

**PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – TIME SENSITIVE  
March 11, 2009**

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**Federal Funds Now Available for Food and Shelter Program in Rockingham & Strafford Counties:**  
Applications Sought for Emergency Food and Shelter Program - Deadline Noon, March 23, 2009

Portsmouth, NH ó Each year, counties throughout the nation are awarded federal funds under the Emergency Food and Shelter National Board Program (EFSP). This year, \$66,544 in federal funds is available for Rockingham County and \$47,990 for Strafford County, New Hampshire. Programs funded include food pantries, homeless shelters, meals-on-wheels programs, emergency rent/mortgage/utility payment programs and other emergency programs for people in need. Applications for EFSP funding for these programs are now being accepted.

Under the terms of the grant from the National Board, private voluntary organizations chosen to receive funds must: 1) be non-profits, 2) have an accounting system and conduct an annual audit, 3) practice nondiscrimination, 4) have demonstrated the capability to deliver emergency food and/or shelter programs, and 5) if they are a private voluntary organization, they must have a voluntary board.

Local agencies qualifying are encouraged to apply for these funds. Individuals are not eligible to receive EFSP funds. All applications must be submitted via e-mail to JoAnn Alessi at [jalessi@uwgs.org](mailto:jalessi@uwgs.org) by Noon on March 23, 2009.

A National Board chaired by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and consisting of representatives from The Salvation Army, American Red Cross, Council of Jewish Federations, Catholic Charities USA, National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, and United Way of America selected United Way of the Greater Seacoast as the administrator of funds to provide the administrative staff and function as fiscal agent. The National Board distributes funds appropriated by Congress to help expand the capacity of food and shelter programs in high-need areas around the country.

United Way of the Greater Seacoast oversees a local Board made up of area representatives who determine how the funds awarded are to be distributed among emergency food and shelter programs run by local service organizations. The local Board is responsible for recommending agencies to receive these funds and any additional funds available under this phase of the program.

For further information and applications visit the United Way's web site by selecting "investments" on the "our work" page: [http://www.uwgs.org/11\\_work\\_sol\\_investments.cfm](http://www.uwgs.org/11_work_sol_investments.cfm), or contact JoAnn Alessi, United Way of the Greater Seacoast, Pease International Tradeport, 112 Corporate Drive, Unit 3, Portsmouth, NH, 03801, telephone: (603) 436-5554 ext. 110, or [jalessi@uwgs.org](mailto:jalessi@uwgs.org).

## **BACKGROUND: EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER PROGRAM (EFSP)**

According to the Emergency Food and Shelter National Board Program, EFSP began in 1983 with a \$50 million federal appropriation. The program was created by Congress to help meet the needs of hungry and homeless people throughout the United States and its territories by allocating federal funds for the provision of food and shelter. During its 25 years of operation, the program disbursed over \$3.1 billion to over 12,000 local providers in more than 2,500 counties and cities.

A National Board selects jurisdictions for funding (and the amount at which they will be funded) based on average unemployment statistics from the previous year and poverty statistics from the 2000 census. Jurisdictions qualifying for direct funds could be a state, county, or city/town. A Local Board represents each jurisdiction, and selects Local Recipient Organizations based on their own determination of the highest need and best use of funds.

### **EFSP & THE SEACOAST REGION**

FEMA annually sends United Way of the Greater Seacoast (chosen by the National Board to serve as administrator and fiscal agent) federal dollars for Rockingham and Strafford County. Once received, UWGS must announce the available federal dollars to all Rockingham and Strafford County agencies that provide emergency food and shelter. Applications to receive funding from the awarded dollars are then sent by UWGS to interested agencies. Once received, the local EFSP board reviews all applications and decides on allocation amounts. FEMA then deposits the proper amounts directly into the agencies chosen to receive the awarded dollars. Agencies receiving dollars are asked to complete a final report for FEMA, detailing how the dollars were spent.

The federal government determines the amount of EFSP Funds available based on unemployment rates, among other factors, in a given county. As a result, funding amounts can fluctuate. In 2008, \$48,442 was distributed to local Rockingham County agencies, and \$33,908 in Strafford County. In the 2009 funding cycle, Rockingham County will receive \$66,544, and Strafford County will receive \$47,990 to supplement emergency food and shelter programs in the area.

Last year, the following agencies received funding through this program:

A Safe Place, AIDS Response Seacoast, Cross Roads House, Homeless Center for Strafford County, My Friend's Place, New Generation, Rockingham County Community Action, Rockingham Nutrition Meals on Wheels, SHARE Fund, Strafford County Community Action.

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*United Way of the Greater Seacoast (UWGS) is a locally governed nonprofit organization working to advance the common good by focusing on the building blocks for a good life – education, income and health. UWGS develops, supports and works in groundbreaking partnerships in the Greater Seacoast region of NH and Southern Maine to create long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening in the first place and create opportunities for a better life for all. For more information, visit [www.uwgs.org](http://www.uwgs.org).*