

Nebraska Ryan White Part B Program
Policy
Utility Assistance
Revised 06/2013

Federal Policy References: -Ryan White CARE Act (PL 104-146)
-HRSA HAB Policy Notice 97-02.2
-Ryan White Part B Manual

The Nebraska Ryan White Program has waived all requirements for subgrant entities regarding imposition of charges for services, pursuant to Section 2617(c)(4)(A) of the Ryan White Modernization Act of 2006.

The HRSA/HAB Fiscal and Program Monitoring Standards for Ryan White Part B Grantees (Monitoring Standards) will guide the oversight of Supportive Services by the NDHHS. The Monitoring Standards are attached to this document by reference. Annual fiscal and programmatic monitoring is required by regulation, both internally and by the NDHHS.
<https://careacttarget.org/category/topics/program-monitoring>

Purpose: The purpose of the Ryan White Part B Policy on utility assistance is to ensure compliance with applicable Federal policies for the appropriate use of Part B funding for the payment of utility assistance on behalf of eligible clients. This policy identifies appropriate utilities for payment, processes, and limitations of utility assistance.

1. Nebraska Ryan White Part B funds may be utilized to assist clients in the payment of utility bills.
2. Clients eligible for utility assistance must meet eligibility criteria per the Nebraska Ryan White Part B Policy “Client Eligibility” and per the HRSA National Monitoring Standards (see link above).
3. Utilities eligible for payment under this policy include water, trash, gas, electricity, and local phone service.
4. One hook up or initial access charge for necessary utilities is allowed during the grant period for individuals moving to further facilitate access to care or support services. Hook up or initial access charges are not allowed for individuals who are moving by their own choice, other than individuals moving out of unstable/abusive situations, or substandard housing.
5. Utility deposits, back payments of utilities as a condition of hook up, late payment service charges, or re-connect fees as a result of utility disconnection are not allowed.
6. Payments for repairs to utilities, appliances, or utility infrastructure are not allowed.
7. Phone service is limited to local service only. Long distance calls to a client’s physician are allowed providing a client provides an itemized bill substantiating long distance calls.

Optional phone features such as: Call waiting, caller ID, call screening, multiple phone lines, internet access, or any other optional service above and beyond local phone service is not allowed.

8. Basic cell phone bills may be allowed if the following criteria are met:
 - Client must not have local phone access in their residence. This includes phone service in other individual's names, who may reside with the client.
 - Client must be unable to receive access to local phone service and provide reasoning as to why.
 - Payment will be limited to the equivalent payment for basic local phone service in the area where client resides, or the cost of the client's basic cell phone service, which ever is less.
9. Case Managers and clients ***are encouraged*** to contact their local phone service providers to inquire about discounted phone service for medically needy individuals.
10. Prior to requesting Ryan White Part B funding, clients must attempt to access all other public and private resources such as local non-profit assistance programs or utility energy assistance programs to ensure Ryan White is payer of last resort.
11. Clients receiving public or private assistance such as, but not limited to Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA), Section 8 housing assistance, or any other publicly funded assistance specifically for the purpose of subsidizing utilities allowed in this policy, must provide current detailed documentation substantiating the amount of the subsidy for the particular utility(s) requested.
12. *Clients receiving public or private assistance such as outlined in item #11 and are eligible for Ryan White Part B assistance will be eligible for utility assistance, up to the full amount of their portion of the utilities (in shared housing situations, subject to current Ryan White policies) less the amount of the client's utility subsidy.*
13. Requests for Direct Emergency Assistance for utilities must include **an itemized bill** for utilities from the utility provider. Shut off notices only showing amount due are insufficient.
14. Utility bills must be in the client, spouse, roommate, landlord, or the management company's name. The home address on the utility bill must match the address of record for the client.
15. Financial limits for utilities are described in the Ryan White Part B Policy "Direct Emergency Assistance Limits/Emergency Financial Assistance Limits" for the current grant period. Utility assistance is subject to the financial limitations of the utility assistance category. **Verification of income documentation must be provided.**

16. In situations where funding requested is insufficient to avoid disconnection based on a client's disconnection notice, utility assistance will be denied.
17. In situations where funding is requested so that client can make payment(s) elsewhere (i.e. rent, utilities, medical bills, etc.) **client must submit** documentation/proof of payment prior to assistance granted. **Approvals based upon contingencies of promised payments are not allowable.**
18. In no case may CARE Act funds be used to make direct payments of cash to recipients of utility services.

* **Household** is defined as the individual Ryan White applicant and anyone who is claimed as a dependent on the individual's federal tax return. If the individual does not file a tax return and is not claimed as a dependent on a tax return, the household is the individual and the following (if they live with the individual):

- Spouse
- Natural, adopted and/or stepchildren under 19 or up to 24 if still enrolled fulltime in school and dependent on the individual for support

If the applicant is a child, then the household is natural, adopted and/or step parents and siblings/step siblings

Domestic partners, unmarried couples and same marriages are not included in the household definition.