Translate

home » news » articles

News Articles

Monday, March 8, 2021

New York Announces $26.6 Million Available to Support Essential Workers and First Responders Through the Empire Pandemic Grant Program

Program Was Designed to Assist Essential Workers and First Responders with Urgent Economic Needs Amidst Ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic

Up to $1,000 Available per Household from Funding Made Possible Through Private Donations

$26.6 million is available to support essential workers and first responders through the Empire Pandemic Response Reimbursement Fund program coordinated by the **Office of Children and Family Services**. The program is designed to reimburse out-of-pocket childcare, transportation, lodging and other qualifying expenses that enabled workers to perform their duties. The funding comes from private donations from individuals, charitable trusts and businesses made during the COVID crisis.

"From the early, dark days of this pandemic, our essential workers have been on the front lines risking their health and safety every day to keep this state running," said former Governor Cuomo. "They took care of us and it is now time for us to take care of them. This grant program will provide critical funding to those individuals and families still struggling from the pandemic and help them get back on their feet as we continue our transition to a new normal."

Qualifying applicants include first responders, health care, and many multi-industry workers. Up to $1,000 is available per household. Workers should be referred by employers, unions or social service providers who can verify employment during the COVID emergency. Families who earn up to 500 percent of the federal poverty level - or $125,470 for a family of four - are eligible to apply for the funds to cover expenses.

OCFS Commissioner Sheila J. Poole said, "We at OCFS are proud and honored to assist our first responder and essential worker neighbors by getting relief to those who honorably and tirelessly responded to the COVID-19 crisis. All New Yorkers owe a debt of gratitude to these everyday heroes who bravely served so others could stay safely at home and to the health care workers who courageously saved so many lives."

About the Empire Pandemic Response Reimbursement Fund

The Empire Pandemic Response Reimbursement Fund is a non-competitive application. Applicants who meet the eligibility criteria set forth below and who submit the required supporting documentation for eligible expenses will be awarded funds to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses they incurred to respond to COVID-19 that have not been reimbursed by another source. Awards will be made to eligible applicants for eligible expenditures on a first come, first served basis until funding is exhausted. The maximum reimbursement amount is $1,000 per household.