



PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

## American Association of University Professors

Promoting Quality Higher Education – An Investment in Oregon's Future

# Association Policy – 14

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### **PSU Assistance Fund Policy**

*Adopted July 16, 2020*

*Revision Adopted December 20, 2021*

**Purpose:** To establish the PSU-Assistance Fund to provide financial support to PSU-AAUP members in need

**Applicability:** This policy applies to PSU-AAUP Members

### **Eligibility:**

PSU-AAUP members who earn the 110% of the median salary of PSU-AAUP members or below are eligible for assistance. Eligibility for support may be modified by the Executive Council.

### **Policy:**

Natural disaster, personal tragedy, and financial hardship can happen unexpectedly. To support PSU-AAUP members in a time of need, PSU-AAUP has established the Assistance Fund where members and the community can donate into this fund. Members can make donations to the fund and members in need can apply for assistance and relief.

The goal of the fund is to provide financial support for eligible AAUP Members who are experiencing financial hardship. “Financial hardship” may include but is not limited to circumstances such as sudden loss of income; housing insecurity; family crisis; urgent need; unanticipated or catastrophic losses, or loss of wages from work stoppage (strike). This fund will provide no more than \$500 to members who request the funds and to the extent that funds are available.

When a member expresses a financial hardship as the reason for discontinuing their membership, and their membership application falls under the annual cancellation policy as outlined in association bylaw 15, then the assistance fund can be activated, for that member only, by a vote of the EC. This will be regardless of the member’s salary and the request shall not exceed \$500. The member will need to submit an assistance fund application, and the application is subject to the process outlined in this policy. The member must continue to pay dues at least until the cancellation period, in order to be

eligible for the assistance fund. The member is not eligible to receive the specific assistance outlined if they apply during the months of July and August. There is a limit of no more than 5 members receiving this type of assistance per fiscal year.

### **Application Process:**

Members fill out an [online application](#) to help ensure all funds are distributed efficiently and equitably. This [application](#) will be located on PSU-AAUP website when funds are available. When funds are available, that availability will be announced in Member News. The application seeks personal information such as name payable to, mailing address, email address and amount requested. In addition, the application will have an optional “type of hardship” checkbox and a mandatory “confirmation of hardship” checkbox. This information is collected to show that the payment(s) are not for AAUP’s or PSU’s benefit. The application is sent to the Assistance Fund Committee to be processed.

Members are eligible to apply and receive support twice an academic year if funds are available. Members may receive no more than \$500 in one academic year. The maximum amount a member may request is \$500 per request. Members may submit assistance applications up to two times per academic year. Multiple applications from the same member cannot be for the same hardship in one year. Should the total amount of requested support exceed the amount of money available, either through Executive Council allocation from general funds or from solicited donations, the Assistance Fund committee will prorate the individual member award amount based on the funds available so that all members requesting support can receive funding. Checks will be issued to the members with the lowest annual salary to the highest annual salary.

To control the application flow, the application will open when funds are made available by the Executive Council, or when the Executive Council acts on a request from the Assistance Fund committee that a donation window be opened, and donations are to be solicited.

A small committee of AAUP members (one AP, NTT and TT) selected by the EC (in accordance with Association Policy 7) will receive and approve applications based on completeness, to verify the application is not a duplicate, verify applicant is eligible based and salary, and to verify the application is from a PSU-AAUP member. The committee will send a list of names and addresses to AAUP’s Executive Director so a check can be distributed to the members approved for assistance funds. All applications and information are kept in strict confidence.

### **Management of the Assistance Fund**

The Executive Director (or Treasurer/President in the event the ED is not able to do so) will write the check for the member(s) requesting the funds. The committee/treasurer will ensure funds are being spent in compliance with the intent and the account not being overspent. The administrative functions for this fund such as marketing and customer service is interwoven with the existing AAUP administration office and other subcommittees.

In July 2020, the initial one-time funding of \$30,000 will be provided by PSU-AAUP reserve funds as voted on June 18, 2020 by the Executive Council. The source of funding will vary over time based on funding needs. This may be ongoing funding from members as direct donations through a system or through payroll deductions, and fundraising.

### **Donations to the PSU-AAUP Assistance Fund**

Donations to the PSU-AAUP Assistance Fund will be made through the Charity portal of GoFundMe.com, or similar provider. The PSU-AAUP Executive Director will establish and maintain the GoFundMe Account, and will arrange for disbursements from the GoFundMe account to the PSU-AAUP Assistance Fund. The disbursements to the Assistance Fund will after GoFundMe account fees and donation fees, if any. Donations to the GoFundMe account will be solicited by the Association in a “call for donations” in Member News. The donation period will be two weeks, during which time the Association will call for donations, and at the same time the Association will call for applications from PSU-AAUP members who may require assistance.

Disbursements of funds donated will be made consistent with the policy above.

#### Revisions:

July 16, 2020	Original
November 5, 2020	Removed Required quarterly cycle; limited eligibility to 110% of median annual salary rate for PSU-AAUP members; established prorated process for approvals that exceeded the monetary allotment by the Executive Council; established order of payment, lowest paid members first; created a process to solicit donations to the Assistance Fund to increase the amount available for disbursement.
December 20, 2021	Added third paragraph under Policy. Establishing additional guidelines when a member expresses financial hardship as the reason for discontinuing their membership.