

COVID-19 Rent Relief Program - Expanded Frequently Asked Questions

Program Summary

The COVID-19 Rent Relief Program is for renters who cannot afford to pay their rent due to circumstances related to the COVID 19 pandemic. This program expands upon the previous rent relief program through MaineHousing. **You can apply for this expanded program even if you applied and received funds under the other program.**

This program provides up to \$1,000 per month for a maximum of three (3) months for rent not covered by any other Federal, State or Local program. The three month period is for prior months and/or the current month. The applicant is the renter and the benefit is paid directly to the landlord. If the landlord agrees to participate in the program, the landlord is postponing the balance of the payment, not forgiving it, and further agrees not to evict for non-payment of rent for the month(s) for which the COVID-19 Rent Relief was applied.

Eligibility:

Income: You may qualify if your monthly income is within the income limits identified on the table below and are based on household size and the county in which you live. **Some municipalities may have their own rent relief program. They currently include Portland, Lewiston, and Bridgton. If you live in one of these communities, you must apply for that program.** This list will be kept updated.

Ability to Pay: You may qualify if you are unable to pay your rent due to circumstances directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Examples of changes in circumstances include but are not limited to:

- being laid off;
- having your place of employment closed;
- reduction in hours of work;
- having to stay home to care for your children because your day care or school has closed; or other loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Subsidized and Tax Credit Housing Excluded: If you live in housing that receives any kind of subsidy, you are **NOT** eligible. Ask your landlord or property manager about other rent relief options that may be available. You are not eligible if you:

- Get a Section 8 Voucher, live in Section 8 apartments, or receive Rental Assistance from USDA's Rural Development.
- Live in housing developments with mortgages financed by MaineHousing or a federal agency.
- Live in a development/property using low-income housing tax credits you.
- Live in public housing.

Assets: If you can afford to pay your rent from income of any sort or from savings or other liquid assets, you are not eligible.

Mobile Home Pad Rents: If you own a mobile home and rent space in a mobile home park you may be eligible for this program. If you are eligible for the program, it is only for lot rent or the mobile home rent. Park fees are not included.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1) How much will the program pay?

The program may pay up to \$1,000 per month per household for a maximum of three months (for up to a total of \$3,000).

2) How do I apply?

Go to mainehousing.org/covidrent. Click on the 2020 COVID-19 Rent Relief - Expanded Application, which on desktop/laptop will be on the right hand side of the screen and on a cell phone it will be at the bottom of the page. Select the county in which you reside and fill out the application and submit it as directed. If you do not have access to a computer, call your local Community Action Agency. They are listed at mainehousing.org/covidrent. You may apply for each month's rent you cannot pay up to three (3) months total. The benefit is retroactive, so you may apply for past months and the current month at the same time. You may not apply for a future month. You will need to apply again if need help for future months and have not reached the maximum \$3,000 limit.

3) How often can I apply?

Once a month for a maximum of three (3) months for a maximum total of \$3,000.

4) My rent is more than \$1,000. What about the rest of it?

Please talk with your landlord about different payment options. This benefit will help but you still must pay the rest of your rent.

5) If the \$1,000 maximum benefit is all I can pay right now, will I be evicted?

You will not be evicted for the month that your landlord accepts the payment. By accepting payment, the landlord agrees not to evict you for non-payment of rent for the month for which the payment is made. This protection from eviction does not extend to evictions due to other non-compliance with the lease provisions or failure to pay rent for other months' rent not covered in this program.

6) Should I tell my landlord that I am applying?

Yes. Communication between you and your landlord is very important. Most landlords do not want to lose good tenants and good communication can only help. It is also important for them to know that you've applied because they are required to fill out paperwork to receive these funds.

7) How will the application be processed? How will the landlord get paid?

When you submit your application, your local Community Action Agency will process the application. They will contact you directly to confirm the information provided on the application. They will then contact your landlord. The landlord will agree to accept the payment and to not evict you for any rent remaining due that month. Once the landlord agrees and fills out required paperwork, the Community Action Agency will make a payment directly to the landlord. It is very important to remember that payments cannot be made until all required documentation has been submitted by the applicant and received from the landlord.

8) How long will the program run?

The program will run until the funds are exhausted or the program ends.

9) What if my landlord refuses to participate?

We hope that landlords will participate in this program and accept payments. However, there is nothing we can do to require the landlord to participate.

Income Limits

County	Family Size							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Androscoggin	\$39,150	\$44,750	\$50,350	\$55,900	\$60,400	\$64,850	\$69,350	\$73,800
Aroostook	\$37,700	\$43,100	\$48,500	\$53,850	\$58,200	\$62,500	\$66,800	\$71,100
Cumberland	\$43,750	\$50,000	\$56,250	\$62,500	\$67,500	\$72,500	\$77,500	\$82,500
Franklin	\$37,700	\$43,100	\$48,500	\$53,850	\$58,200	\$62,500	\$66,800	\$71,100
Hancock	\$39,400	\$45,000	\$50,650	\$56,250	\$60,750	\$65,250	\$69,750	\$74,250
Kennebec	\$42,250	\$48,250	\$54,300	\$60,300	\$65,150	\$69,950	\$74,800	\$79,600
Knox	\$38,200	\$43,650	\$49,100	\$54,550	\$58,950	\$63,300	\$67,650	\$72,050
Lincoln	\$41,250	\$47,150	\$53,050	\$58,900	\$63,650	\$68,350	\$73,050	\$77,750
Oxford	\$37,700	\$43,100	\$48,500	\$53,850	\$58,200	\$62,500	\$66,800	\$71,100
Penobscot	\$37,700	\$43,100	\$48,500	\$53,850	\$58,200	\$62,500	\$66,800	\$71,100
Piscataquis	\$37,700	\$43,100	\$48,500	\$53,850	\$58,200	\$62,500	\$66,800	\$71,100
Sagadahoc	\$44,000	\$50,250	\$56,550	\$62,800	\$67,850	\$72,850	\$77,900	\$82,900
Somerset	\$37,700	\$43,100	\$48,500	\$53,850	\$58,200	\$62,500	\$66,800	\$71,100
Waldo	\$37,700	\$43,100	\$48,500	\$53,850	\$58,200	\$62,500	\$66,800	\$71,100
Washington	\$37,700	\$43,100	\$48,500	\$53,850	\$58,200	\$62,500	\$66,800	\$71,100
York	\$44,250	\$50,600	\$56,900	\$63,200	\$68,300	\$73,350	\$78,400	\$83,450