




Maleny Neighbourhood Centre is a NFP community resource, responding to diverse local needs.  
 We deliver emergency relief, facilitating community networks and connections.  
 Maleny Neighbourhood Centre fosters resilient and fair communities and a  
 just society where diversity is celebrated and participation encouraged.

*In the Heart of Maleny ...*



<b>MALENY NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE</b>			
<b>2022 EMERGENCY RELIEF POLICY</b>			
<b>Authorised By:</b>	Maleny Neighbourhood Centre (MNC) Assn Inc Management Committee		
<b>Responsibility for Review:</b>	Centre Coordinator (CC) and the MNC Management Committee		
<b>Policy Developed:</b>	January 2017		
<b>Last Review:</b>	9/1/2025		
<b>Approved by Management Committee:</b>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;"><b>Signed:</b> </td> <td style="width: 40%;"><b>Dated:</b> 9 JANUARY 2025</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Signed:</b> 	<b>Dated:</b> 9 JANUARY 2025
<b>Signed:</b> 	<b>Dated:</b> 9 JANUARY 2025		
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	January 2026		
Emergency Relief (ER) refers to the provision of some limited resources to assist people on low incomes and/or in financial crisis.			
<b>Review Process</b>	This Policy will be reviewed by the MNC Coordinator, Volunteer Support Worker (VSW) and approved by the MNC Management Committee on or before the next review date.		
<b>Documentation and Communication:</b>	Any decisions requiring policy changes will be recorded in the Minutes of MNC Management Committee and advised to CC for implementation and updating of the policy documents.		
<b>POLICY CONTEXT</b>			
<b>Queensland Standards for Community Services:</b>	Standard 3 - Responding to individual need		
<b>Other Standards:</b>	Standard 1 - Governance and Management Standard 2 - Service Access Standard 4 - Safety, wellbeing and rights		
<b>Relevant Policies:</b>	Financial Management and Delegations		
<b>Forms or other organisational documents:</b>	ER client form Material Assistance Guidelines (see below) ER spreadsheet Referral spreadsheet		

Legislation or other requirements:	Associations Incorporation Act, 1987
Purpose and Commitment	<p>Maleny Neighbourhood Centre (MNC) will provide Emergency Relief (ER) on an equitable basis to those who are in financial difficulty and seeking assistance. This will be done within Maleny Neighbourhood Centres' designated guidelines and subject to our capacity to respond.</p> <p>Emergency Relief refers to the provision of some limited resources to assist people who are in (but not limited to) any of the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● on low incomes</li> <li>● in financial difficulty</li> <li>● homeless / living in their car</li> <li>● in difficult circumstances, for example due to violence in the home or mental health issues.</li> <li>● Unemployed due to Covid</li> </ul> <p>Funds and items are donated to MNC from local businesses, community organisations, service clubs and individuals.</p> <p>ER is provided within a social justice context. Dignity, discretion and a non-judgemental approach towards recipients must be maintained at all times.</p> <p>Recipients are to be treated with respect in relation to ethical and legal rights, including their right to make their own decisions and to participate actively in any plans made on their behalf. At all times, clients are given information and support aimed at furthering their self reliance.</p> <p>MNC's role will be to represent people in crisis and provide referral and information regarding their rights and entitlements.</p> <p>Client confidentiality is to be maintained at all times. Sensitive information is not to be shared with other individuals and/or agencies other than with the express permission of the ER client.</p>
SCOPE	<p>This policy applies to residents of the Maleny Neighbourhood Centre Catchment area (Mapleton in the north and Conondale in the west) and organisations MNC works with the delivery of Emergency Relief.</p>
Procedures	<p>All clients seeking ER assistance must complete an ER client assistance form. Front desk staff will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assess client's needs through an interview process and provide assistance and / or referrals as required. All ER assistance must be entered onto the front desk ER Client list, iPad (or ER paper form) and daily tally sheet. If entered on the paper form, the information will require manual transfer to the ER Database spreadsheet.</li> <li>● Distribute Emergency relief as outlined in the Maleny Neighbourhood Centre <b>Material Assistance Guidelines</b> (See below).</li> </ul> <p>All front desk staff will be provided with training that includes how to assist people who come into MNC for ER, including conducting interviews to assess client's needs.</p> <p>Front desk volunteers <b>cannot</b> distribute Emergency Relief to their own family members or to friends. Should a situation arise where a family member requires ER, the volunteer is to</p>

