

Season of Sharing Contra Costa County

Application Submission Protocols

1. Confirm whether the client has received prior SOS assistance.

Before beginning an application, please email sos@ehsd.cccounty.us to confirm whether the client has received Season of Sharing assistance within the past five years in any county. This is particularly helpful when a client remembers receiving assistance but cannot recall which community agency assisted them. With our many partner agencies, it can sometimes be difficult for clients to remember where they previously applied.

2. Use the current digital/fillable application.

Please use only the **current fillable PDF version** of the SOS application, which is **attached** for your convenience. The digital version can be completed on a computer and helps improve readability and accuracy. Please do not submit handwritten applications, older versions of the application, applications containing the previous SOS heart logo, or applications with calculation errors in the fillable budget section. The budget calculation issue has been corrected in the current version. Please enter **only numbers** in the budget section and it will calculate it for you (**do not** enter dollar sign \$, comma, or period.)

3. Complete all sections of the application.

Please ensure that **all** sections of the seven-page application are completed, including the **“Landlord/Vendor Information”** section.

Please double-check the landlord/vendor name, address, email address, and telephone number for accuracy, as we may need to contact the landlord or vendor to verify information.

4. Complete the Referral Agency Information section.

The **“Referral Agency Information”** section should be completed by the referring worker. Please include the agency name and the worker’s name, email address, and telephone number. This information allows us to quickly reach the appropriate worker if clarification or additional information is needed.

5. Obtain the required client signature.

Per the Season of Sharing Fund Directors, **all** SOS applications must include the required client signature. Applications submitted without the required signature will need to be returned to the referring worker for completion. Signatures may be provided directly on the application, through Adobe Sign, or **telephonically** when the application is completed by phone with the client.*

6. Complete the information-release authorization.

Clients must provide consent to the information-release language contained in the application paragraph under **“This Section To Be Completed By Applicant.”**

- **When completing the application in person:** Please have the client read the information-release section and sign and date below it.
- **When completing the application by phone:** The worker should read the information-release section to the client and ask whether the client agrees. If the client provides verbal authorization, the worker should write “telephonic signature” on the signature line.*

*Workers may also follow their department or agency requirements for obtaining and documenting telephonic signatures.

7. Focus the crisis narrative on the applicable timeframe.

The narrative should describe the client's qualifying crisis **within the past six months** and provide enough detail to explain how the sudden, unexpected emergency—such as a loss of income, forced move, or critical family need—created the financial hardship reflected in the application.

8. Ensure supporting documentation supports the narrative.

Please make sure the required supporting documentation corresponds with and helps substantiate the emergency circumstances described in the application. Consistency between the narrative and documentation helps the SOS Committee evaluate the request efficiently.

9. Submit complete application packets.

Please **wait to submit the application until all required supporting documentation has been received and the completed packet is ready for SOS Committee review.**

Submitting a complete application packet from the outset helps reduce processing time and minimizes the need for follow-up requests for missing information.

10. Observe the weekly submission deadline.

Completed SOS applications should be submitted by **Tuesday at 4:00 p.m.** to be considered for the Wednesday review.