



# Montgomery County COVID Rent Relief Program

## *Frequently Asked Questions - Landlords*

- **What is the COVID Rent Relief Program?**
  - The COVID Rent Relief Program provides grants of up to \$12,000 to eligible tenants who have experienced a loss related to COVID, preventing them from paying rent. You can find out more about the program at [www.mc311.com/rentrelief](http://www.mc311.com/rentrelief). Included on the website are flyers, document checklists, and additional FAQs.
- **How does this program work?**
  - Tenants who meet the below criteria are invited to apply for assistance. Tenants must supply information on their household, income, and rent responsibility. Landlords complete a companion application which verifies the rent information and payment information. Once both parts have been submitted a case worker will review the application and make a recommendation. Approval is contingent on tenant meeting all eligibility and supplying required information. Award amount is specific for each household and is based on income, rent responsibility and arrears.
    - Tenants must have experienced a COVID related financial hardship
    - Tenants must be able to demonstrate an income of 50% or less of Area Median Income (AMI) from either the previous 30 days of 2020 taxes
    - Tenants must owe at least \$1,000 to their landlord
    - Tenants must have lived in Montgomery County since August 2020 or earlier
- **Where do I go to apply?**
  - Please visit [www.mc311.com/rentrelief](http://www.mc311.com/rentrelief) to start the application.
- **How do I set up an account?**
  - Visit [www.mc311.com/rentrelief](http://www.mc311.com/rentrelief) and select "Start a new application." Answer the questions in the pre-eligibility screening and it will send you an email allowing you to create an account.
- **What are the password criteria?**
  - When you first create your account, you will receive a temporary password. The temporary password may contain letters, numbers and articles of punctuation including commas, periods, dashes, colons, and parentheses. When you re-set the temporary password, your new password must be at least eight characters long, contain letters and numbers, and may include a limited number of articles of punctuation such as question marks and exclamation points.
- **What languages is the application available in?**
  - Amharic, Chinese, English, French, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

- **What documents do I need to have ready to upload?**
  - All landlords should register in the [County's Central Vendor Registration System](#) to receive a payment from the County. You will also be required to provide documentation that shows how much your tenant pays monthly, how much they have paid and how much they owe. You must also disclose any other assistance being received for that unit.
- **How do I upload documents?**
  - To upload documents in support of an application, first add your tenant information where asked. If you have more than one tenant, you can use the bulk feature or you can use the manual entry feature. Once your tenants are added you will see an upload button. Please make sure you are uploading information for just one tenant household at a time and using the same file format. You may upload no more than 10 MB of data at once. Uploads all applicable documents for your tenant, including their rental ledger and/or a monthly bill.
- **What do I do if my tenant has already applied?**
  - If your tenant has applied, you should receive an email asking you to complete an application and provide information regarding their debt and monthly rental costs. Please submit this information as soon as possible in order for the application to be reviewed.
- **Do I need to wait to get a confirmation email that my tenant applied?**
  - You do not need to wait to receive the confirmation email that your tenant has applied. However, we are unable to begin working on an application until we have the tenant part completed. If you initiate the application your tenant will receive an email asking them to apply also.
- **How can I help my tenants apply?**
  - Encourage tenants to apply by sharing program information, providing documents, offering scanning, and offering use of company computers/Wi-Fi. Additionally, as an email address is required to create an account, consider creating a tenant account for your residents to use that don't have an email address. Please note – this account must be set up with a different email than your landlord account. To set up a tenant account select "start a new application" from the homepage and complete the pre-eligibility as a tenant.
- **Are my tenants eligible?**
  - Tenants are eligible so long as they have experienced financial hardship due to Covid-19, make no more than 50% of the Area Median Income, have lived in Montgomery County since August 2020 and owe the landlord at least \$1,000. Tenants are eligible even if they received funds in previous phases of the rent relief program and regardless of their immigration status. Tenants are not eligible if they are related to their landlord by birth or marriage.
- **Do tenants who receive housing vouchers or other subsidies qualify?**
  - Yes. Tenants receiving housing choice vouchers or other rental subsidies are still eligible to apply but assistance can only be provided on the portion of the rent that is their responsibility. Additionally, we strongly encourage these tenants to notify their subsidy provider of a change of income.

