

## Frequently Asked Questions About Masonic Family Outreach Services

*For a more detailed overview about accessing Masonic Family Outreach Services, visit [masonichome.org](http://masonichome.org).*

### **1. What is Masonic Family Outreach Services (MFOS)?**

MFOS provides free assistance finding services and resources for families struggling with today's complex issues, such as the needs of a special-needs child, or economic events like job loss or foreclosure. The goal of MFOS is to help fraternal family access the services and resources they need to resolve challenges and improve their quality of life. MFOS supports members of all ages.

### **2. What kinds of services does MFOS provide?**

*Services are tailored to individual client needs and preferences.*

- Information and referral services are available through Masonic Assistance. MFOS can offer telephone guidance and assistance to obtain various resources, benefits, and services in a member's community.
- Ongoing need-based case management is provided for clients who need support in accessing and applying for community benefits, such as those offered through public and private entities. MFOS care managers maintain regular visit schedules and/or telephone contact to provide this level of support.
- One-time financial assistance may be provided in unique circumstances. Financial assistance is only available when it serves as a bridge to self-sufficiency and all other benefits, including resources from the member's lodge, have been exhausted.

*MSOS is unable to provide information about Masonic-owned service providers or providers who are Masons.*

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**3. I'm not sure if my needs fall under the service categories above. What should I do?**

MFOS understands that every individual and family situation is unique and is committed to assisting you in any way possible. Contact Masonic Assistance at **(888) 466-3642** or by completing the online request for information form at [masonichome.org](http://masonichome.org) and MOS staff will do their best to help.

**4. Am I eligible?**

*All Masons are eligible to receive assistance and services. There is no age or membership minimum. To apply for MFOS financial assistance, applicants must:*

- Be under the age of 60 and a California Master Mason in good standing for five consecutive years (or his wife or widow)
- Have exhausted all other public or private benefits, including their lodge, to remedy the financial need.
- Agree to an MFOS approved care plan that will lead the applicant to self-sufficiency after one-time financial assistance.

*If you are 55+ and permanently disabled, receiving long-term disability, you may qualify for Masonic Senior Outreach Services.*

**5. I know a family who may benefit from support, but the Mason is ill or unable to call. Can his wife call?**

Yes, MFOS works with all members of the family.

**6. How do I make a referral to MFOS?**

- Call the Masonic Assistance office at (888) 466-3642.
- When calling to make a referral for someone other than yourself, it is important to have that person's permission to make the referral.
- The best process is to have the person needing assistance make the call, or be with you when you call. This allows the person needing assistance to be involved with the process from the start.
- Be prepared: In-depth intake calls take anywhere from 30-60 minutes.

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**7. Does MFOS provide emergency financial assistance?**

- When emergency financial assistance is required, MFOS will refer the caller back to the home lodge.
- MFOS will also provide resources in the caller's home community that may
- also assist with the emergent financial need.
- An MFOS care manager may be assigned, if deemed necessary.

**8. Do I have to repay any MFOS financial assistance I receive? How do I facilitate repayment?**

MFOS clients who receive financial assistance are required to sign an Agreement to Repay, which states that the client agrees to repay MFOS when they are able to do so. The financial assistance provided by the MFOS program is structured as a loan, so the income does not make the client ineligible for other services and programs.

**9. Will I have to sign over my home in exchange for MFOS?**

As part of your application, you must provide information regarding all properties and resources, including life insurance policies, investments, bonds, etc., as this will need to be assessed prior to receiving financial assistance from MFOS. If you are approved for financial assistance and you own real property, a Deed of Trust or Secured Interest on that property will be placed. When you sell your property, or pass away, the MFOS program will be repaid ONLY for funds expended upon your care.

**10. What if I need financial assistance but I live with family or friends?**

MFOS financial support will only be extended to cover your and/or your dependent family's (spouse and dependent minor children) share of costs. All household members are expected to contribute to living expenses. The MFOS client's share will be determined by dividing household expenses by the number of occupants.

**11. How long does the MFOS financial assistance application process take? How will I be notified about the status or outcome of my application?**

The time varies according to your circumstances, how long it takes to finalize a care plan toward self-sufficiency, and the timely submission of all requested documents. Once all application documents have been received, it may take one month to for application materials to be reviewed and submitted for

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approval. Notifications are conducted by telephone, email, and/or US mail as a final step in the application process.

**12. Do I have to provide my Social Security number (SSN) on the application form?**

If you are only applying for MSOS you do not need to provide your SSN; however, if you are also applying to the Masonic Homes, your SSN is required.

**13. What are some reasons an application may not be approved?**

Incomplete paperwork, such as a lack of documentation regarding financial need and current circumstances, or an unsigned form are two reasons. If an applicant has transferred any financial resources or property to family or friends within the past 3 years, he or she could be rendered ineligible for financial assistance.

**14. Who is not eligible for one-time financial assistance through MFOS?**

Master Masons of less than 5 years, Masonic children, grandchildren, remarried widows (current husband is not a Mason), and Master Masons from out-of-state who never affiliated with a CA lodge are all ineligible for financial support. Information and referrals are available to any caller.

**15. What if I need an attorney/in-home care/transportation services? Does MFOS offer these services?**

MFOS will be glad to help you research and locate this type of service in your community, but it is up to you to determine which agency to work with. MFOS does not provide these services.

**16. What are the hours of operation for MFOS?**

The Masonic Assistance office answers calls from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. daily. Each intake call takes up to 60 minutes so if you receive a voice message, please leave your call back number and someone will call you back within 24 hours. Masonic Assistance can be reached at (888) 466-3642.