



## COVID-19 Rental and Utility Assistance Programs

The Public Health Emergency (Emergency) has put a financial burden on renters in the District of Columbia. This document provides the essential information for emergency rental and utility assistance programs including funding sources, availability of funds, eligibility requirements, and contact information for the Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) administering the application processes. The rental assistance programs are:

- I. **Stronger Together by Assisting You (STAY DC) Program** – As of the revision date of this document, the STAY DC program is no longer accepting **new** tenant applications. Tenants are encouraged to pursue the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) if they are seeking rental, first month's rent, and security deposit assistance. Please see the ERAP section below for more information.
  - A. **Note: Tenants can respond to STAY DC applications until 6:00 p.m. on December 6, 2021, if those applications are in response to landlord applications** that were initiated prior to the October 27, 2021 deadline.
  
- II. **Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)**
  - A. **Tenant Benefits:**
    1. Depending on the availability of funds, renters may apply ERAP assistance to cover:
      - a) **Rent arrears that are overdue by at least 30 days**, as well as associated late fees and court fees necessary to keep the tenant in their housing.
        - (1) To apply for the past due rent assistance program, renters would need to be the leaseholder for a DC unit. In addition, they must be currently leasing the DC unit for which they are applying for assistance
        - (2) The total amount of assistance to a tenant may not exceed **five** times the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for the Metropolitan area based on unit size and zip code, established by HUD. FMR schedules by zip code can be found here: [DC Fair Market Rent](#).
        - (3) The cap of five times the fair market rent may be waived in any of the following circumstances:
          - (a) Applicant lives with 6 or more individuals and reasonable alternatives to the housing arrangement

are not available;

- (b) Individual living in the unit has a disability or extended illness and losing housing poses a serious threat to health or safety; or
- (c) The applicant is applying during the Emergency or within 180 days thereafter.

b) **Security deposit and first month's rent.**

(1) The maximum payment is the actual value of the security deposit and/or first month's rent. The amount paid depends on a household's income and available resources and is subject to certain limitations.

(2) Renters may apply for security deposit and first month rent for a unit in a neighboring county (for example: Prince Georges County, Montgomery County, Arlington County, etc.).

(3) Renters must be threatened with homelessness to be eligible for security deposit and first month's rent assistance.

- 2. ERAP will make its payment directly to the landlord, court, or U.S. Marshals Service. No money will be given directly to tenants.

B. **Eligibility Requirements:**

- 1. ERAP does not require a social security number nor will an applicant's immigration status be needed to verify eligibility for the program.
- 2. Renters must be District residents and must owe their housing provider rent.
- 3. A renter may only apply for ERAP once within a twelve-month period.
- 4. Renters must earn 40% of the Median Family Income (MFI) or below. The MFI for DC varies based on household size. See the income chart below (reflecting annual income after taxes).

| Household Size | 40% MFI Annual Salary |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1              | \$35,280.00           |
| 2              | \$40,320.00           |
| 3              | \$45,360.00           |
| 4              | \$50,400.00           |
| 5              | \$55,440.00           |
| 6              | \$60,480.00           |

C. **Application:**

- 1. Application Process: Tenants should contact one of the CBOs listed in the next section or apply at <https://erap.dhs.dc.gov/>.
- 2. Documents needed:

- a) The following two documents are mandatory for all applications:
  - (1) **Proof of residency**; and
  - (2) **Photo ID** for all adults in household.
- b) The following are desired but not mandatory if applicants complete the self-certification:
  - (1) **Proof of Income** for last 30 days; or,
  - (2) **Proof of resources or benefits**.
- c) If applying for First Month/Security Deposit:
  - (1) **Proof of Rental Agreement** (e.g., an approval notice for the new unit the tenant applied for); and,
  - (2) **Documentation of Need for Assistance** (e.g., homelessness verification, notice of eviction or voucher for new unit).
- d) Additional documents may be requested throughout the application process.

