**RTI Foundation Grant Guidelines**

**Revised July 1, 2019**

1. **The Award:**

The RTI Award of $2,500 was given to the NC Lyme Disease Foundation on April 1, 2019. This is a one-time award that will be divided among several Lyme sufferers. Equally important, by establishing a process for fair monetary distribution and detailed documentation, the NC LDF will have solid footing when applying for funding in the future. Receiving the award has the following conditions:

* The money is to be given to low-income people as demonstrated by tax documents or those on disability,
* Who live in the Triangle,
* Who are financing *doctor visits and medical protocols as* prescribed by a physician with a written prescription, for the purpose of treating tick-borne illnesses

It is crucial that we follow these conditions and have a documented process. Therefore, the Board developed and approved the following process which is summarized below.

1. **Definitions:**

**Triangle** is defined as the eleven-county region, officially named the Raleigh–Durham–Cary–Chapel Hill [combined statistical area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Combined_statistical_area) (CSA) based on the 2012 boundaries. The counties in this CSA are Chatham, Durham, Franklin, Granville, Harnett, Johnston, Lee, Orange, Person, Vance, and Wake (see this link for the website -https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Research\_Triangle).

**Low income** is defined by the US Department of Education for 2019 as follows: $18,735 for one person (with a single tax filing), $25,365 for two people in a household (with a single tax filing), $31,995 for three people in a household (with a single tax filing), and $38,625 for four people in a household (with a single tax filing), (see this website for further detail on the definition of low income - <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/incomelevels.html>)

We will need to keep a copy of the page of your tax return showing your adjusted gross income in case of an audit by the RTI Foundation. This information will be kept by the Foundation’s Treasurer and not made public. Please note it would be necessary to determine whether an individual is filing independently, in which case we would need the individual’s tax form, or if an individual is part of a “household” tax form, in which case we would need to see the household’s tax form. The original tax form will be returned, but please be prepared for the Lyme Foundation to retain a copy of the form for our records. We will redact your personal identifying information (other than your name).

1. **Process for applying for a grant:**

The Board has decided to award up to five grants of $650 each (the Board will add $150 per person to the RTI grant of $500 per person). If you meet the above definitions and are interested in applying for a grant, please follow the process outlined below.

1. Any member of the NCLDF or individual on our email list who is suffering from tick-borne disease is eligible for the award, as long as the following criterion are met:
	1. He or she is low income, as demonstrated by tax documents and the U.S. Department of Education low-income definitions listed above, or letter of disability or other documentation that shows your income.
	2. Lives in the Triangle and can present proof of residency (driver’s license, etc.), and
	3. Will spend the money after August 15th, 2019, for “financial assistance for doctor visits and medical protocols as prescribed by a physician with a written prescription,” being related to Lyme Disease or other tick-borne illness, and will have spent the money by July 1st, 2020, for said purposes. These time periods mark the beginning and end period of grant disbursement.
	4. Has sent an email to John and Mary by August 15, 2019, requesting grant benefits.
2. Potential recipients will send their requests for funding to John Dorney (swampjrd@earthlink.net) **and** Mary Al-Akhdar (walakhdar@aol.com) by email to be put on a potential recipient list.
3. A minimum of two Board members will meet and draw, blinded and at random, seven names and list them in order of draw. The first five individuals will be notified by email of the need to meet with John and Mary in person at a designated time with the following information: a copy of their 2018 Federal Tax return as required to document their low-income status and residency. A minimum of two Board members will review said documents for that information and then return the tax returns to the individuals, retaining a photo copy for the Foundation’s records with all personal identification information (other than the name) redacted. No information from tax returns will be retained other than a note that they meet the low income and residency definitions. The determination of the Board members will be recorded on a tracking sheet.
4. If five eligible individuals do not meet with the Board members and do not produce suitable records, then the next individual on the list will be contacted, and so on until five individuals qualify.
5. If a total of five candidates for the grant money do not qualify, the total RTI money will be

divided among the candidates that do qualify; i.e., 4 candidates will divide the $2,500, or 3 will divide the $2,500, and so forth.

1. The selected individuals can then submit documentation for doctor visits or treatment

protocols prescribed by the doctor to Mary Al-Akhdar (Treasurer). Suitable documentation in the form of copies of doctors’ diagnoses notes and prescriptions, as well as medication purchase receipts should be provided to the Board for grant payments or purchase reimbursements. Other documentation could be requested as necessary. John Dorney, President, will check the documentation to be sure that both he and Mary concur with the reimbursement. Reimbursement will only occur if the paperwork turned into Mary *clearly* denotes the therapy is for Lyme and other tick borne treatment. Total reimbursement will be as much as a $650 award for each of five recipients. Grant recipients will not be eligible to apply for a future grant through the North Carolina Lyme Disease Foundation unless the previous grant monies are documented accurately.

1. If any or all of the five selected individuals prefer that that the NCLDF pay their doctors medication bills directly (instead of reimbursement), then he or she can make that request to the Board in writing. Upon Board approval, a minimum of two Board members will work with that individual and his or her physician to cover costs up to $650, per five candidates. The treating physician would likely require paperwork for direct payment from Mary, due to HIPPA Laws or other considerations of privacy.
2. Previous recipients of the RTI grant money will only be considered for the 2019 grant after opportunities for new recipients are exhausted. This is not meant to deter past recipients from applying.
3. **Questions?**

Please email John Dorney, President of the NC Lyme Disease Foundation any questions at swampjrd@earthlink.net.