

Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services COVID Rent Relief Program – Phase 2



The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) provides short-term rental assistance to eligible households who have experienced a financial loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has caused them to fall behind on their rent. While funds are available, the program will provide up to \$4,000 in rent relief for eligible households that can be used for rent arrears and a rent credit for future months. The program is funded through a \$20 million supplemental appropriation to DHHS to assist renters impacted by the pandemic.

For Phase 2 of the program, DHHS has developed a Homeless Prevention Index to evaluate all neighborhoods in relation to COVID-19 impact, housing stress, and social determinants. Applications will be prioritized based on areas of highest COVID impact, with households outside of the initial “high impact” neighborhoods (map available at bit.ly/mc-hpi-map) placed on a waitlist and contacted as capacity allows. This will enable the program to ensure that an equity lens is utilized, recognizing that communities of color have been significantly impacted by COVID, disproportionately experience homelessness, and are more likely to get evicted.

We encourage all Montgomery residents who think they may be eligible to **Apply Now!**
<https://forms.montgomerycountymd.gov/f/CRRPApp>

I am struggling to pay my rent. Is there assistance available?

If you are behind on your rent, assistance may be available through the DHHS’ Housing Stabilization Services. Please complete the online application linked above, call 311 (240-777-0311) OR complete a service request. A case worker will call you back to review your eligibility.

Who is eligible for the COVID Rent Relief Phase 2 Program?

Full eligibility will be determined by Housing Stabilization staff. Requirements may include:

- Households must be at or below 60% AMI, based on the last 30 days of income (see table below).
- Households must be paying at least 50% of their income on rent.
- Income loss must be related to COVID-19.
- Households must be at least one-month behind on rent payments.
- Must have applied for unemployment benefits (if eligible).
- Must be a Montgomery County resident since at least February 2020.
- Households may have formal or informal lease arrangements.

<i>Family Size</i>	<i>Max. Annual Household Income 60% AMI</i>	<i>Max. Monthly Household Income 60% AMI</i>
1	\$51,000	\$4,250
2	\$58,260	\$4,855
3	\$65,529	\$5,461
4	\$72,780	\$6,065
5	\$78,660	\$6,555
6	\$84,480	\$7,040
7	\$90,300	\$7,525
8	\$96,120	\$8,010

I have an agreement with a friend to pay for some of the household expenses, but do not have my own lease, am I still eligible for assistance?

Yes, you may still be eligible for assistance if you have an informal lease.

How much are you able to provide?

Eligible households with a formal lease will receive \$4,000. Eligible households who have an informal rental arrangement will receive rental assistance based on their monthly rental costs up to \$4,000.

Will I receive the money directly?

In most cases, the grant goes directly to the property owner as a credit against your rent bill. For households with informal rental arrangements that do not have a lease in their name, the grant may be provided directly to the tenant.

How do I apply?

Option 1 – Online Submission: You may submit your request directly to [the DHHS website using the online submission form](#). You will be asked to answer questions and upload certain documents before you submit. You may also email documents to hss@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Option 2 - 311: To request assistance, please create a 311 Service Request or call 311 (240-777-0311). You will be asked to provide information, including an email address (if available). In the service request summary box please add the number of adults and children, monthly rent, and current household income. Please list contact preference (email or phone) and any additional contact information in the "brief description" field. Callers who already have an open service request will be contacted by program staff to complete an application, and do not need to submit an additional request. Please keep the service request number and await contact from the program.

Option 3 – Outreach Worker: DHHS Outreach Workers will be visiting select sites to assist people in person with their submission. These events will be announced in advance at participating locations.

What documents do I need?

- **Self-Certification of COVID-19 Impact**: You will be required to self-certify that you have had a loss of income (e.g., layoff, furlough, or termination from employment) or unexpected increase in medical, childcare, or utility expenses due to COVID-19.
- **Income Verification**: You will be required to provide documentation and/or self-certify that you have a gross household income that does not exceed the program limits based on household size.
- **Verification of Residency**: You will be required to self-certify that you have been a resident in Montgomery County since at least February 2020.
- **Landlord Documentation**: You must submit documentation from your landlord showing your monthly rental cost and that you are at least one-month delinquent in your rent.
- **Photo Identification**: Copy of a Driver’s License, Photo ID, or passport for each adult member.
- **Unemployment Benefits**: Households that may be eligible for unemployment must certify that they have applied or attempted to apply.

