

Survivor Resilience Fund
DASH's Step-by-Step Process from Assessment to Award

Based on the work of Heather Bomsta at Michigan State University, Research Consortium on Gender Based Violence

1. Survivors contact DASH by phone. Those seeking housing advocacy are directed to attend the Wednesday community housing clinic.
2. Survivor walks into the Wednesday housing clinic (run by a coalition of groups, including DASH).
3. Survivor sits down face-to-face with an advocate.
4. The advocate fills out an Inquiry Tracking form while discussing the survivor's situation, needs and wishes.
5. The advocate explores DASH services, including the possibility of the SRF. The SRF resource is not advertised throughout the community, but rather it is determined to be an option for survivors for whom it is clear that an SRF grant would address the issues that are threatening housing stability and prevent homelessness. Occasionally, survivors who are receiving other DASH services may qualify for SRF funding. For example, SRF funding has been used to help Cornerstone residents (DASH's 43-unit emergency-to-transitional housing program) seek permanent housing or Empowerment Project participants (DASH's scattered site transitional-to-permanent housing program) who are unable to pay their rent in emergency situations.
6. If DASH's Housing Advocate can see that SRF could be a possibility – the advocate :
 - a. Encourages the survivor to be 'forthcoming' about their situation so that the full extent of the need is understood (i.e. – the SRF is likely not helpful to just pay back rent if survivor also has multiple threats to housing stability).
 - b. Typically contacts the landlord or other party directly to ascertain the full amount owed if survivor is uncertain and verbally consents to the advocate's contacting the third party on their behalf. Advocates are often successful with convincing landlords to drop late fees, as well as educate them about housing protections for victims, in order to help maintain housing for the victim. Occasionally, advocates may contact a landlord when the survivor is not present – if they are unable to reach them while survivor is present.
7. Once the advocate has gathered as much information from the survivor about his or her situation, the advocate may offer the SRF as an option if it appears that with the SRF grant the survivor will be able to address the immediate threat to his or her housing

stability. Usually survivors are ready to move forward immediately, but occasionally they may take some time to consider options before opting for the SRF grant.

8. As part of filling out the **SRF form** the advocate asks the survivor what they can financially contribute, by asking if they are able to pay some part of the amount but not all. There have been situations where survivors have contributed, but that is an assessment the survivor and the advocate make together. While a survivor may have the money to contribute, DASH would rather support the survivor to use the money towards maintaining her stability. The survivor's ability to contribute does not impact the SRF request.
9. If advocate and survivor determine that SRF is the best option, then the advocate fills out the one-page SRF form, which includes the following information:
 - a. Date
 - b. Name
 - c. Phone number
 - d. Amount requested
 - e. What the money is needed for (categories include: rental assistance, utility bill, childcare, car/transportation, family/needs, outstanding debt, storage/moving, other)
 - f. A vendor name (whenever possible – though in about 50% of cases the money goes directly to survivors, especially where multiple vendors may be owed money.)
 - g. Vendor account #
 - h. Vendor address
 - i. Signature of survivor stating that the information given on the form “is true and correct to the best of {their} knowledge”
 - j. Signature of staff completing the form
10. Sometimes it is necessary to reach out to the vendor to negotiate an amount or create a payment plan. For example, it may be necessary, due to budgetary constraints, to see if a vendor will accept part of the balance due now and a second check somewhat later when DASH has more money available. The advocate contacts the survivor and again receives verbal consent to reach out to the vendor.
11. After the SRF form has been filled in, the Program Director writes a ‘summary of need’ in an email to the Executive Director and Deputy Director and they make the final decision. The advocate includes the family composition, why they came to Housing Resource Clinic and how the SRF grant would assist the survivor in maintaining or achieving housing stability. Requests are only denied when there is a lack of funds, and typically when that is the case, the advocates do not offer the SRF as an option. Usually the requests are time sensitive and typically take only one to two days to process.
12. The Deputy Director notifies the advocate that DASH can make the grant.

13. The advocate notifies the survivor that her request will be granted.
14. The advocate completes a Check Request Form. Checks are issued in a day or two; faster if needed.
15. The vendor is paid – or – the advocate meets with the survivor to hand them a check. If the vendor is paid directly, the advocate contacts the survivor to inform them that payment has been made. If the payment is made to the survivor, the hand-off is typically done in person using a check or money-order.
16. The advocate tends to reach out to survivors after about two weeks via whatever contact method was used throughout the SRF process. If the contact information is incorrect or no longer in service – no further attempt is made to contact the survivor. During the follow-up the advocate chats informally with the survivor and fills in the SRF follow-up form.
17. DASH initiates no subsequent contact with the survivor after the first follow-up. Survivors are welcome to call DASH or their advocate to check in or seek additional services as they wish – including additional SRF funding.
18. If a survivor returns or contacts an advocate for additional SRF funding the same procedure would be followed – but the advocate may work with the survivor somewhat more closely to determine what the survivor needs to stabilize. The process is still survivor-driven and low-barrier, with survivors choosing whether or not to access any other offered services.