



Emergencies: Rental assistance and bus vouchers

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Fast facts

- ▲ Approximately 6.5 percent of Hennepin County's residents (approximately 1.2 million) said they missed a rent or mortgage payment at least once in the last 12 months because they lacked the funds, according to Hennepin's Survey of the Health of Adults, the Population and the Environment (SHAPE) 2006.

What does Hennepin offer for clients in emergencies?

Hennepin County authorizes emergency rental assistance and transportation assistance to help people who lack resources and are in crisis.

Who is eligible to be helped?

An applicant for emergency assistance must:

- face an emergency situation that will threaten their health or safety if not resolved, and
- be unable to resolve the situation by using all income and resources that are available or able to be made through work during the month.

Rental assistance:

In 2008, Hennepin used \$9.8 million to assist people experiencing a housing crisis with rent and damage deposit assistance.

Bus vouchers:

Emergencies can sometimes be resolved if the individual has transportation to a job or safe housing. Hennepin provides bus vouchers to clients to anywhere in the contiguous 48 states who are eligible for emergency assistance and have:

- a bona fide offer of employment, or
- housing at the destination.

Hennepin staff verify the client's information before issuing a voucher. If the client is traveling over regular meal times, a bag lunch is provided for families or a \$5 food voucher is issued to single adults.

The majority of vouchers issued -- about 70 percent -- go to clients who are returning to a prior residence or a residence where they have a documented connection such as a family member living there.

In 2008, Hennepin spent approximately \$67,000 for bus vouchers and transportation for clients. The exact number of people helped is not known since Hennepin records vouchers for families as one. However, about 75 percent of vouchers are issued to single adults.

Funds to assist clients with transportation come from a combination of federal, state and county monies.