



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL DISASTER FUND INFORMATION/GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

The purpose of the ESA International Disaster Fund is to assist an ESA member whose home and/or personal belongings are destroyed or damaged extensively by one of nature's causes -fire, flood, etc. The need for assistance occurred in the current year from June 1 to May 31. Assistance may also be given when a member incurs heavy financial responsibility due to a debilitating illness or accident, which involves the member or their spouse or *immediate family who resides in the home due to physical or mental impairment whom they have legal guardianship over and are legally responsible.*

In the event a member's chapter requests additional help for them after one claim has been paid, the State Committee MUST investigate the application thoroughly. **The Disaster Fund is not an on-going source of assistance; a second claim will not be paid for the same illness or accident.** If the State Committee establishes that the additional need is valid, the application must be submitted (along with the information regarding the reasons for recommending the additional claim) to the International Council Disaster Fund Committee Chairperson. Following receipt of such an application, the International Council Disaster Fund Chair will review with the committee, comprised of the IC Disaster Fund Chair, the IC President, and the IC First Vice President/President-Elect, and will make the final determination regarding the additional claim.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY

- (1) Active Members of 90 days or more, (2) Members-at-Large who are in good standing with Headquarters, (3) Life Active Members will be determined by the IC Disaster Fund Chair in agreement with the IC President and First Vice-President/President Elect.

STATE DISASTER FUND CHAIR

The State Disaster Fund Chair shall review all claims and send only those onto the IC Disaster Fund chair that have been found to be on valid forms in compliance with the IC Disaster Fund Chair Guidelines. It is of vital importance for the Chair to assess the need carefully when making a recommendation for acceptance of any claim. Things that do not qualify for assistance under these guidelines: anything in the home that is damaged or needs repair that does not pertain to a Natural Disaster. Broken pipes, flooding in home, remodeling for medical issues, co-payments other than medical bills, divorce, unemployment, furnace replacement, etc. Disaster Fund Chairs affixing their signatures to the application indicates that they have investigated and found the claim to be valid according to the International Council Disaster Fund Guidelines.

AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE

\$5,000.00 is the maximum amount given to a member of a Disaster Fund claim. Every consideration will be taken when determining the total amount that will be paid to the claimant. The International Council Disaster Fund Chair will determine the total amount to be paid based on the nature of the claim. The International Council Disaster Fund Committee will review the claim and make the final decision if there is

some doubt as to the amount to be paid.

HOW TO APPLY FOR ASSISTANCE

Step 1 - Chapter: An application MUST originate with the local chapter of the member involved, even if the member is MAL, and be signed by the Chapter President. The Chapter Vice President, or the next highest elected chapter officer not related to the member, must sign the application if the Chapter President is the member involved. All information requested on the application MUST be completed or the application will be returned. Dollar amounts must be given as requested on the application form. Additional pertinent information, which would help the IC Disaster Fund Chair in reaching a decision, should be included in an accompanying letter. If assistance is needed due to a terminal illness, it is recommended that the request be made as early as possible. A claim initiated before or within 30 days following the death of a member will be paid to the surviving family providing it meets all other criteria.

The original copy of the completed application must be submitted to the State Disaster Fund Chair. A copy should also be retained in the chapter files. (In the event there is no state council, the chapter may follow the procedure outlined below for the state. The request for assistance in such a case is submitted directly to the IC Disaster Fund Chair.)

Step 2 - State: The State Disaster Fund Chair is responsible for approving the application. They MUST recommend the amount being requested from the Disaster Fund based upon the nature of the claim rather than automatically stating the maximum amount allowed. Following approval, the State Disaster Fund Chair MUST sign the application. If the State Disaster Fund Chair is involved in the Disaster Fund Claim then they must disqualify themselves from the investigation and approval process and send the claim directly to the IC Disaster Fund Chair.

The signature of the State Disaster Fund Chair to the application indicates that they have investigated and found the claim to be valid according to these guidelines. The State Disaster Fund Chair shall mail the original application to the IC Disaster Fund Chair (the IC Disaster Fund Chair will send a copy to the IC President and First Vice President/President-Elect). The State Disaster Fund Chair should retain one copy for their records. **If the State Disaster Fund finds this is not a valid claim according to the guidelines the claim should not be submitted to the IC Disaster Fund Chair.**

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DISASTER FUND

All checks are to be made payable to the ESA Disaster Fund and mailed to the State Disaster Fund Chair. If the State Disaster Fund Chair receives a cash donation she should deposit the cash and send a personal check or money order to the IC Disaster Fund Chair made out to the IC Disaster Fund.

The State Disaster Fund Chair will record the checks and forward them, along with the monthly report, to the IC Disaster Fund Chair. (If there is no state council, contributions may be mailed directly to the IC Disaster Fund Chair.) The IC Disaster Fund Chair will send reports of donation to each State Disaster Fund Chair quarterly.

