The NT Government will provide $100 000 towards a no interest loan scheme for families in need, Family and Community Services Minister Marion Scrymgour announced today.

The No Interest Loan Scheme will be run by Somerville Community Services to provide low-income households with the opportunity to obtain credit to purchase basic household appliances.

“People on low incomes have great difficulty obtaining credit – but this scheme will give them a chance to buy basic items such as fridges and washing machines without the burden of paying interest,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“The difference between this scheme and emergency financial assistance is that this Scheme instils a sense of responsibility and pride in being able to pay off the loan.”

Ms Scrymgour said the funds have been allocated under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) – which is funded by the NT and Federal Governments.

SAAP provides a crisis response to individuals and families who find themselves homeless or at risk of homelessness.

“People coming out of crisis situations such as homelessness or escaping domestic violence often have no household goods, and while they may be given priority public housing they normally don’t have the white goods or furniture,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“One of the cornerstones of Government’s Building Healthier Communities strategy is giving kids a good start in life by supporting families – and the No Interest Loan Scheme does just this.”

Ms Scrymgour said that Somerville piloted the scheme last year, with more than 45 Territorians assisted to purchase essential white goods.

“I commend Somerville and its staff for the extraordinary job they have done so far, and I am pleased the NT Government is able to offer support for such a worthwhile scheme.

“Somerville has a wealth of experience in providing community services in the Northern Territory.”