

Financial Aid Information and Rules

The MDF Conference Financial Aid Program aims to provide financial support for a person living with DM and a caregiver to have a once-in-a-lifetime experience learning about research, sharing tips for maximizing daily life, and finding strength and empowerment through connection and community. Caregivers – parents, spouses, etc. – are welcome to apply on behalf of their loved one living with DM.

Qualifications:

- **Living with DM or primary caregiver for someone living with DM.** Financial aid may also cover one caregiver, or their loved one living with DM upon request.
- **First-time in-person conference attendee.** Priority will be given to attendees who haven't been to MDF's Annual Conferences before. This allows MDF to ensure as many people as possible can attend an in person MDF community event at least once. For those who have previously attended an MDF conference in person, MDF will review applications after all of the first-time attendee financial aid have been awarded.
- **Financial need.** Household income and member information will not be saved, stored, or shared but will be used to determine financial need.

MDF Conference Financial Aid Awards:

To best meet the needs of our community, the MDF Conference Financial Aid Program now offers three levels of financial support. You can choose which type you'd like to apply for based on need:

- **Ticket Only** – The price of registration for you and your caregiver is waived.
- **Ticket + Travel** – Registration is waived, plus MDF will provide travel support. Domestic travelers are eligible for up to \$750 (for both yourself and your loved one with DM or your caregiver) and international travelers are eligible for up to \$1000 (total for both yourself and your loved one with DM or your caregiver). Travel must be booked directly through MDF's travel agency, reimbursements for driving will be based on your current physical address and the Federal Mileage Reimbursement amount for 2027. This will be sent to you after the conference. **MDF no longer reimburses for flights, trains, buses, etc. purchased outside of our designated travel agency. Flights must be booked no fewer than 30 days prior to dates of travel.**
- **Ticket + Travel + Hotel** – Registration is waived, plus MDF will provide travel and hotel support. Domestic travelers are eligible for up to \$750 (for both yourself and your loved one with DM or your caregiver) and international travelers are eligible for up to \$1000 (total for both yourself and your loved one with DM or your caregiver). Travel must be booked directly through MDF's travel agency, reimbursements for driving will be based on your current physical address and the Federal Mileage Reimbursement amount for 2026. This will be sent to you after the conference. **MDF no longer reimburses for flights, trains, buses, etc. purchased outside of our designated travel agency. Flights must be booked no fewer than 30 days prior to dates of travel.** MDF will cover up to three nights of hotel accommodations. Hotel rooms must be booked directly through MDF to be covered.

Financial aid applications are evaluated on financial need, first-time attendance, and availability of funds. MDF encourages anyone living with DM or their primary caregiver to apply, knowing that different levels of support may make it possible for more families to attend an MDF conference for the first time.

- MDF will provide breakfast, lunch, and dinner on Friday and Saturday.
- Applications will be received until midnight on Friday, January 29th, 2027. Determinations will be made by February 5th.

Financial Aid Rules:

- **Covered Expenses**
 - **Economy airfare and/or bus and/or train tickets booked through MDF's travel agency**
 - **Allowable:**
 - Ticket cost for financial aid recipient and approved caregiver or affected loved one only
 - Checked baggage fees (up to one checked bag per traveler)
 - **Not Allowable:**
 - Seat upgrades (exceptions may be made when request is accompanied by a doctor's note and approved by MDF)
 - Pet fees: service and support animals are free on US airlines and should not require a fee. Any other pet fees without these designations cannot be covered.
 - **Hotel**
 - **Allowable:**
 - Up to three nights (Thursday, Friday, and Saturday **only**) at a hotel booked through MDF.
 - **Not Allowable:**
 - Incidentals of any kind, this may include but is not limited to mini-bar snacks, in-room purchases, spa treatments, etc.
 - **Mileage**
 - **Allowable:**
 - Mileage reimbursement for personal vehicles only (does not apply to rental cars)
 - Reimbursement to include fuel costs at the IRS mileage reimbursement rate and will be pre-calculated based on the address you use in your application and the address of the conference venue. If you indicate you are driving, you will receive reimbursement after the conference.
 - **Not Allowable:**
 - Fuel - Fuel is calculated into the IRS mileage reimbursement rate and cannot be reimbursed separately

- Vehicle repairs
 - Moving violations or tickets of any kind
- **Other Travel Expenses**
 - Other travel expenses (meals, taxis/rideshare, parking, etc.) will be covered via the federal per diem rate for the conference location city of first and last day of travel, if travel funds remain after purchase of airfare/train/bus tickets.

Additional Information and Requirements:

- Financial aid applications will be reviewed on a bi-weekly basis, awarded each Friday on a first come, first served basis.
- Awardees must accept an offered financial aid within one week from the date of award by registering for the conference.
- Awardees who do not accept the award within the stated one-week time frame may risk the loss of the award.
- Awardees who accept the financial aid, have travel and rooms booked, but who do not attend the conference without an approved excusal will be ineligible to apply for future financial aid of any type for a period of up to five years.
- Awardees who miss their scheduled transportation unrelated to weather, or system delays, will be responsible for the resulting difference in transportation ticket prices.