



## Frequently Asked Questions:

The Direct Grant program helps partners who are facing financial hardship due to a qualifying event and, as a result, do not have the ability to maintain their basic living expenses. If an application is approved, based on the eligible partner's need, the Direct Grant can award up to \$5,000, if adequate funds are available, to assist with basic living expenses. In order to receive a Direct Grant, the circumstance causing the hardship must take place during the previous 90 days and during the partner's employment with Brookshire Grocery Company, and the partner must meet the minimum criteria:

- The partner must be employed with BGC for 6 months.
- The partner must have a qualifying event **AND**
- The partner must have a qualifying expense.

Having one without the other generally means the situation does not meet the set criteria for a Direct Grant.

**Note: The fund is not intended to handle all expenses related to an emergency situation. It is intended for short-term financial assistance.**

### What is a qualifying event?

A qualifying event, as defined by BGC and the BGC Partners Care Fund, is an **unforeseen** event that has **recently** occurred and caused a financial hardship. Specific, **unavoidable** emergency situations are considered to determine eligibility for a Direct Grant.

- Natural Disaster (wildfires, hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, etc.)
- House Fire
- Major Illness
- Serious Injury
- Death
- Other/Discretionary

### **What is a qualifying expense?**

A qualifying expense, as defined by the BGC Partners Care Fund, is **past due** rent/mortgage/past due basic utilities (electric, gas, water/sewer ONLY), and food and clothing. Where appropriate, the Direct Grant may also help pay security deposits and certain expenses related to the death of a qualifying loved one.

### **How long does it take for a decision to be made on a Direct Grant?**

Direct Grants are typically processed within seven business days from the date of receipt of the application and all required supporting documentation. Lack of appropriate documentation will prolong the processing time and could result in your request being denied. Review the BGC Partners Fund materials located on the **BGC Core Portal at People and Culture > BGC Partners Fund** or send an email to **PartnersCareFund@brookshires.com** to ensure you provide the proper documentation with the application.

### **What information does the Fund need when reviewing a Direct Grant application?**

Every Direct Grant application will require a Financial Worksheet, proof of the qualifying event (varies based on event), and proof of the qualifying expense (copies of past due bills). Review the BGC Partners Fund materials located on the **BGC Core Portal at People and Culture > BGC Partners Fund** or send an email to **PartnersCareFund@brookshires.com** to ensure you provide the proper documentation with the application.

### **How often might a partner qualify for a Direct Grant?**

Potentially, a Direct Grant may be issued up to two times within a 12-month time- period.

### **Can a partner on a medical leave of absence or FMLA apply for the BGC Partners Care Fund assistance?**

Yes. A partner on an approved medical leave or FMLA will very often be someone who needs BGC Partners Care Fund assistance the most. The partner needs to coordinate with their Store Director, District Manager or VP or Officer to start the application process.

### **Will the BGC Partners Care Fund reimburse a partner for expenses they have already paid?**

The BGC Partners Care Fund program assists in situations where the partner has no other means of paying the necessary expense. Therefore, payment of the expense removes the financial need as defined by the BGC Partners Care Fund. In most cases, reimbursement will not be considered.

## Do BGC Partners Care Fund donors benefit from automatic assistance?

The BGC Partners Care Fund is a 501(c)3 nonprofit. Donations to the Fund allow the BGC Partners Care Fund to help qualifying partners during a hardship, but assistance is not guaranteed based on donor status. So, while a donation to BGC Partners Care Fund does not equate to automatic assistance, a donation makes it possible to provide assistance if the situation meets the criteria.

## What constitutes BGC Partners Care Fund fraud?

- Falsification or alteration of supporting documents or information therein (originals are **REQUIRED** whenever possible)
- Falsification of an authorized sponsor
- Use of funds for anything outside the purpose for which funds were issued
- Intentional misrepresentation of hardship
- Intentional withholding of relevant information which, if known, would result in declination
- Intentional misuse of BGC Partners Care Fund account
- Intentional attempt to deceive management team or BGC Partners Care Fund administrators

BGC Partners Care Fund fraud is taken very seriously. It is a violation of Brookshire Grocery Company's Code of Ethics. Confirmation of fraud, whether successful or not, may result in disciplinary action, reimbursement of funds, and possible termination from Brookshire Grocery Company.

## What is an authorized sponsor?

An authorized sponsor is a Store Director, VP, or Corporate Department Director or Officer. BGC Partners Care Fund applications may only be submitted through an authorized sponsor. The role of the authorized sponsor is to ensure the partner meets the minimum criteria for a BGC Partners Care Fund grant. Authorized sponsors also act as a liaison between BGC Partners Care Fund and the partner in need.

## How do I apply for a Direct Grant?

If you are a partner that meets the eligibility requirements for a direct grant, contact your store director or VP. If you are an authorized sponsor assisting a partner with their application, go to BGC Core portal>BGC Partners Care Fund>click Sponsor Acknowledgement Form link under Step 1. If you have questions, email **PartnersCareFund@brookshires.com**, or call BGC's **Partners Support Hotline at 800-825-4536, Option 7.**