PROCEDURES FOR STATE DISASTER FUND CHAIR

The duties of the State Disaster Fund Chair are two-fold:

- I. Receive and process donations from the membership.
- II. Receive and process Disaster Fund Applications.

I. DONATIONS

- A. Promotion:** The State Chair is to promote the Disaster Fund within their state, reminding members that it can never be anticipated when disaster money would be needed. Promotion may include special projects such as raffles at state meetings, Memorial or

Honorarium donations, contributions in lieu of Christmas, Birthday, Secret Pal gifts, etc.

- B. Chapter and Individual Donations:** Chapters and individuals within the state should be requested to send all donations to the State Disaster Fund Chair. The State Chair will record donations and send with report to the IC Chair.
- C. State Record Keeping:** Donations are to be recorded as the State Chair receives them. The State Chair may set up books/records to fit their needs for accurate, efficient reporting to the IC Chair that will include the following:
1. Preparation of Disaster Fund Report and transfer of funds to the IC Chair monthly.
 2. The annual period to be covered is June 1 through May 31.

It is suggested for the State Chair to prepare a list of all chapters in the state (including name and number), then record donations to the side of the chapter name as the donations are received. This will provide a reference as to whether a chapter has donated as well as accumulate a chapter's total when more than one donation is submitted during the year.

- D. Disaster Fund Report and Transfer of Funds to the IC Chair:** The sample of the donation report form may be found below and also on the IC website. Once a month, if you have received donations, complete the report form and submit one copy to your State President, keep one for your files, and forward one copy to the IC Chair along with donations received. (Note: A report is not necessary unless you have donations to forward to the IC Chair.)

Be certain that all chapter checks have been properly made out and signed; and that all have been endorsed if made payable to the State Chair, State Council, etc. Endorse the check with the name on the check and show "For Deposit Only" under the endorsement. Checks made payable to the ESA Disaster Fund do not require an endorsement by the State Chair.

Complete the Disaster Fund Report by listing each donation by check number and other self-explanatory information requested on the form. Be certain checks endorsed total the same as "Total This Report." Please do not hold checks - this causes "stale" dates and many banks will not honor checks after a certain period of time.

- E. Disaster Fund Report Number:** The first Disaster Fund Report submitted to the current IC Chair is to be numbered 1 usually in August or September. On Report Number 1, do not show any previous contributions or number of chapters previously reported. These should be zero. Each report, thereafter, will be numbered in sequence with previous totals brought forward. The final report submitted to the current IC Chair will be the one ending May 31. Report numbers are applicable to the term of the current IC Disaster Fund Chair, not the State Disaster Fund Chair.

F. Awards

The Disaster Fund Chair at IC convention gives the following one (1) award:

State Disaster Fund Award -presented to the **state** with the largest total contribution June 1 through May 31. There will be a 1st, 2nd & 3rd place presented

Period Covered

The year will be from June 1 through May 31. The final May report to the IC Chair must be postmarked by June 1. This can be accomplished if the State Chair starts the May report before May 31, and is ready to add any donations received on the last day of the period.

Donations made or postmarked after June 1 will be counted toward the next year's awards.

G. IC Reports

The IC Chair will send status reports to the State Chair and State Presidents at the end of October, January, April, and June showing each state's contribution and claims paid to date. These reports should be in agreement with state records unless donations are held by the state or chapters/members within the state send donations directly to the IC Disaster Fund Chair.

The International Council Executive Board requests that checks be processed as outlined in these "Procedures for State Disaster Fund Chairs." By doing so, it will enable the IC Chair to keep their records up to date, provide money for claims, and relieve the heavy end-of-the year load for both the State and IC Chair.

II. DISASTER FUND APPLICATIONS

A. Notification

Keep the membership within your state informed that the Disaster Fund is available and assistance may be given when a member's home and/or personal belongings are destroyed or damaged extensively by one of nature's causes – earthquake, fire, flood, tornado, etc. Assistance may also be given when a member incurs heavy financial responsibility due to serious accident or catastrophic illness (or death), which involves the member or their spouse or *immediate family who resides in the home due to physical or mental impairment whom they have legal guardianship over and are legally responsible.*

B. Application Form

An application form is provided for copying and distribution as handled within respective states. **DO NOT SUBMIT CLAIMS ON AN OUTDATED FORM.** (See enclosed "Disaster Fund Information" for details on handling applications.) Be sure that ALL information is complete and legible before sending to the IC Chair. Avoid delays caused by the return of the application form due to incomplete information. The chapter president and State Disaster Fund Chair must sign the forms before submitting the claim to the IC Disaster Fund Chair. If the applicant, is serving as chapter president then the chapter vice president must verify and sign the claim application. Additionally, if the applicant is the State Disaster Fund Chair then the state president must verify and sign the claim application.