



## **CITY OF DORAL**

### **Emergency Hardship Grant 4 Families (EHG4F) Policy** (Adopted FY 2025–2026)

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish an objective and consistent process for implementing and administering the City of Doral Emergency Hardship Grant 4 Families (EHG4F) Program. This document provides policy, procedures, responsibilities, and guidelines as they relate to the program. This document may be amended from time to time, as appropriate, with the approval of Council.

#### **Program Overview and Goal**

The EHG4F Program's primary goal is to provide short-term financial aid to City of Doral residents facing verified, unforeseen hardship. The intent is to help households stabilize during emergencies and prevent displacement or loss of essential services.

#### **Fund Determination**

The award allocation for this program shall be determined by Council during the annual budget process. For Fiscal Year 2025–2026, the total allocation is \$100,000.00 Funds will be disbursed until the annual allocation is exhausted.

#### **Applicant Eligibility**

To qualify, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

##### **I. Residency**

- Must be a legal resident of the City of Doral for at least twelve (12) continuous months prior to application.
- Proof of residency includes at least two of the following:
  - Valid Florida driver's license or ID with a Doral address.

- Lease agreement or utility bill in the applicant's name.
- Voter registration card.
- Utility Bill.
- Homestead exemption record.

## **2. Income**

- Single-income households: annual income  $\leq$  80% of Area Median Income ("AMI"), as established by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD").
- Dual-income households: annual income  $\leq$  100% of AMI.
- Income verified with W-2/1099, pay stubs, or IRS tax return.

## **3. Hardship Documentation**

- Applicants must submit a written explanation and supporting documents, such as:
  - Employer termination/furlough notice.
  - Medical bills and physician statement.
  - Death certificate or divorce decree.
  - Court-issued eviction/foreclosure filing.
  - Utility shutoff or disconnection notice.

## **4. Ineligibility**

Applicants are ineligible if they:

- Receive federal housing subsidies (Section 8, LIHEAP, HCVP).
- Own more than one real estate property.
- Fail to provide truthful or complete information.
- Received maximum disbursement within the past twelve (12) months.
- Cannot verify legal residency in the City of Doral during the previous twelve (12) consecutive months.

## **Eligible Uses of Funds**

Funds may be used exclusively for:

- Past-due rent or mortgage payments.
- Past-due Homeowners' Association (HOA) assessments/fees.
- Utility bills (electricity, water, gas, internet).
- Emergency childcare assistance necessary for employment.
- Essential transportation/vehicle repairs directly tied to income or essential access.

## **Restrictions:**

- Funds cannot be used for debt unrelated to housing, utilities, or essential services.
- Funds cannot be used for non-essential expenses.

## **Cap on Assistance**

- Maximum award up to \$3,000.00 per household in any twelve (12) month period.
- The award is based on verified need, documentation, and availability of funds.
- Households may not receive more than one award in a twelve-month period.

## **Application & Submission**

- Applicants must submit a completed application form, required documentation, and proof of hardship through the City of Doral website (InfoDoral section) by the posted deadline.
- Applications should be submitted within the first ten (10) days of each month, until program funds are exhausted.
- Incomplete applications will be rejected. Applicant can reapply in the following cycle.
- Applications will be date- and time-stamped upon receipt.

## **Review & Approval Process**

- Applications will be reviewed for eligibility by a designated committee of three City staff members.
- The committee shall make determinations based on documentation and program criteria.
- Approved applications will move forward for disbursement.

## **Disbursement of Funds**

- Funds will be paid directly to third-party providers (landlord, mortgage lender, utility company, licensed childcare provider, or auto repair service).
- No funds shall be disbursed directly to applicants.

## **Program Oversight**

- The program will be managed by the Finance Department with assistance from the Constituent Services Coordinator.
- A running balance of funds disbursed shall be maintained until the \$100,000.00 allocation is exhausted.
- At exhaustion, the program will be suspended until reauthorized or reappropriated by the Council.

## **Program Separation Clause**

- This program is wholly funded by the City of Doral from general funds.
- No federal or state funds will be used.
- Compliance with similar Federal and State program requirements are not applicable towards program eligibility.
- HUD AMI benchmarks are referenced solely for income eligibility.

## **Reporting & Final Documentation**

- Finance Department staff shall prepare quarterly internal reports on the number of applications received, approved, denied, and total funds disbursed.
- Reports shall be provided to the City Manager's Office and shared with the Mayor and Council upon request.

## **Document Retention Period**

- Program documents shall comply with Florida Public Records Documents law.
- All grant applications, supporting documents, and disbursement records shall be retained in accordance with Florida General Records Schedule GSI-SL.
- Record copy: five (5) fiscal years after completion of the grant cycle and applicable audits are released.
- Duplicates: retained until obsolete or no longer of administrative value.