



weR1 Fund Overview

The weR1 Rhode Island Relief Fund is an initiative of Governor Raimondo to provide cash assistance to undocumented immigrants who have experienced financial hardship during the COVID-19 crisis. The State has partnered with 15 community organizations throughout Rhode Island to process applications and distribute the payment. Dorcas International is the fiscal agent for the program.

The State expects to provide **\$400** through a pre-paid debit card to **7,000 households** across Rhode Island. Only one member per household may receive this cash assistance.

All monies in the fund are donations from individuals, philanthropic organizations, corporations, and other private donors. There are no state dollars. The intention is to raise at least \$3 million, of which \$1.5 million has been raised so far.

Donating to the fund: Individuals can donate to the fund by texting “weR1” to 27126 or going online to the RI Foundation’s donation page <https://rifoundation.org/funds/wer1-rhode-island-fund> .

Eligibility to receive funds: There are three eligibility requirements for individuals seeking funds:

- 1) The individual must live in Rhode Island
- 2) The individual must be ineligible to receive most public assistances and federal COVID-19 emergency relief due to their immigration status
- 3) The individual must have experienced a financial hardship related to the COVID-19 crisis

Application and distribution processes:

There is a 5- step process to receive the funds:

- 1) **Call and/or check online.** Individuals call one of the 15 community partners or check community partners’ websites to initiate the application process. Some community partners may post an online application for individuals to fill out while others may only collect information via phone.
- 2) **Complete a phone interview.** Once a connection is made, a community partner staff member will walk applicants through a series of questions to determine their eligibility for the fund. Community partners have multi-lingual capacity. Call or check a community partner’s website for language availability.
- 3) **Referral.** A community partner staff member will make a referral to Dorcas International.
- 4) **Processing.** Dorcas international will process the application.
- 5) **Distribution.** Dorcas international will distribute a **\$400** prepaid no fee debit card to the community partner within 2-3 weeks. The community partner will then distribute the card to the applicant. The card can be used to make purchases at stores and to withdraw cash at banks.

Information from applicants: Applicants will be asked to provide information about family composition, impact of COVID-19, and need for assistance. In addition, applicants will be asked to provide their initials, address, and phone number. If the community partner finds the individual is

eligible for assistance, they will send the initials, address, and phone number to Dorcas International to request the payment. Dorcas International will monitor for duplicate requests.

Data sharing and storage: Initials, phone numbers, and addresses collected by community partners and sent to Dorcas International will be sent through a secure portal and stored on Dorcas International's secure data system. No information stored on this data system will be shared outside of Dorcas International, and all data stored by Dorcas International will be destroyed after 60 days.

Applicants who are ineligible: If an individual applies to the weR1 fund and is found to be ineligible to receive assistance, a case manager from Dorcas International will follow-up directly with the individual. Case managers will work with individuals to help them find other resources.

Community partners: Individuals can call and/or check the following 15 community partners', or Dorcas International's, websites to apply to the weR1 fund:

- AMOR: 401-675-1414; <https://amorri.org/>
- Center for Southeast Asians: 401-274-8811; <http://www.cseari.org/>
- Clinica Esperanza: 401- 347-9093; <https://www.aplacetobehealthy.org/home>
- Community Action Partnership of Providence: 401-273-2000; <https://www.cappri.org/>
- Comprehensive Community Action Program: 401- 467-9610; <https://www.comcap.org/>
- Connecting for Children and Families: 401- 766-3384; <https://www.cfccenter.org/>
- Dorcas International: 401-784-8601; <https://diiri.org/2020/07/02/wer1/>
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center: ~~401-846-4828~~; <https://www.mlkcccenter.org/>
- Fuerza Laboral: 401-725-2700; <https://www.fuerza-laboral.org/#welcome>
- Higher Ground International: 401 270-3582; <http://www.highergroundintl.org/>
- Hope and Change for Haiti: 401-942-4368 or 401-545-2653; <https://www.hncforhaiti.org/>
- Progreso Latino: 401-728-5920; <https://progresolatino.org/>
- Providence Student Union: 401-423-4419; <https://www.pvdstudentunion.org/>
- Guatemalan Center of New England: 401-484-0090; <https://www.guatemalancenter.org/>
- Tri-county Community Action Agency: 401-351-2750; <https://tricountyri.org/>
- West bay Community Action: 401-732-4660; <https://www.westbaycap.org/>