



Towards maximum self-sufficiency...

NEW HAMPSHIRE
LOCAL WELFARE ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION
ETHICS RESOLUTION

PURPOSE: The purpose of this ethics resolution is to acknowledge the varying dynamics of municipalities across the state, including proximity to assistance services, and to establish a fair and equitable agreement on residency in relation to permanent and emergency temporary housing placement outside of a municipality of origin. This resolution will provide increased collaboration and consistent liability expectations, further establish general assistance best practices, and foster increased municipal support for temporary emergency assistance by clarifying municipal liability due to temporary emergency housing placements.

The following standards should be observed when communicating with a current or potential applicant for general assistance and collaborating with any municipality:

- I. A welfare official should not attempt to end, or avoid acquiring, local welfare financial responsibility by encouraging, persuading or pressuring a person:
 - A. not to apply for assistance, or to discontinue residence in the municipality in which they currently reside, or
 - B. to establish a residence in another municipality.
- II. A welfare official should make a good faith effort to contact the welfare official of another municipality when a person is being directed to them and explain why the person may be inquiring and/or applying to their municipality. This applies whether or not the welfare official has accepted initial financial responsibility for the person. Applicable state confidentially statutes shall apply. Temporary, non-resident assistance may be necessary to provide for a person even if that person is being directed to another municipality, depending on the circumstances, including transportation and timing of need for assistance (165:1-c Nonresidents.)
- III. Welfare officials should not grant any assistance that he/she knows will be used to relocate or help establish the recipient's residence in another municipality, unless:
 - A. a good faith effort is made to explore local resources, after which it is discovered that none are reasonably available.
 - B. the person has indicated a need and/or intent to move to another municipality for non-local welfare-related reasons.
 - C. an assessment of financial sustainability for proposed first month's rental assistance into new housing has been completed by the municipality of origin.

IV. When a recipient of general assistance decides of their own volition to relocate to another municipality, the welfare official from the municipality of origin should contact the welfare official of the other municipality in advance of the move and pay up to one month's eligible assistance following the move, if necessary, due to known or unanticipated circumstances. The municipality of origin should work with the receiving municipality and pay reasonable housing costs.

A. Persons who are sanctioned by municipal welfare and arrive in another community are not the liability of the community where the sanction originated. However, arrangements may be made between the two communities to have the sanction resolved.

B. When a person contacts a welfare official in a municipality in which they do not currently reside, or appears in a municipality, for the sole purpose of applying for assistance to avoid applying for or pursuing assistance in their municipality of origin, the welfare official may contact the official in the municipality of origin to determine a proper course of action. This may include establishing an appointment with the municipality of origin, the municipality of origin accepting 30-day local welfare liability, or other agreed upon courses of action.

V. According to RSA 126-A:30, persons receiving short-term emergency housing (e.g. shelter or motel) shall continue to maintain their legal residence in the municipality of origin, for local welfare purposes, as it existed at the time of entering the emergency housing. Therefore, the New Hampshire Local Welfare Administrators' Association supports and encourages the following municipal local welfare best practices:

A. A person does not gain or lose residency while in emergency housing, hospital or treatment program center until such a time said person has acquired more permanent residence (i.e.: apartment).

B. A person that leaves emergency housing of their own free will and remains in a situation of homelessness, or is exited from emergency housing for non-compliance or policy violations, for local welfare purposes, remains a resident of the municipality of origin for thirty (30) days.

C. A person assisted by a municipality, or other assistance providers, with emergency housing assistance in a motel in another municipality, who then self pays for a consecutive thirty (30) days without municipal or other provider assistance should, for local welfare purposes, transition residency to the new municipality.

D. Temporary urgent assistance may need to be provided to meet basic needs of transient individuals or residents of other municipalities. Municipalities should communicate and coordinate assistance options with each other, including reimbursements from municipalities of origin (RSA 165:20-a), when it is determined unreasonable for the person to physically return to the municipality of origin due to transportation, timing of need for assistance or residency is unclear.

V. If good faith efforts to abide to any parts of this resolution agreement are unsuccessful, applicable state statutes shall prevail.