# 2021 Annual Town Meeting
# Social Service Appropriation Policy
# Town of Springfield

**PURPOSE:** Under Vermont law, a town may appropriate such sums of money as it deems necessary for the support of social service programs and agencies that provide services to town residents. 24 V.S.A. § 2691. The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for managing social service agency appropriations that will be voted upon at the Town of Springfield annual meeting.

**APPLICABILITY:** This policy applies to appropriation requests from social services agencies and programs subject to the provisions of Title 24, Chapter 73 of Vermont Statutes Annotated. Such programs include, but are not limited to, transportation, nutrition, child care, medical care, and other rehabilitative services for persons with low incomes, senior citizens, children, disabled persons, drug and alcohol abusers, and persons requiring employment to eliminate their need for public assistance.

This policy does not apply to town membership organizations such as the Vermont League of Cities and Towns or the Southern Windsor Regional Planning Commission.

**PROCEDURE:** Those social service agencies that have not had an appropriation request approved at the most recent annual town meeting, or that are requesting a larger appropriation than that approved at the most recent annual town meeting, or that failed to be approved at the most recent annual town meeting must submit a petition for an article requesting an appropriation in accordance with Town of Springfield Charter, Article Two II(B)3(c) and 17 V.S.A. § 2642. Such petition must be signed by at least five percent of the voters of the town and filed with the Town Clerk not less than 47 days before the day of the annual meeting. It is recommended that agencies submit their proposed petition to the Town Clerk for format review prior to obtaining the required signatures. The petition should be in substantially the following form:

**Petition of Legal Voters of the Town of Springfield**

We, the undersigned legal voters of the Town of Springfield, hereby petition the Selectboard to add the following article to the warning for the annual town meeting to be held on Tuesday, March __, 20__:

Shall the Town appropriate the sum of $[*insert amount of request*] to [*insert name of social service agency*], for [*insert brief description of the purpose of the proposed appropriation*]?

| Print Name | Address | Signature |
|---|---|---|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

**Pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 2642(a)(3)(C), a petition must contain the petition language on every page on which signatures are collected and must contain the printed name, signature, and street address of each voter who signs the petition.**

No proposed article may contain any opinion or comment about the subject being voted upon. Petitions submitted after the deadline will not be honored. Petitions submitted prior to the deadline but not containing the required number of signatures shall be returned by the Town Clerk within 24 hours from receipt stating in writing on the petition why it cannot be accepted. Any petition returned to the petitioners may be amended to correct any stated deficiencies and refiled with the Town Clerk not later than 48 hours after the petition was returned by the Clerk, or the filing deadline, whichever is later. However, supplementary petitions shall not be

accepted if the original petition did not meet the filing deadline or did not contain the requisite number of signatures.

Those social service agencies that have had an appropriation request approved at the most recent annual town meeting are not required to submit a petition for an article requesting an appropriation if the amount requested is the same or less than the amount approved by the voters in the previous year. In such case, the previous year's approved warning/ballot language will be carried forward on to the next year's warning and ballot exactly how it appeared in the prior year. Additionally, in such case, the agency should make its request by letter to the Selectboard postmarked no later than 90 days before the day of town meeting (December 2, 2020). If the last day for filing letters with the Selectboard falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, then the deadline shall be extended to the next day which is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday. The letter should identify the name of the agency, the amount requested for appropriation (which shall be equivalent to the prior year's voter approved appropriation, or less), and a person to contact for more information. Agencies that do not meet the 90 day deadline must submit a petition for an article requesting an appropriation in accordance with Town of Springfield Charter, Article Two II(B)3(c) and 17 V.S.A. § 2642.

All social service agencies requesting appropriations under this policy are required upon request to submit a description of the agency's programs for inclusion in the town report. Descriptions must be limited to one page and should describe the program or services provided to town residents. Agency representatives are encouraged to attend the public informational meeting held on the Monday night preceding the Town Meeting (held on the first Tuesday each March) to explain the appropriation request to the voters and answer their questions. Such agency must, upon request, also make available their organizations most recent 990.

Approved social service appropriations will be paid by the Town after July 1st following the Town Meeting in which the appropriation was approved and after a letter is received by the Town requesting such funds, containing payable information and address information. Payment is subject to the availability of funds.

The foregoing policy is hereby adopted for the 2021 Annual Town Meeting by the Selectboard of the Town of Springfield, Vermont, this 28 day of September, 2020. If adopted, this Policy is effective for the 2021 Annual Town Meeting only and will be reconsidered each September prior to that year's Annual Town Meeting.

Walter E. Martone, Chairman

Michael E. Martin, Vice Chair

Kristi C. Morris

George T. McNaughton

John A. Bond