- **Do I need to complete a separate application for each tenant?**
  - No, you do not need to complete a separate application for each tenant. Within the application there is a bulk upload option to add information for multiple tenants. However, if you have multiple properties and want the payments going to each one separately, please complete separate applications for each of those properties.
- **If I've already received funds from previous rounds, do I still need to set up another account?**
  - Yes, we are using a new online application system and need everyone to reapply using this system. Landlords must use this system to verify tenant application information and submit applications on behalf of tenants. All landlords should also register in the [County's Central Vendor Registration System](#) to receive a payment from the County.
- **Do I have to repay this money?**
  - No, rental assistance funds are treated as grants, rather than loans, and as such, there is no expectation that the money will be paid back to the County. However, if the tenant leaves the unit with a credit from the COVID Rent Relief Program, that payment that must be returned to DHHS.
- **What if my tenant has moved out?**
  - The program is designed only to pay rent for a tenant's current address. If your tenant moves out, you are required to return any remaining account credit to DHHS. If your tenant moved out previously and left a rental debt, unfortunately, this program is not able to pay that.
- **Where does my check get sent?**
  - Your check will get sent to the vendor address connected with your CVRS registration. Therefore, if you have multiple CVRS registrations across your portfolio, please make sure to complete a separate application for each of those properties.
- **How do I find out whether and how my property company is registered in the CVRS?**
  - Register with the County as a vendor and check on your registration at [www.mcipcc.net](http://www.mcipcc.net). If you need to register for the first time, use the below hints.
    - **Your Legal Company Name** is the name that appears on your Articles of Incorporation/Amendment, and must match exactly the Name on your W-9 or Social Security Card. **DO NOT use a Trade Name or d/b/a.**
    - The address you list in the CVRS system is the address that you would like the benefit payments to be mailed.
    - **Use Commodity Code: 971-64** (Residential Space Rental or Lease) or, if you are a Sole Proprietorship, your TIN (Taxpayer ID number)
    - Select '**Montgomery County Government**'. *If you do not select 'Montgomery County Government', your registration will not be processed.*
    - **CVRS Customer Service can be reached at Phone: 866-963-2898.**

- **Are there any conditions to receiving these funds?**

- You must forgive all late fees, penalties, and legal fees incurred by the Tenant. Additionally, you agree to cancel any current eviction actions and will not sue to evict\* or undertake an eviction actions while receiving COVID Rent Relief Program funds and for 30 days after benefit period. Additionally, if your tenant's lease is expiring or has already expired you must offer at least a 90-day lease extension. (*This does not include breach of lease for safety reasons.*)

In some cases, if a tenant earns 30% of Area Median Income or less, we may be able to provide additional funds. However, if your tenant qualifies for additional funds, you must agree to forgive 10% of their total rental debt (as well as the other terms of accepting CRRP money).

- **How long will it take to get a decision on my tenant's application?**

- It is difficult for DHHS to provide timelines before all applications are received. However, application status can be viewed online, and decisions will be made efficiently after an application is assigned to a case worker for review. Once a decision is made on funding amount, a check will be mailed within one business week.

- **When will I be notified if a tenant application is approved?**

- You can see status updates for your case by logging into your account. A final approval letter and agreement of use of funds will be sent out when a case is approved.

- **What if my tenant owes more than \$12,000?**

- We encourage you to consider forgiving some of the tenant debt and work to develop a payment plan with your tenant for any arrears over what the program provides.

- **How can a tenant prove they applied for or received funds from this program?**

- Anyone applying receives a confirmation email confirming they have applied and can also log into their account and see the status of their application. When funds are awarded a final approval letter with program terms is issued to both the landlord and tenant.

- **What can you tell me about my tenant's application?**

- If you are a landlord whose tenant has applied, you should be contacted by email to confirm the information they supply and provide additional documentation. We will be in touch to confirm rental information and payment information before a final grant is awarded. Additionally, if we are struggling to reach your tenant, we may ask for your assistance to make contact. We will not disclose any of the client's personal information.

- **Can I use this money to pay for utilities?**

- No, these funds are specifically designated to pay rent. If you tenants are struggling with utility bills, they may call providers directly to negotiate payment plans, or apply to the Office of Home Energy Programs for assistance.

- **Is there a deadline to submit my application?**

- No, there is no set deadline for application submissions; however, we anticipate strong demand for the program and encourage applicants to get apply as soon as possible. Funds are limited.

**\*Last Updated August 9, 2021\***