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Prince George's County Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program Frequently Asked Questions for Landlords

Updated: June 15, 2021

The Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development seeks to provide economic support to tenants suffering from income loss and offering relief to landlords on behalf of renters experiencing financial difficulties due to the COVID-19 pandemic public health emergency. The following frequently asked questions provide additional information about the Emergency Rental Assistance Program:

1. Question: Is there an application deadline?

Answer: Applications will be received on a rolling basis until funding is exhausted. DHCD has received \$27M from the Treasury and anticipates additional funding from the State of MD and from the American Rescue Plan.

2. Question: Which Households (HH) are eligible for this assistance?

Answer: Households (i) with income below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI), that (ii) are behind on their rental obligations, and (iii) that have experienced direct or indirect loss of income or have accrued additional costs due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Please ensure to clearly state the reason(s) of the direct or indirect COVID 19 impact in the attestation form submitted by each tenant.

To determine if a tenant is income eligible for emergency rental assistance please use the chart below:

Household Size	<u>EXTREMELY LOW INCOME</u> (30% AMI = Maximum Income)	<u>VERY LOW INCOME</u> (50% AMI = Maximum Income)	<u>LOW INCOME</u> (80% AMI = Maximum Income)
1	\$27,100	\$45,150	\$57,650
2	\$31,000	\$51,600	\$65,850
3	\$34,850	\$58,050	\$74,100
4	\$38,700	\$64,500	\$82,300
5	\$41,800	\$69,700	\$88,900
6	\$44,900	\$74,850	\$95,500
7	\$48,000	\$80,000	\$102,100
8	\$51,100	\$85,150	\$108,650

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (<http://www.huduser.org>)

3. Question: Is my property eligible?

Answer: All residential rental properties, including multi-family buildings, single family homes, condominiums and cooperatives, are eligible.

4. Question: If the tenant received assistance from the previous rounds of emergency rental assistance, is the tenant still eligible for assistance in this round?

Answer: Yes. A tenant can receive up to a total of twelve months of additional rental assistance, meaning that if a tenant has already received three months of rental assistance, the tenant may still qualify for up to an additional 12 months. Please note these cannot be months where the tenant has previously received rental assistance.

5. Question: Is the tenant's Social Security Number needed in the application?

Answer: No, the tenant's Social Security Number is not needed.

6. Question: If the tenant receives housing assistance from the federal, state or local government, are they still eligible for this program?

Answer: Yes, but ERAP can only cover the tenant portion of the rent payment. Interested applicants must also consult with the Housing Authority that issued the applicable housing assistance (for example, Housing Choice Voucher) to ensure the adjustment of the rent payment moving forward.

7. Question: How many months of delinquent rent can I apply for on behalf of the tenant?

Answer: The Emergency Rental Assistance is provided for up to 12 months and can be requested as early as April 1, 2020 for rental delinquencies related to COVID-19.

8. Question: How long and how much funding can be applied to the tenant's rent?

Answer: The maximum period of time is 12 months. There is no cap on the amount of assistance; however, it would be equal to the tenant's amount of rent for the eligible month, excluding fees and other costs.

9. Question: If a tenant has a rental delinquency prior to April 1st can that be included?

Answer: The Emergency Rental Assistance Program only covers rental delinquencies incurred after April 1, 2020. This means that any outstanding rent for the month of March will not be covered by the Program. When reporting the delinquencies on the Owner Losses Report, you should be recording the amount of rent due for each month beginning April 1st and thereafter (instead of the cumulative delinquency), excluding fees and other costs.

10. Question: How soon after I apply will be application be reviewed and funded?

Answer: We so wish we could give you an estimate! DHCD is prioritizing reviewing applications based on HHs income and other social and pandemic factors that result in areas of greatest vulnerability within the County. If review of your application starts at a month subsequent to the month that you applied, the reviewer will be reaching out to you to allow you to add funding request for the month(s) between application and start of review process. Submitting complete documentation will also allow DHCD to review and fund applications faster.

11. Question: Should landlords who submitted applications for the last round of rental assistance submit a new application for this round of funding?

Answer: Yes, landlords must submit a new application and new supporting documents for this round of funding. Some of the supporting documents are the same with the ones submitted in the last round of funding.

12.Question: Is the property Deed required for submission of the ERAP Application?

Answer: Yes. Landlords/Owners will not be able to complete the ERAP application without a copy of the property Deed. Please note that a copy of the property Deed can be access free of charge from the State of Maryland Land Records website: <https://mdlandrec.net/main/index.cfm>

13.Question: How will I know if DHCD has all the documentation and information they need from me to process the application?

Answer: Once your application is submitted, you will **not** be able to go back into the Landlord Portal to make additional changes to your application. DHCD will review your application and contact you via e-mail to inform you of any discrepancies or missing information that will prevent processing your application. It is important that you monitor your e-mail for any messages from DHCD.

14.Question: If I do not agree with some of the language in the Rental Assistance Agreement, do I have the ability to alter or challenge the agreement?

Answer: No. All of the documents required for participation in the Emergency Rental Assistance Program are non-negotiable.

15.Question: When I apply for a specific dollar amount from the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, am I guaranteed to receive that amount?

Answer: No. Simply applying for funding through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program does not guarantee you will be awarded the full amount. Your application is subject to review by DHCD and funding availability. Following review and approval, you will be e-mailed a notice of approval with the dollar amount of the approved rental assistance, along with the non-negotiable terms and conditions. You must indicate that you accept the final amount of assistance, as determined by DHCD, to receive payment.

16.Question: If utilities are included in the rent, will the ERA Program still make the rent payment?

Answer: Yes, utilities that are covered by the landlord will be treated as rent.

17.Question: I have multiple rental properties; do I have to fill out an application for each property?

Answer: Yes. Owners or Landlords should complete one application for each property. The owner/landlord must also complete separate Owner Losses Reports for each rental property where losses are being claimed. Each Owner Losses Report must be accompanied by a complete set of documents for each tenant, including income verification information, 1st and Signature Page of the lease and the Rent Ledger.

18.Question: Are there any restriction on collecting the balance of the rent from the tenant?

Answer: If you accept payment from DHCD on behalf of the tenant, you are agreeing to waive any outstanding rent payments *for a period of thirty days, immediately prior to the first day of the Rental Assistance months* if you are approved for rental assistance for greater than 12 months. This is applicable only to rental properties with 10 or more units. For example:

Example: A tenant has past due rent from March 1, 2020 through April 2021. Where an owner is approved for rental assistance payments for the months of May 2020 – April 2021, the owner must waive the outstanding rents for the month of April. (Please note that the waived past due rents may not be related to COVID-19).

Owner shall not accept any other payments for the Owner Losses or Prior Defaulted Rent. Prior Defaulted Rent is that rent inside of that 30-day lookback window.

Answer: Yes, the landlord should notify DHCD if the tenant moves out while we are providing rental assistance.

19.Question: Am I restricted from taking legal action against tenants after accepting payment from DHCD?

Answer: If you accept payment from DHCD on behalf of the tenant, you are agreeing to waive any self-help actions such as eviction for 90 days after receiving payment.

20.Question: Is there a requirement of the landlord to notify DHCD is the tenant moves out?

Answer: Yes, the landlord should notify DHCD if the tenant moves out while we are providing rental assistance.

21.Question: What happens if the tenants continue to be unable to pay rent in the future?

Answer: You will be able to re-apply in the future. DHCD will send more information about accepting landlord and tenant applications in the near future and once additional funding has been made available.

Additional questions?

Please submit questions to: ERAPLandlord@co.pg.md.us