

United Charities Hardship Grant Policy

Effective Date: June 19, 2025



PURPOSE:

United Charities provides employee assistance for UPMC Hamot Employees who are experiencing a true unforeseen, non-recurring emergency due to a catastrophic event, natural disaster, life-threatening/serious illness or critical injury due to an accident which could not have been prudently planned for and is beyond the employee's control. Emergency is defined as an unforeseen circumstance that calls for immediate action and an urgent need for assistance. Please review the guidelines listed below to determine eligibility

ELIGIBILITY:

The United Charities Fund is open to UPMC Hamot employees whom:

1. Are full time or part time;
 - a. Per Diem and Students are excluded.
 - b. Employees on an approved Leave of Absence are eligible to apply.
 - c. Employment status will be verified by Human Resources.
2. Have worked one (1) calendar year of service or more;
3. Have not been placed in discipline at the written warning or higher level in the past one (1) rolling year;
 - a. Employee's supervisor will be contacted for confirmation.
4. Have actively searched for assistance from other resources as applicable; and
5. Have documentation to verify the need for assistance of expenses.

GUIDELINES:

Employee must be experiencing a true unforeseen, non-recurring emergency due to one of the following:

- Catastrophic event occurring within ninety (90) days of application.
- Natural disaster occurring within ninety (90) days of application.

- A life-threatening/serious illness that results in greater than ninety (>90) calendar days of lost work.
- Critical injury due to an accident that results in greater than ninety (>90) calendar days of lost work.
- Loss of home and experiencing active homelessness

The reason for application must be for an emergency which could not have been prudently planned for and is beyond the employee's control. United Charities Request Form must be submitted to Hamot Health Foundation through our [website](#).

Examples of NON-ELIGIBLE employee emergencies include: funeral expenses; chronic debt; loss of income due to family breakup, separation or divorce; work related illness or injury; legal fees; major purchases; income tax delinquencies; bankruptcy; medical insurance or deductibles; moving expenses; criminal or negligence expenses; child support problems; reduced work hours or pay; credit card bills; home foreclosures; car repairs or accumulated financial distress.

Examples of ELIGIBLE employee emergencies covered include:

- Catastrophic event (fires, serious crime against the employee ((arson, assault, domestic abuse)) that impacts the ability to afford basic needs (food, shelter) occurring within ninety (90) days of application.
- Natural disasters (floods, tornados, severe storms and lightning strikes) that have damaged or destroyed the employee's primary residence causing loss of home or use of home occurring within ninety (90) days of application.
- A life-threatening/serious illness that results in greater than ninety (>90) calendar days of lost work that impacts the ability to pay basic needs (food, shelter); affects earning capacity of employee, and produces medical bills which are unexpected and/or not covered by insurance occurring within ninety (90) days of application.
- Critical injury due to a non-work-related accident that results in greater than ninety (>90) calendar days of lost work that impacts the ability to pay basic needs (food, shelter); affects earning capacity of employee, and produces medical bills which are unexpected and/or not covered by insurance which have incurred within ninety (90) days of application.
- Experiencing active homelessness

The maximum assistance available for an eligible employee is \$500 gross per household. The maximum award is not guaranteed, and in some cases, a lesser amount may be awarded.

Cash payments are not made directly to the employee. Any assistance awarded will be applied to a bill provided by the applicant or in the form of a gift card.

During any two-year period, an eligible employee may not receive in the aggregate, an amount that exceeds the maximum assistance.

Eligible employees must provide written documentation of their qualifying emergency. The documentation must be attached to their request form verifying the source of the emergency. Any request form received without documentation will not be considered.

PROCEDURE:

Employees requesting financial assistance through United Charities must complete **The United Charities Request form** on our website and submit it to Hamot Health Foundation (blackjl@upmc.edu) **along with documentation** for an emergency caused by one of the following:

- Catastrophic event occurring within ninety (90) days of application.
- Natural disaster occurring within ninety (90) days of application.
- A life-threatening/serious illness that results in greater than ninety (>90) calendar days of lost work.
- Critical injury due to an accident that results in greater than ninety (>90) calendar days of lost work.
- Experiencing active homelessness

Employees must attach documentation of their qualifying emergency to the request form verifying the source of the emergency for assistance. Any request form received without documentation will not be considered. The Hamot Health Foundation team will review request form for eligibility. Applications will be reviewed in the order in which they are received.

Every effort will be made to review requests in a timely manner. Request will only be considered once appropriate documentation is provided. Decisions and final approval of disbursement of funds will be made on a case-by-case basis.