

Clinton County Emergency Rental Assistance Program

Announcement & Program Overview

Keeping renters safe and in their homes

PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

Clinton County received \$2,540,838.37 in rental assistance funds from the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), established by section 501 of Division N of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L. No. 116-260 (Dec. 27, 2020). The Rental and Utility Assistance Grant Program component of Act 1 of 2021 signed into law by Governor Wolf on February 5, 2021, gives the Department of Human Services (DHS) the authority to establish programmatic and eligibility guidelines for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program.

The Clinton County Housing Coalition (CCHC) will administer the local Emergency Rental Assistance Program. An application for ERAP assistance may be submitted by either an eligible household or by a landlord on behalf of that eligible household. In general, funds will be paid directly to landlords and utility service providers.

ERAP funds may be used to cover the following expenses:

- Rental arrears for up to 12-months for past due rent that has been accrued after March 13, 2020.
- Prospective rent payments up to three months.
- Utilities and home energy costs are separately stated charges related to the occupancy of rental property.
- Other Expenses Related to Housing including but not limited to relocation expenses, rental fees, reasonable late fees, etc.

Eligible households may receive up to 12 months of assistance, plus an additional 3 months if CCHC determines the extra months are needed to ensure housing stability and funds are available. The payment of existing housing-related arrears that could result in eviction of an eligible household is a priority. Households with incomes at or below 50% AMI are also a priority. Assistance must be provided to reduce an eligible household's rental arrears before the household may receive assistance for future rent payments. Future assistance may be provided for a maximum of three months at a time. Households may reapply for additional assistance at the end of the three-month period if needed and the overall time limit for assistance is not exceeded.

RENTER ELIGIBILITY

To receive financial assistance under the ERA program, an "eligible household" is defined as a renter household in which at least one or more individuals meets the following criteria:

- The tenant is a citizen or qualified non-citizen of the United States of America; and,
- The tenant has a valid lease in their name; and,
- The household has experienced a COVID-19 triggering event such as household/tenant qualifies for unemployment or has experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced a financial hardship due to COVID-19; and,

- The household's annual income does not exceed 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI), as determined by HUD and adjusted for household size,
 - Verification of household income is determined using the household's 2020 tax filing records, or sufficient confirmation of the household's monthly gross income 30 days prior to the date of application; and,
- The household has not and will not receive rental assistance from any other source, including, but not limited to, federal, state, and local rental assistance programs, for the same period the ERA is requested.

LANDLORD ELIGIBILITY

To receive financial assistance under the ERA program, owners, landlords and property managers must:

- Own or manage a rental property within Clinton County; and,
- That property must be occupied by the "eligible household" with a valid lease; and,
- Provide a signed IRS Form W-9; and,
- A detailed description of the charges due.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply through the PA Department of Human Services COMPASS website located at:

www.compass.state.pa.us

Select the "Get Started" button under the Emergency Rental Assistance Program banner. Applications submitted through COMPASS will be received immediately for continued eligibility processing. **Be sure to provide a valid email address and/or telephone number.** CCHC will contact you with further information on submitting the required documentation. Eligibility cannot be determined until all documentation is received.

Applications and additional program information can be downloaded and printed from the Clinton County Housing Coalition's website located at:

www.cchousingcoalition.org

or at various other community services websites. Return your completed applications to the address below.

If you do not have access to the internet, paper applications may be picked up at the Clinton County Housing Coalition's office located at:

**330 East Main Street (Rear)
Lock Haven, PA 17745**