**What to do After You’ve Been the Victim of a Fire**

**At the Scene of the fire**

* Try to find out from the **Fire Department** (978-674-4588 in Lowell) or other City official, for example, from the **Health Department (**978-674-4010 in Lowell**)**, the severity of the fire. Can you move back in to your apartment immediately? If not, can the officials estimate when you can return? How much damage was caused to your living space? How long will the utilities be turned off?
* The **Red Cross** (978-372-6871) may be present on the scene. Find out from a Red Cross staff if they can put you up at a local hotel. If so, for how long? Find out what other services Red Cross can provide by way of clothing and food if needed. The Red Cross may be limited in how much they can help.
* **Contact the** **landlord or property manager**. Find out who the **insurance adjustor** is for the property. If repairs need to be made before you can move back in, try to find out how long it will take the landlord to complete necessary repairs. The City will have to inspect the living space before you will be allowed to move back in.
* Contact any other **family** or **friend** who might be able to house you on a temporary basis.

**In the Immediate Aftermath of the Fire**

* If you have renters insurance, contact your carrier immediately.
* The City of Lowell sometimes provides agencies like **Community Teamwork Inc** with funds to house homeless fire victims in hotels temporarily. You may contact the CTI Resource Center at 978-459-0551 to see if funds are available. Funds are limited. CTI can also assist you in searching for new housing. If you have a lease, you must discuss terminating the lease with your landlord or an attorney.
* Depending upon when the fire occurred, you may be eligible to get a **return on the rent** you paid for that month. You might also be able to get your **security deposit returned** if you are not going to be able to move back into the apartment.
* You may be eligible to receive up to **$750 in relocation benefits** through the landlord’s insurance company. The $750 can be used towards a downpayment on a new apartment. It can also be used to reimburse you for out-of-pocket expenses for food, clothes, and other expenses you incurred due to the fire. If you have a lease, you must discuss terminating the lease with your landlord or an attorney.
* If you have minor children and your income is low enough you may be eligible to receive emergency shelter through the State. You must apply at **the Department of Transitional Assistance** (Lowell - 978-446-2400) with a fire report and ask for shelter placement. You will have to meet income and other guidelines and have minor children in your household.
* **The Lowell Wish Project** (978-441-9474) may be able to provide emergency items and furniture for fire victims, but you may need a referral from another agency.
* You may go to the **Lowell Housing Authority (**978-937-3500) oryour local housingauthorityand apply for emergency housing.