**D. Administering CBOs:**

- 1. Catholic Charities
  - a) Office: (202) 338-3100
  - b) Website: [www.catholiccharitiesdc.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesdc.org)
- 2. Housing Counseling Services, Inc.
  - a) Office: (202) 667-7006
  - b) Website: [www.housingetc.org](http://www.housingetc.org)
- 3. Salvation Army- National Capital Area Command (NW office)
  - a) Office: (202) 332-5000
  - b) Website: [www.salvationarmynca.org](http://www.salvationarmynca.org)
- 4. Salvation Army- Solomon G. Brown Social Services Center (SE Office)
  - a) Office (202) 678-9771
  - b) Website: [www.salvationarmynca.org](http://www.salvationarmynca.org)
- 5. Virginia Williams Family Resource Center
  - a) Office (202) 312-5510 or Fax (202) 312-5598
  - b) Website: [www.community-partnership.org](http://www.community-partnership.org)
- 6. The United Planning Organization
  - a) ERAP Scheduling: (202) 562-3800
  - b) Website: <http://www.upo.org/>
- 7. The Greater Washington Urban League
  - a) Office: (202) 265-8200
  - b) Website: [www.gwul.org](http://www.gwul.org)

For more information on ERAP, please visit <https://erap.dhs.dc.gov/>.

III. **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) & Utility Discount Program (UDP)**

Please note, major utilities will not disconnect services during the Emergency.

A. **LIHEAP Benefits:**

1. Residents may receive one-time energy bill assistance between \$250 and \$600. Benefit is based on household size, total household income, heating source, and type of dwelling.
2. Customers who receive assistance with their energy bills through LIHEAP are automatically eligible to receive a free Home Energy Kit from the DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU). Home Energy Kits include six energy-efficient LED light bulbs, a smart power strip, and a bathroom faucet aerator, and will help reduce energy use and a recipient's carbon footprint. The Home Energy Kits can be requested [here](#).

B. **LIHEAP Eligibility Requirements:**

1. The renter must be a District resident;
2. The utilities must be in the renter's name; and
3. The renter must owe \$250 or more on a utility account.

C. **UDP Benefits:** Assists low-income District residence in reducing their utility costs. Residents may receive up to \$475 per year on electric bills (\$300 per year if heat is not electric heat); up to \$276 during the winter on gas bills, and over \$400 annually on water and sewer bills.

D. **UDP Eligibility Requirements:** To qualify, the utility bills need to be in the beneficiary's name, and they must meet the following income guidelines which have been updated as of May 27, 2021:

| Household Size | Maximum Annual Income |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1              | \$70,600              |
| 2              | \$80,650              |
| 3              | \$90,750              |
| 4              | \$100,800             |
| 5              | \$110,900             |
| 6              | \$121,000             |
| 7              | \$126,000             |
| 8              | \$126,000             |

Income Guidelines for FY22(October 1, 2021-September 30, 2022) are:

| Household Size | Maximum Annual Income |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1              | \$72,250              |

| Household Size | Maximum Annual Income |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 2              | \$82,600              |
| 3              | \$92,900              |
| 4              | \$103,200             |
| 5              | \$113,550             |
| 6              | \$123,850             |
| 7              | \$134,200             |
| 8              | \$144,500             |

**E. LIHEAP & UDP Application Process:**

1. DOEE is not accepting appointments in-person at this time.
2. To apply:
  - a) [Apply online here](#); or
  - b) [Print this application](#) along with copies of the documents listed below and mail it to “Attn: Energy Assistance 1200 First Street NE, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Washington DC 20002”.
3. The following documents needs to be included when mailing the application:
  - a) Service disconnection notice or a letter from the utility company that states the service has been disconnected (if applicable);
  - b) Most recent utility bills (or a copy);
  - c) A government-issued photo ID;
  - d) Proof of income for everyone in the intended recipient’s home who receives income; and
  - e) Social Security cards for everyone in the intended recipient’s home.

**F. Managed by:** DC Department of Energy and Environment

1. 1207 Taylor Street NW (Serves Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6)
2. 2100 Martin Luther King Ave SE (*Serves Wards 6,7, and 8*)

For more information on LIHEAP or UDP, please visit <https://doee.dc.gov/liheap> or <https://doee.dc.gov/node/9402>.

**IV. “202 Assist” Program**

**A. Eligibility Requirement:** Renter must be a Ward 8 resident.

**B. Application:**

1. The tenant must complete an application: <https://www.lh4us.org/forms>.
2. The tenant must email the completed form to [LHAdmin@lhndc.org](mailto:LHAdmin@lhndc.org) and attach the Rental Assistance Application.

