



**Fund for
Utility
Service
Emergencies**

Fund for Utility Service Emergencies [FUSE] Peterborough City and County

Sponsored by Peterborough Utility Services (PUS)
Fund Management by the Housing Resource Centre
229 King Street, Peterborough, Ont. K9J 2R9
Telephone: 705-743-9122 Fax: 705-742-3015

Fund Purpose and Description

FUSE is a community based, charitable program created in 2003 as a joint initiative of Peterborough Utility Services and the Housing Resource Centre, a program of Community Counselling & Resource Centre (CCRC).

The fund has been established to raise and distribute funds as financial assistance to low-income people toward the cost of services they purchase from the PUS. An Advisory Committee will review operational matters relating to the Fund .

The Housing Resource Centre (HRC), will be solely responsible for all eligibility decisions and for the amount of assistance allocated to the applicant. All payments will be made by CCRC directly to the client's account with the utility. The fund will be operated according to eligibility criteria that is mutually established and agreed upon by the above parties.

Funding is provided by Peterborough Utilities Services and by charitable donations from individuals and organizations.

Eligibility

Lower income customers* of the PUS, from anywhere in Peterborough City and County, can apply for FUSE if they are at risk of loss of utility services. (* based on Statistics Canada Low Income Cut Offs)

All information provided related to income and expenses will be verified. Strict program standards apply. Eligible expenses include arrears, deposits or reconnection charges for utilities provided through the PUS.

How to Apply

People who require assistance can apply at the **Housing Resource Centre** during regular business hours **705-743-9122**.

All information is confidential. Complete verification of information is required. Decisions on eligibility are made based on established criteria and guidelines.

If the application is approved, funds are provided directly to the Peterborough Utility Services.



FUSE Criteria, Standards, Guidelines and Limits

1. This is a fund of **LAST RESORT**. **ALL** other means of assistance (e.g. Ontario Works and ODSP Benefits, and other available, charitable assistance) must be fully allocated to eligible applicants **before** FUSE funds are granted. Assistance may be denied to applicants who do not access existing resources.

Applicants must agree to information verification of income and expenses. Strict confidentiality will apply. CCRC will not divulge information to PUS or other organizations about client situations without a *duly authorized 'Release of Information'; or 'Form 14'*.

2. There are maximum levels of assistance that may vary according to availability of funds. Assistance will be available to individuals or families a maximum of once per year except in extraordinary circumstances.
3. The Fund's Standards guarantee:
 - Equitable access for city and county customers of PUS
 - Flexibility to unique needs and situations
 - CCRC and PUS observe full and appropriate customer / client confidentiality. Regular financial reporting by the fund management will ensure accountability to the fund sponsor and to community donors.
4. Applications for assistance that exceeds the annual limits must be approved by at least two members of the Advisory Committee
5. Applicants may be asked to submit partial payment to the HRC **before** amounts from the fund are disbursed. Applicants **may** be requested to attend a credit related counselling appointment **before** funds are granted.
6. The PUS may allocate grace periods (temporary delay of pending disconnection) to applicants while HRC processes applications. These may be suspended without notice to the customer at the sole discretion of PUS.
7. Applicants in receipt of Ontario Works or O.D.S.P. will be advised to contact their worker to apply for discretionary or mandatory benefits before FUSE funds are granted.
8. Funds granted under this program are charitable in nature and therefore not deducted from recipients of social assistance (not clawed back).
9. Assistance provided is by direct payment to the PUS. Cash is never given to applicants.

CCRC is A United Way Member Agency