

Non-Member Benevolence Request Procedures

1. Two benevolence teams, each comprised of one deacon and two lay members, are scheduled to meet on an alternating weeks each month: one on the first and third week, the other on the second and fourth.
2. Benevolence requests received by office staff and that qualify based on Brookside's geographic boundaries are emailed to the deacon liaison of one of the two benevolence teams, depending which team is scheduled to take calls that week.
3. The benevolence deacon calls the applicant and gathers essential information.
 - a. Name, address, phone number, birth date, last four digits of Social Security number.
 - b. Reason for need
 - c. Number of children in household
 - d. Other forms of assistance being received
 - e. Whether request for aid has been made of other churches, the status of those requests, and why the applicant called Brookside (referral, just driving by, etc.)
4. Based on the information gleaned, the deacon either sets up a meeting between the applicant and the benevolence team, asking him/her to bring written documentation verifying the financial shortfall (or perhaps a rough outline of a monthly budget) or explains that Brookside can not meet his/her need at this time. Referrals to other agencies can be made at this time.
5. The deacon calls or emails ACCESS with the information gathered to verify that the applicant is not abusing the generosity of area churches (or is not red-flagged for any other reason). The deacon can ask ACCESS caseworkers for advice on how to handle this request.
6. The benevolence team meets 15 minutes prior to greeting the applicant for prayer and to bring give the team a brief outline of the requests being made. After greeting the applicant, the team listens to the requests, asks appropriate questions, and gives him/her an estimated time within which to expect a response.
 - a. The team can listen for ways that Brookside might minister to the applicant in ways other than financial.
 - b. The team can offer ministry brochures, tell about and invite him/her to participate in the various ministries and programs of Brookside.
 - c. The team can refer the applicant to government programs and community support services.
7. After the applicant has been dismissed, the team discusses the viability of granting the request, based on the information gained in the interview, the availability of funds, and the Holy Spirit's inspiration.