



Utility Assistance Program and Resource Navigation



Utility Assistance in San Marcos

- Utility assistance is provided by the City through several agencies funded through the Human Services Advisory Board (HSAB) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The San Marcos Utilities' program is administered by Community Action, Inc.

Funding Source or Program	Agency	Funding
HSAB*	Bobcat Pride Scholarship Fund	\$5,000
HSAB*	Society of St. Vincent de Paul	\$20,000
HSAB *	Southside Community Center	\$50,000
CDBG	Salvation Army	\$12,000
CDBG	Southside Community Center	\$12,000
CDBG	Society of St. Vincent de Paul	\$12,000
SMTX Utilities	Administered by Community Action, Inc.	\$120,000
	TOTAL FUNDING ALLOCATED BY CITY	\$231,000

*Funding amounts for the 2024 calendar year. The 2025 process for HSAB funding is underway.

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Utility Assistance Program

- **Electric: \$60,000; Water/Wastewater: \$60,000**
 - 8% Administrative Fee to Community Action, Inc.
 - Works in concert with the Texas Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program and with Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program
- **Eligibility & Qualifications**
 - Low Income (250% of federal poverty level) families
 - Member of the household is: elderly, disabled, veteran, or children five years old or younger
 - Customers may receive assistance twice a year
 - To be utilized for current billing period and arrears amount due to not exceed sixty days of outstanding bills and delinquent fees



Utility Assistance Program

- **Utility Assistance Awards per program in FY2024**

Utility Assistance Program	Dollar Amounts	Number of Accounts
City Program	\$13,196.60	93
Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program (CEAP)	\$223,887.97	352
Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)	\$53,580.97	131
TOTAL	\$290,305.54	576

- Awards vary across programs in amount and duration each year
 - City program: Current and outstanding balance, up to two times per year
 - CEAP: May be awarded for up to \$2,400 each year



Utility Assistance Program

- **Application**

- Applications open third week of January
- May be completed/submitted in-person, via email, fax, or mail

- **Application Process**

- Initial Review by Community Action of application, documents, and income calculation
- Request of customer usage from City
- Community Action Case Manager Follow-Up
- Utility Assistance Award Decision
 - If approved: customer is notified, and pledge is sent to Utility Billing
 - If denied: customer is notified with explanation
- Expedited process due to disconnection notice



Utility Assistance Program

- **Barriers & Opportunities**

- Submitting supporting documents is a challenge for some applicants, with birth certificates being the most challenging due to cost
 - Continue providing support to customers navigating processes to obtain and/or replace documents
 - Collaborate with Community Action to include additional information on Utility Assistance application to provide clarity of this funding source, eligibility criteria, and necessary documents for those only eligible/interested in City funding for 2025



Utility Assistance Program

- **Barriers & Opportunities**

- Application timeline and length of process
 - Continue resource referral and assist with marketing and promotion while preparing customers to submit their completed application once applications open in January
- Communication Flow between City and agencies receiving funding
 - Increase levels of communication and information sharing to better support customers requesting assistance, including those who have been denied utility assistance
 - Initiate regular meetings and touch points with agencies receiving funding to better understand the experience of community members and identify barriers to access

Resource Navigation

- **San Marcos Public Library is available to provide resource referral at the Information Desk, and hosts programs, classes, and workforce assistance**
 - Librarians can provide limited assistance with researching and contacting agencies, and submitting applications for available resources
 - Care Navigators provide in-depth bilingual assistance with finding resources on Tuesday mornings

SMTX RESOURCES

City departments provide services to people in need every day and we are able to refer people to the resources they need. It is a critical component in caring for members of our community.

LIBRARY SERVICES

The library is open 7 days per week providing free resources to all with access to wi-fi, computers, short telephone calls, restrooms, printing, and a safe place to be. Hours: Monday - Thursday 9am to 9pm, Friday 9am to 6pm, Saturday 10am to 6pm and Sunday 1pm to 6pm. Call 512-393-8200 or email smpl@sanmarcostx.gov for assistance. 625 E. Hopkins St.



LIBRARY PROGRAMS

- Care Navigators can provide in-depth assistance with finding resources and are available Tuesdays 9am to noon.
- Enhanced photo library ID cards for 18+ are available Wednesdays, 2pm to 4pm or by appointment. Our cards can be used as a supporting document for Texas ID.
- Mental Health programs are available.
- Free legal aid, call 512-393-8200 for dates/times.
- Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid 956-996-8752

LIBRARY CLASSES AND WORKFORCE

- GED, ESL, and Citizenship classes are free and are scheduled Mondays to Thursdays, day and evening.
- Additional Vocational training may be available.
- Drop-in hours for job, resume, and employment resources are available weekly or by appointment.
- Monthly Job Fair, call 512-393-8200 for date/time.
- Computer assistance is provided during all hours and one-to-one help and instruction is available Fridays 10am to 11am.

HOUSING

- BR3T housing can provide rental security deposits, pet deposits and utility deposits, and application fees, 512-677-9701.
- San Marcos Housing Authority, 512-353-5058.
- COSM free reuse Warehouse, 634 E. Hopkins St, open Saturdays 8am to noon.
- Austin Tenant's Council in-person events at the SM Library or call 512-474-1961 to receive help with fair housing and tenant's rights.

For more resources - <https://sanmarcostx.gov/communityresources>

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

City Departments can provide information about agencies, programs, and services available in our San Marcos community. **Here are some places to start.**

SOUTHSIDE COMMUNITY CENTER

- Breakfast Monday - Friday, 8am to 9am and Sunday 10am to 11am and dinner every day 4pm to 5pm.
- Laundry and showers are by appointment, or you can check with the office as a walk-in.
- 518 S. Guadalupe St.
- Other assistance may be available, call 512-392-6694.



HAYS COUNTY FOOD BANK

- Distribution in San Marcos is on Mondays 4pm to 6pm at the Food Bank, 220 Herndon St.
- Other locations available in Kyle, Wimberley, and Buda. Call 512-392-9300 for schedule.
- Assistance Navigators are available to help clients with yourtexasbenefits.com account and filling out other benefit forms. Call 512-392-8300 ext 225 for appointment.



VICTIM SERVICES

- Hays Caldwell Women's Center provides free and confidential services to people who have experienced family violence, sexual assault, or child abuse who are in Hays or Caldwell Counties. Available 24/7.
- 24-hour crisis response, 800-700-4292.
- SM Police Department Victim Services provides crisis intervention, help with protective orders, and information about victim rights. Call 512-753-2106.



OTHER OPTIONS

- Community Action provides health, education, senior services, utility assistance, and more. 512-392-1161
- St. Vincent de Paul 218 Roosevelt (no phone)
- Salvation Army 512-754-8541
- SM Bus Schedules and Information 512-805-7433
- Texas Workforce Commission 512-392-1291
- San Marcos Animal Shelter 512-805-2650
- SMCISD Community Engagement 512-393-6700
- City Utility Assistance 512-393-8383
- Alcoholics Anonymous SMTX 512-396-2060
- Hays County Veterans Services 512-392-8489
- First Baptist Mission Able 512-392-3377



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Resource Navigation

- **Other City departments, teams, and staff regularly provide resource referral and/or access to other programs and services**
 - Neighborhood Enhancement connects community members with agency resources and/or access to the Reuse Warehouse
 - Utility Billing provides resource referral for utility assistance programs and other resources to customers
 - Homeless Outreach Team comprised of City Marshals, Neighborhood Enhancement, and Police departments
 - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coordinator
- **One City, One Voice**