

FIND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Do you need financial assistance and are not sure where to turn? Having trouble applying for financial aid? Here are some tips that will help you locate helpful resources and apply for financial assistance.

Discover Resources You Already Have. There may be resources at your fingertips that you have not yet identified. Think about the skills, abilities, and availability of your family, friends, and co-workers. Family and friends are often very happy to help with meal preparation, child care, and rides to and from treatment. These services will provide comfort and support, and help you manage additional expenses. Reach out to your support system. Their assistance, both practical and emotional, will be integral in helping you handle the costs of daily living.

Reach Out to Local Community Organizations. Don't be shy in reaching out. Community organizations, both Jewish and secular, often have funds to assist community members in a time of need and operate in a confidential manner. In many synagogues, the rabbi has a discretionary fund that is available to help community members in their time of need. Many of us are comfortable with helping others, but not accustomed to being on the receiving end of support. You have helped others before, and now it may be your turn for support.

Speak With Your Social Worker. Arrange a meeting with the social worker at the hospital or medical center at which you are being treated. The social worker can connect you with services and financial assistance programs that will address both your medical expenses and your daily living expenses.

Search the Internet. The internet is a powerful tool for finding resources. Use the enclosed resource list and Sharsheret's online resources, and spend some down time searching for websites and organizations that may provide the support you need. Narrow your search with keywords such as "Jewish" or "cancer" or "financial assistance". If you are not computer savvy, enlist the help of a friend to assist you with your search.

Apply for Assistance From Different Organizations. Be creative and consider multiple organizations that, together, will help you meet your financial needs. There are several ways to make applying for financial assistance grants, co-payment assistance, prescription assistance, and daily living assistance easier, including:

- Pay close attention to eligibility requirements.
- Keep multiple copies of doctor's notes and scans handy.
- Stay organized and meet deadlines.
- Enlist friends' help in completing forms and paperwork.

Focus on the Little Steps, Not the Big Picture. Applying for financial assistance can feel overwhelming, especially if you think that you need to get it all done in one day. Set up a schedule so that you can tackle one piece of the project at a time. By focusing on the smaller steps, you will be better able to get the job done.

Remember: You Have Nothing to Lose – and Much to Gain – By Reaching Out. While it may be difficult to reach out for financial assistance, particularly if you have never reached out before, remember that you have so much to gain and nothing to lose by applying for financial aid. Take the first step and follow through.