

Criteria and Guidelines of the Tennessee Dental Association Relief Fund

The Tennessee Dental Association (TDA) Relief Fund is a charitable trust designed to assist dentists and their qualifying dependents in times of severe financial crisis. The Relief Fund provides temporary, emergency assistance to dentists who are not financially self-sustaining due to circumstances beyond their control.

Grants are awarded at the discretion of the TDA Relief Fund Trustees consistent with the Trustee's interpretation of these guidelines and subject to fund availability.

A. Eligibility

1. Tennessee dentists and qualifying dependents* of a dentist who is deceased or incapacitated** who are not financially self-sufficient. Eligible applicants include members of the Tennessee Dental Association who have experienced a catastrophic financial loss beyond their control (including due to illnesses, or natural and other disasters).
2. Applicants are not required to be members of the Tennessee Dental Association.
3. Grants are not transferrable.

B. Purpose

1. Grants are intended to provide eligible applicants with immediate, temporary, emergency assistance in their essential daily living expenses and emergency living needs.
2. As resources are limited, the grants are needs-based and support the most dire cases where applicants are unable to support themselves and circumstances have prevented them from gainful employment in or out of dentistry.
3. The Relief Fund does not provide grants to cover business expenses and business loans.

C. Application

1. Application Period: The application period is open.
2. All requests must be made on the TDA Relief Fund application form which may be obtained from www.tndental.org or by contacting the TDA office at 615-628-0208.

3. How to Apply: Review the Rules of the Grant program and submit a complete application, along with supporting documentation to the Tennessee Dental Association as described in the application. Failure to submit a complete form and supporting documentation will result in the delay of funding decision or denial of funding support. Additionally, an application will be denied if an applicant knowingly provides inaccurate or misleading information in connection with their application.
4. All information received in connection with an application will be regarded as confidential.
5. Pursuant to IRS guidelines, detailed financial information will be collected from the applicant. Applicants must submit supporting documentation as required in the application, which may include the following information:
 - a. Most recent tax returns.
 - b. Checking and savings account information.
 - c. Social Security benefits.
 - d. Medicare/Medicaid benefits.
 - e. Veterans' benefits
 - f. Medical records related to the application.
 - g. List of applications and contact information made for outside funding sources including federal, state, and local governments. Also, include responses from these entities if applicable.
6. Applicants may be asked to provide additional information or documentation while their application is being considered.

D. Terms of Grant

1. Grants made to any individual are limited to a maximum of \$5,000 per application, with the Trustees determining amount awarded. The Trustees will determine whether to make the grant payment to the obligation/bill source or to the grant recipient. If in extraordinary circumstances, the Trustees of the Relief Fund determine additional funding is necessary, approval may be sought from the Tennessee Dental Association Board of Trustees.
2. Individual circumstances of each applicant will be considered, including, but not limited to:
 - a. The applicant's financial income, assets, and expenses.
 - b. The average daily living expenses in the applicant's geographic region and justification for any category that exceeds the regional average.
 - c. The applicant's age and medical condition(s).

- d. The opportunity and effort made for assistance from other sources.
 - e. Other criteria as deemed relevant by the Trustees.
3. Award decisions made by the TDA Relief Fund Trustees are final. Decisions will not be reconsidered by the Trustees or any other body unless the applicant submits new information showing that their circumstances have materially changed since they applied.
 4. Upon receipt of a complete application award decisions will be made in a timely manner and considered in the order received.
 5. Grants are limited to one per year. A new application and documentation will be required with each grant request.
 6. Grants are based on the availability of funds through the TDA Relief Fund charitable trust.
 7. The recipient of a grant has no property right in, or entitlement to, the amount of the grant. The setting of the amount of the grant is a statement of intention only on the part of the TDA. TDA may, in its sole discretion, cease disbursement of the funds of the grant to any grant recipient, at any time.

*Dependents are limited to a dentist's current spouse and blood-related or legally adopted children under the age of 18. Dependents include the dependents of deceased dentists. A deceased dentist's spouse, if married to such a dentist at the time of his/her death, is also considered a dependent.

** "Incapacitated" means: an adult individual who, because of a physical or mental condition, is substantially unable to provide food, clothing, or shelter for himself or herself, to care for the individual's own physical health, or to manage the individual's own financial affairs.