Governor Mills & MaineHousing Extend Rent Relief Program

June 4, 2020

Governor Janet Mills and MaineHousing announced today an extension of the COVID-19 Rent Relief Program. The rental assistance program, established in April, allows households that meet certain income and ability to pay requirements to receive a one-time, up to $500 payment in rental assistance to be paid directly to their landlord. With the extension, the program now covers rent for the months of April, May or June.

> *"This program has helped provide a small measure of relief to thousands of Maine renters and their landlords," said Governor Janet Mills. "As people across the state continue to feel the impact of COVID-19, we hope it will continue to help more."*

> *"We know that COVID-19 has highlighted the significant range of Mainers' housing challenges," said Daniel Brennan, Director of MaineHousing. "We're happy to continue providing support to those who need it most."*

Since its creation in April, the program has served more than 5,200 Maine households in April and May with 2,800 applications still in process. Program statistics may be found here.

Each household that meets certain income and ability to pay requirements may receive a one-time, up to $500 payment in rental assistance paid directly to their landlord. When a landlord accepts payment, they agree not to evict the tenant for nonpayment for the month the payment was issued. MaineHousing will continue to administer the program on a statewide level with local implementation provided by Maine's Community Action Agencies.

> *"We know this won't cover the full rent for most renters," Brennan noted. "We want to help as many people as possible and to do that, we capped the one-time payment at $500. It's also important for us to reiterate – this is not a rent forgiveness program. Renters are still responsible for paying their rent. We encourage landlords and tenants to communicate with one another about this program and other issues that may arise because of COVID-19."*

Those who received rent relief through this program in April or May are not eligible for program funds in June. Those who applied in April and May but have yet to hear back from their local Community Action Agency should contact that agency to check on the status of their application. A list of agencies and their service areas can be found here (PDF).

People who live in subsidized housing are not eligible for this program because they have other programs available to them and should contact their property manager.

Applicants can find application materials and answers to commonly asked questions here mainehousing.org/covidrent. Materials are also available in six additional languages.

Copyright © 2019
All rights reserved.

Governor Janet Mills
1 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
207-287-3531