	<p>inform the VSW or CC and decisions will be made in accordance with the Conflict of Interest Policy.</p> <p>Emergency Relief available at MNC includes food, vouchers (Telstra, fuel, IGA &amp; Woolworths cards and coffee shops), cooking utensils, swags, tents, sleeping bags, camp stoves and gas cylinders, blankets, sheets, personal hygiene items and referrals to other agencies for assistance. Cash payments are <b>not</b> available. ER clients are provided with sufficient food for three days once a month. Telstra and fuel assistance every 2 months.</p>
Complaint Process	<p>If a person wishing to access Emergency Relief has a complaint they may address that complaint in the first instance to the VSW following the Feedback and Complaints Policy. If this is not satisfactorily resolved it should be referred to the CCDW. Complaint forms can be obtained through the VSW, CC or DW</p>
Interagency Coordination	<p>When possible, attend interagency network meetings to actively promote the sharing of resources within local community outlets and contribute to the up-skilling and education of inter-agency volunteers.</p>

### **Emergency Accommodation**

On occasion MNC will be approached by people in need of emergency accommodation. There are very limited funds, including those donated by CHASM Housing, available for this. Purchasing emergency accommodation is at the discretion of the CC (or VSW if CC is uncontactable) with approval from the MNC management committee.

If a client requires emergency accommodation the following steps **must** be followed prior to offering this assistance to the client:

1. Ascertain the client's accommodation needs
2. Discuss the case with the VSW and the CC
3. If the CC considers it to be a suitable case, they will provide authorisation via email to the VSW. If the CC is unavailable, the MNC President is to be contacted. If he/she is unavailable, another member of the MNC Executive Committee is to be contacted. Authorisation needs to take place via email from the authorising person to the VSW.
4. If approved, the VSW will contact accommodation providers to ascertain if there is any suitable accommodation available and to negotiate the terms and payment arrangements.
5. The client will be informed that the MNC will not be liable for any further costs associated with this arrangement.

### **Material Assistance Guidelines**

In the main, ER assistance is in the form of food from the MNC pantry, supermarket vouchers, frozen cooked meals, coffee vouchers and referrals to other agencies. However, if required, swags, tents, sleeping bags, camp stoves, gas cylinders, cooking utensils, blankets, sheets and personal items may also be provided, depending on availability.

A limited supply of additional assistance is available including fuel and Telstra vouchers (see below). For further assistance clients are directed to agencies who provide help such as: NILS, budgeting, counselling, legal assistance,

dental clinic and Centrelink. Clients nominate the referrals they require on the ER form and the front desk volunteer will give the phone number for that referral service.

The front desk volunteer does not call on behalf of the client.

The table below details the assistance and frequency of ER assistance that can be provided. The table below can be varied if needed at the discretion of the VSW or CCDW.

ITEM	ELIGIBILITY	QUANTITY	FREQUENCY & PROCESS
<b>GROCERIES</b>			
WW & IGA grocery vouchers Food including pre-cooked frozen meals and bread.	Financial hardship	Sufficient for 3 days for the number of people in the household	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No more than 1 visit per person per fortnight.</li> <li>• No more than 4 vouchers per visit (3 x \$120)</li> <li>• If requested more frequently, notify VSW or CC to assess the client's needs.</li> <li>• Outdoor pantry, fridge and freezer is available to the client for groceries after ER hours.</li> </ul>
Personal hygiene items	As required	As required	As required
<b>CAMPING / COOKING</b>			
Tent	Homeless/living in car	1 per client/family group	Once every 3 months
Swag	Homeless/living in car	1 per client	Once every 3 months
Camp stove	Homeless/living in car	1 per client/family group	Once every 3 months
Gas cylinders	Homeless/living in car	2 cylinders per client/family group	Once per month at discretion of VSW
Cooking utensils	Homeless/living in car	As required, and depending on availability	As required
Blankets, sheets and towels	Financial hardship Homeless/living in car	As required	As required
<b>HELP WITH COSTS</b>			
Fuel vouchers – Liberty Fuel Station	To attend necessary appointments ie Centrelink, medical, job agency, job interviews & identified emergencies	One \$30 voucher per household	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once in 2 months</li> <li>• <b>NOTE: clients cannot just get a fuel voucher. These are only available as part of ER assistance and eligibility.</b></li> </ul>