**Q: Will GA help pay for specialty baby formula? I know about WIC but just curious if GA will pay for emergent need**

**A:** GA can assist with formula but may require a client to check with WIC or other local agencies first.

**Q: Is it possible to get the reference sheet for individual areas/towns if you don't work for the town?**

**A:** Reference sheets are made for municipal administrators but are also posted by the Maine Welfare Directors on their website at [www.mainewelfaredirectors.org](http://www.mainewelfaredirectors.org). Otherwise, the Department posts copies of the GA Rules, Statute, Ordinance and Appendices on it’s website at <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/programs-services/general-assistance>

**Q: What is standard for determining false misrepresentation? i could picture a "feeling" the person may have to not believe the person. can you appeal?**

**A:** Clients can always appeal a decision. Each decision sheet has directions for clients to request a fair hearing within 5 days of receipt of their decision. Municipalities must have evidence to justify a disqualification for false representation. They cannot disqualify on a feeling.

**Q: Is the GA hotline available 24/7?**

**A:** The GA hotline is only available during regular business hours Monday-Friday from 8am-5pm.

**Q: How are income limits set to qualify for GA?**

**A:** GA maximums are based on county/metropolitan area. An applicant who has income will be expected to use that income for basic necessities. Income will reduce the amount of assistance a person can receive. For example, a person with a $1,000 maximum who also has $100 in income will only be eligible to receive the remainder of $900 in assistance.

**Q: What about towns that say GA funds are expended?**

**A:** Budgeting for GA is incredibly difficult on municipalities. They must give their best “guestimate” for the following year’s budget numbers with only the previous years’ expenditures to go by. Numbers are due for the next tax year before changes from legislation and annual maximums come into effect each year. Some towns may not budget enough for certain categories of assistance through GA. We appreciate the technicality and struggle towns have in creating a budget for GA, however state law requires that towns assist all eligible applicants for assistance, even if the municipality has exceeded their GA budget. The state also reimburses for 70% of all assistance issued.

**Q: Is there a place we could reference a list of what GA will assist with payment of? If so, Is this the same for every City/Town?**

**A:** There is not a comprehensive list, but the rules, statute and ordinance summarize the types of items that are considered basic necessities. For instance, the GA Ordinance (available to view on the DHHS website) states:

Basic Necessities. Food, clothing, shelter, fuel, electricity, potable water, non-elective essential medical services as prescribed by a physician, nonprescription drugs, basictelephone service where it is necessary for medical or work-related reasons, property taxes when a tax lien placed on the property threatens the loss of the applicant’s place of residence, and any other commodity or service determined essential by the municipality.

**Q: Will GA help a single person who is homeless and only source of income is SSI which is 914/month?**

A: It depends on the municipality the person is living in and whether they have received assistance previously. The maximum allowances vary depending on community.

For example, the 1 person maximum in Bangor is $816, but the 1 person maximum in Waldo County is $970. This means that a person in Bangor would be “over income” by $98, but a person in Belfast might be eligible for $56 ($970 max-$914 income).

Additionally, when someone is a repeat applicant, they are required to document how their money was spent in the 30 days prior to application. If someone received $914 from SSI and had $900 in receipts, but was missing the remaining $14 in receipts, the individual would only be eligible for $42 in assistance ($970 max-$914 income - $14 unaccounted for = $42).

**Q: There was some conversation in homeless meetings that LD459 allows GA to go over the 30 days? Can you speak to what that means?**

A: I’m not sure exactly what that refers to. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Governor Mills issued emergency rules. One of those emergency rules allowed a maximum eligibility period of 60 days (versus the original 30). This rule ended 30 days following the termination of the Maine State of Emergency in 2022 (ended approx. August 2022).

**Q: Will the State reimburse towns at 70% if their maximums are higher than the model ordinance prescribes?**

**A:** YES. As long as they were submitted with justification for the changes and then approved by the GA Program Manager with the Department.