Do you require a Social Security Number as part of the application?

Social Security Numbers are not required. A photo ID will be required.

I do not have a letter from an employer, I am self-employed, or I do not have regular work hours. What do I do to verify my income?

You will be able to complete a self-certification using the [online submission form](#).

When is the deadline to request this assistance?

We strongly encourage you to apply as soon as possible, as the funds are limited, but there is not a set deadline to submit your request at this time.

What if I do not live in one of the targeted “high impact” neighborhoods?

The COVID Rent Relief Program – Phase 2 will prioritize households renting in “high impact” neighborhoods OR who are currently homeless. Households that are eligible, but do not live in the targeted “high impact” neighborhoods will be and contacted as program capacity allows.

I already called 311 and requested support from the DHHS COVID Rent Relief Program earlier this year, but I was put on a waitlist and never received assistance. How do I know if I am on the waitlist? And do I need to apply again?

No, you do not need to apply again if you are already on the waitlist. Housing Stabilization staff will be contacting everyone that has called into 311 to assist you in completing the application.

I already received funding from the first phase of the HHS COVID Rent Relief Program or another rental assistance program earlier this year. Can I apply again for more funds?

If you have already received assistance through the DHHS COVID Rent Relief Program – Phase 1 earlier this year or the State Assisted Housing Relief Program, you are not eligible to receive funds.

For all other HHS rental assistance programs, the standard 12-month benefit cap has been waived during this public health emergency. If you meet the other eligibility requirements, you may still receive a benefit. Additionally, if you received assistance through the Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) COVID Rental Assistance Program, you may still receive a benefit.

I applied for the COVID-19 Rental Assistance Program through the HOC in August. Is this the same program?

No, the DHHS COVID-19 Rent Relief Program is separate and different than the HOC COVID-19 Rental Assistance Program with different eligibility guidelines. This program is administered through DHHS' Housing Stabilization Services. The COVID-19 Rental Assistance Program is administered by the HOC and has its own eligibility guidelines. Households may apply to both programs. If you think you may be eligible for the COVID-19 Rent Relief Program, based on the eligibility above, complete the online application, call 311 or complete an online service request.

What is counted as income for eligibility for the COVID-19 Rent Relief Program?

The program will look at any income from the previous 30 days. This includes, but is not limited to wages, social security, cash assistance, unemployment (pending or currently receiving).

Will I have to report this money on my 2020 taxes?

No, in most cases the grant goes directly to the property owner as a credit against your rent bill.

Will accepting this assistance be counted as public charge?

DHHS is not a legal authority on public charge. We will recommend you contact the following legal resources if you have a concern:

- [Protecting Immigrant Families](#)
- [Gilchrist Center](#)
- [Maryland Health Connection](#)
- [One Nation AAPI-Asian American and Pacific Islander](#) (frequently asked questions in Spanish and multiple Asian languages)
- [Justice in Aging](#)

I was able to pay my rent up until now, but do not think I will be able to pay next month, can I get help?

Unfortunately, this program is only available to households behind on their rent. If you find yourself in that position, please call again at that point.

Will I have to pay this money back?

No, this is not a loan. You will not have to pay the County back.

My landlord says I need to leave immediately if I cannot pay everything in full. Where am I supposed to go?

Only a sheriff, with a court order can evict you. Please reach out to Landlord and Tenant Affairs at 240-777-0311 and the Police Department non-emergency line at 301-279-8000. Additional information is available on the [Department of Housing and Community Affairs \(DHCA\) COVID-19 website](#).

I have a Court summons for an eviction hearing, what should I do?

We encourage you to participate in the court proceedings as you may be eligible for a COVID related delay in eviction. Please review the information available on the [DHCA COVID-19 website](#).