

## Social Service Appropriation Policy Town of Bristol

**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 Bristol 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, the Addison County Regional Planning Commission, or the Addison County Solid Waste Management District.

**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, must submit a petition for an article requesting an appropriation in accordance with 17 V.S.A. § 2642, for three (3) consecutive years, for the same amount. 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. The petition should be in substantially the following form:

### **Petition of Legal Voters of the Town of Bristol**

**We, the undersigned legal voters of the Town of Bristol, 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 \$[insert amount of request] to [insert name of social service agency], for [insert brief description of the purpose of the proposed appropriation] in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 2691?

Print Name

Address

Signature

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**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.

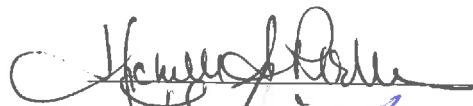
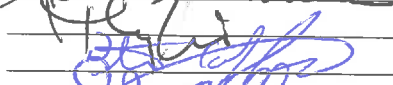
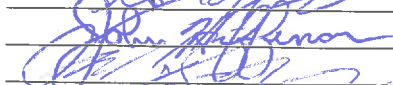

Those social service agencies that have had an appropriation request approved for the same amount, for three (3) consecutive years, are not required to submit a petition for an article requesting an appropriation if the amount requested is the same or less than the amount approved by the voters in the previous year. In such case, the agency should make its request by letter to the Selectboard postmarked no later than 50 days before the day of Town Meeting. 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, and a person to contact for more information. Agencies that do not submit a letter to the Selectboard before the 50 day deadline may be required to submit a voter-backed petition in accordance with 17 V.S.A. § 2642.

If an increase is made to an appropriation during Town Meeting voting, that increase is valid for that tax year only. If the social service agency would like to continue the increase, they must petition for that amount for three (3) consecutive years.

All social service agencies requesting appropriations under this policy are encouraged to submit a description of the agency's programs for possible inclusion in the Annual Town Report. Descriptions must be limited to one sentence and should describe the program or services provided to Town residents. Agency representatives are encouraged to attend Town Meeting to explain the appropriation request to the voters and answer their questions.

Approved social service appropriations will be paid by the Town on the following schedule: November 30th of each year, after collection of the first installment of property taxes. Payment is subject to the availability of funds.

The foregoing policy is hereby adopted by the Selectboard of the Town of Bristol, Vermont, this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of October, 2016 and is effective as of this date until amended or repealed.

  
\_\_\_\_\_, Chair  
  
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