

Funding

- ▶ Cooperative members have the option of choosing a set amount of \$1, \$3 or \$5 to be added to their utility bill each month and deposited into the Project Helping Hand account. This will be a perpetual agreement that will continue until one party initiates contact that they would like it removed.

Rules

- ▶ No account will receive more than \$300 within a 12-month period.
- ▶ Project Helping Hand funds will not be used for deposits. The amount of payment authorized will be contingent upon the funds available in the Project Helping Hand account.
- ▶ Assistance shall be limited to the payment of two months' bills. Should the utility bill contain charges for more than two months, only two months' portion of the accumulated bill can be paid. These funds are designed to assist a member only twice per 12-month period.

Assistance

- ▶ This program is provided in partnership with the Family Service Agency. This program allows you, the member, to contribute money hassle-free. Once you complete the attached form and return it to us, we will begin adding your desired donation to your utility bill. All proceeds donated to Project Helping Hand will go directly to those who truly need help. To receive assistance from Project Helping Hand, call the Family Service Agency at (850) 785-1721. For questions concerning the policy and implementation of the program, contact GCEC at 265-3631, 639-2216 or (800) 568-3667.



P.O. Box 8370
Southport, FL 32409



*"Members Helping Members
One Dollar At A Time."*



Gulf Coast
Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Wewahitchka (850) 639-2216
Southport (850) 265-3631

www.gcec.com

Mission

- ▶ To provide emergency assistance to our members who cannot afford to pay their utility bills. The program assists the elderly, the disabled, the low-income, the sick, the military and others who are experiencing financial hardships.

Eligibility

- ▶ Project Helping Hand funds shall be used only for members of Gulf Coast Electric Cooperative, Inc.
- ▶ Assistance from Project Helping Hand will be used for the sole purpose of supplementing and extending current available resources, but not to substitute or reimburse ongoing programs and services. The assistance is merely a supplement to other programs that are already available.
- ▶ Funds will be used for families who show a temporary need in paying their utility bill. A Customer Service Representative will review an applicant's pay history prior to receipt of assistance.

First consideration will be given to these categories:

- The Elderly (age 65 and older)
- Handicapped Persons
- Families Below the Federal Poverty Line
- Crisis Victims
- Military Families
- All Others Who Demonstrate a Verifiable Need for Assistance.

- ▶ To be considered as a Project Helping Hand candidate, GCEC members must:
 - Have identification with the same address as the GCEC account
 - Be a GCEC member at least 6 months
 - Have a plan to pay future bills
 - Possess a: delinquent GCEC account; final notice; disconnect notice; and/or current bill that they may not be able to pay.
- ▶ Members are required to contact the Family Service Agency at (850) 785-1721 to initiate the process.
- ▶ The Family Service Agency will then check their databases to ensure that the member has not received help from another agency.
- ▶ The Family Service Agency will contact Gulf Coast Electric Cooperative to confirm the amount owed and obtain payment information, which will be confidential and used only in making the determination concerning the recipient's eligibility.
- ▶ The Family Service Agency will inform the Customer Service Representative of the amount to be paid on the account by first calling, then faxing approval to the Cooperative within one business day.
- ▶ Payment histories will be used in the subjective reasoning of each case. A reoccurring poor payment history suggests that the payment problems may continue whether or not Project Helping Hand funds are granted. Thus, the applicant can and may be turned down for poor payment histories.
- ▶ Project Helping Hand funds can only help residential members. No funds will be issued to any business or commercial account.
- ▶ The Family Service Agency will be responsible for completing follow-up checks to make sure the families' lives are improved.

☐

\$1

☐

\$3

☐

\$5

Official Use Only

I pledge to have the following amount added to my utility bill each month and deposited into the Project Helping Hand fund. I understand that this is a perpetual agreement, and I must notify Gulf Coast Electric Cooperative by phone or mail to remove this reoccurring donation from my bill.
(select a donation level)

Name _____
GCEC Account Number _____
Mailing Address _____
Telephone Number _____
Signature _____

**Project
Helping
Hand**