Example 2.1.5 – Programme Information Sheet – Rental Assistance

*Note: this is a real example of an information sheet used for onboarding partners who are involved in referral to a National Society rental assistance programme. It was use in Poland for the Ukraine 2022 response.*

# Polish RC – IFRC Rental Assistance Programme

## What is the Polish RC-IFRC Rental Assistance Programme?

1. The objective of the programme is to support vulnerable people to access and sustain access to appropriate rental accommodation that more closely meets their needs.
2. The purpose of the supported rental period is to buy the target household time and “breathing space” to become self-sustaining (for example to develop livelihood further).

* **Conditional cash assistance for 6 months**, delivered in 6 transfers on monthly basis to the tenant. The amount defined by the family size and the corresponding size of the housing unit (1/2/3+ bedroom units). **One-off cash transfer as security deposit,** to be paid for the landlord to the tenant in one transaction together with the first month of rent (to be returned by the landlord to the tenant at termination of contract / end of notice period as per rental contract).
* **One-off cash transfer as a contribution for purchase of HH items and/or house maintenance/improvement work** to comply to minimum housing standards.
* **One-off cash transfer as a contribution to housing adaptation** needs for people living with disabilities (maximum 15% of cases).
* **Regular monitoring** by phone and on site, to follow up on payment to the landlord, to ensure the rental arrangement is safe and sustainable for the tenant family, and to assess the adequacy of living conditions are maintained.
* Possibility to grant **up to 3-month extension** of the assistance in the current housing arrangement for the very vulnerable cases (max 20% of the total caseload).

## Rental Assistance Programme Components

The Red Cross staff and volunteers involved in the rental assistance programme will provide the following:

* Information and advice on rental practices, how and where to find accommodation, how to protect your deposit and get it back at the end of the lease, how to rent with pets, etc.
* Engagement with potential landlords to encourage them to rent
* Support and advice on understanding the rental contract and what it needs to include
* Briefings to help ensure that you, as tenant, and the landlord understand obligations under the rental contract. The Polish Red Cross will facilitate a meeting with both parties (in advance of contract signing). A separate agreement will be signed between the Polish Red Cross and you, in addition to the rental contract. This agreement defines the roles and responsibilities of the Polish Red Cross under the rental assistance programme.
* Minimum housing standards: Polish Red Cross staff / volunteers will conduct housing adequacy checks as part of the programme to ensure that the rented property meets minimum standards around ventilation, space, furniture, etc.
* Regular calls and visits:
  + At the start of the tenancy, support will be provided to complete deposit protection measures within the first week (e.g. photos / video of current state of property). Visits will be conducted by Red Cross staff / volunteers within the first week to make sure that everything is ok. Red Cross staff / volunteers will also follow up with the landlord.
  + Throughout the six months of the programme Red Cross staff and volunteers will conduct calls and visits and will be available to support mediation with the landlord if required
* Referrals to support services: Polish Red Cross staff / volunteers will support with referrals to additional services as required

## Financial Assistance

The Polish RC-IFRC will provide six months of financial assistance to cover the cost of renting. The financial assistance will be paid on a monthly basis to your Polish bank account and you will be responsible for paying the landlord. The financial assistance will be paid on the following basis:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1 Bedroom** | **2 Bedroom** | **3 Bedroom** |
| Eligibility (examples) | 1 adult and 2 children (both under 5) | 1 adult and 2 child (one under 5, and one 5 to 10)  OR  2 adults and 1 child  OR  1 adult and 1 child (incl. 1 PWD needing space) | 1 adult and 2 children (at least 1 over 10)  OR  2 adult and 2 children (both over 5)  OR  2 adult and 3 children+ |
| Rental payment (€) /month | €425 | €500 | €700 |

The family sizes indicated under eligibility are examples only and this will have to be assessed with each family separately.

In addition, the Polish Red Cross will provide:

* The deposit at the value of one month of rent
* One off payments:
  + Housing item support €300, available to all and intended to contribute to the costs of any household items required, e.g. bedding, plates, etc.
  + Disability support €500, available only in particular cases where some small modifications / equipment are required to support a person with disabilities to live comfortably in the rented accommodation

## What do people need to do?

If they are interested to take part in the rental assistance programme, they will need to do the following:

* **Register** – complete registration and application form with Polish Red Cross staff / volunteer. This will be done in person at the Collective Shelter/Warsaw.
* **Identify a rental property** –explain to find a place that they wish to rent. Polish Red Cross staff / volunteers can provide advice on this if required.
* **Rental contract** – once they have found a property and the Polish Red Cross staff / volunteers have completed the housing adequacy check, they will need to sign a rental contract with the landlord. The lease can be for more than 6 months but the Polish Red Cross financial assistance is for 6 months only.
* **Polish Bank Account** – provide bank account details for a Polish bank account to Red Cross staff OR set up a Polish bank account if they don’t already have one
* **Payments** – Red Cross will provide the financial assistance each month to cover the cost of rental and they will be responsible for paying the landlord
* **Support Services & Monitoring** – engage with Polish Red Cross staff / volunteers regarding needs for support services and sharing any challenges, may be faced