3. The subject line for the email should be “202Assist – [Tenant’s Last Name] – [Tenant’s Phone Number in format 2021234567]”.
  4. Renters can also apply by phone at 202-373-1050 between the hours of 10am and 3pm.
- C. **Administering CBOs:** Lydia’s House and Housing Counseling Services are assisting the John Wall Family Foundation (JWFF) in identifying qualified applicants and dispersing rent relief.
1. Lydia’s House – (202) 373-1050
  2. Housing Counseling Services – (202) 667-7713
- D. **Available Funds:** Former Washington Wizards All-Star guard John Wall, in collaboration with the JWFF, launched the “202 Assist” program in late May 2020 as a one-month fundraising effort. The program raised \$554,360.

For more information on the “202 Assist” Program, please visit <https://202assist.com/>.

## V. **Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP)**

- A. **Program Overview:** HPP supports eligible families (30% of Median Family Income or below) to prevent episodes of homelessness through case management, mediation, financial assistance (including up to 4 months of rent arrears), and connection to housing resources.
- B. **Application Process:**
1. Virginia Williams Family Resource Center (VWFRC) conducts Assessments for Homeless Services via phone at (202) 526-0017. (The VWFRC is closed for in-person interviews throughout the public health emergency.)
  2. Families and individuals seeking access to homeless services may also call the DC Shelter Hotline at (202) 399-7093 from 8 am-12 am, Monday-Sunday, or call 311 after hours.
- C. **Administering CBO:** Virginia Williams Family Resource Center (VWFRC) - the central intake for the District's coordinated homelessness assistance system for families with children. VWFRC is NOT a shelter.
1. The VWFRC is open Monday- Thursday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
  2. The telephone number is (202) 526-0017.

## VI. **Family Rehousing and Stabilization Program (FRSP)**

- A. **Program Overview:** FRSP is a rapid-rehousing program that supports families who experience homelessness or are at imminent risk of homelessness. Among other homelessness prevention services, the program provides 12-18 months of rental assistance, short term rental subsidies, and security deposit and furniture assistance.

**B. Application Process:**

1. Referrals to FRSP start at Virginia Williams Family Resource Center (VWFRC), Address: 33 N Street NE / Washington, DC 20002, Phone: (202) 526-0017 | (202) 724-4208.
2. **Eligibility:**
  - a) Must be a DC Resident.
  - b) Must have the financial capacity to pay full rent amount at the end of the term period.
  - c) Must be in full compliance with TANF requirements.

**VII. Supportive Services for Veterans and their Families Homeless Prevention (SSVFHP)**

**A. Program Overview:** SSVFHP supports Veterans and their families who are in danger of being homeless. Among other homelessness prevention services, SSVFHP provides funds to pay rental arrears, utilities, security deposit, first month rent, etc.

**B. Application Process:**

1. Call one of the following organizations:
  - a) Housing Counseling Services at (202) 667-7006;
  - b) Friendship Place Screening Line at (202) 364-1419; or,
  - c) Operations Renewed Hope Screening Line at (703) 887-8117.
2. **Eligibility:**
  - a) Either must be a Veteran or a member of a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran.
  - b) Gross annual income cannot exceed 50% of area median income based on the income limits.
  - c) Must be imminently losing their primary nighttime residence.
  - d) Must have no other residence.
  - e) Must not have sufficient resources or support networks (e.g., family, friends, faith based or other social networks) immediately available to prevent them from becoming homeless.

**VIII. National Community Church Relief Fund**

**A. Program Overview:** National Community Church has raised money to create two separate rental relief funds, one for refugees and another that is open to the general public. The hope is to be able to give every recipient at least \$400. Bills are paid directly to the Landlord or entity providing the bill.

**B. Application Process:**

1. For more information, reach out to National Community Church, 205 F Street NE Washington, DC 20002, (202) 544-0414.

2. **Eligibility:**

- a) Must live in the DC Metro Area.
- b) Must upload an ID or a case manager identification verification letter and a bill that needs to be paid.

**IX. Rental Payment Plan Options**

Through July 24, 2022, landlords are required to develop a rent payment plan for renters that experience a financial hardship directly or indirectly caused by the Public Health Emergency. For more information on rent payment plans, please see "[OTA's COVID-19 Tenant Rights and Resources Guide](#)" on the OTA's website.

For questions about any of the services the OTA provides, please contact us at 202-719-6560. For up-to-date information and resources regarding COVID-19 and DC Government operations, please visit [coronavirus.dc.gov](https://coronavirus.dc.gov).

**(202) 719-6560**



**[www.ota.dc.gov](http://www.ota.dc.gov)**