Press Release
March 1, 2021

New Rental Assistance Application to Launch March 15

Applications will be paused from March 1 to March 14 to transition to new online system

SALT LAKE CITY (March 1, 2021) Starting March 15, Utah renters can apply for pandemic rental assistance through a single, centralized online application. Until then, the program will pause taking new applications in order to ensure that new federal guidelines are met.

“Emergency Rental Assistance is an important program that can help Utah renters impacted by the pandemic to stay in their homes,” said Department of Workforce Services Deputy Director Nate McDonald. “While we recognize that a pause in accepting applications may cause concern, it will help to ensure the updated program runs smoothly and will allow local community action program agencies to work through their existing backlog of applications.”

The state has partnered with local community action program agencies around the state, as well as counties and cities, to develop and implement the program and transition to the updated guidelines. Previously, renters applied for rental assistance through local community action program agencies, but starting March 15, renters from anywhere in the state can apply for assistance online at rentrelief.utah.gov (/).

Renters are eligible if they have combined household income at or below 80% of area median income, have qualified for unemployment, experienced a reduction in income or incurred significant costs due to the pandemic and are experiencing housing instability. Applicants may be prioritized and expedited if they have been unemployed for at least 90 days, or are at or below 50% area median income.

Eligible expenses include current rent plus three months of prospective rent, past-due rent, eligible fees, security deposit, utilities and internet service.

Renters who are worried about paying their March rent should speak with their landlord to develop a plan for payment, which can include Emergency Rental Assistance. While there is a federal eviction moratorium in place through March, it does not remove a renter’s responsibility to pay rent, and communicating with their landlord is essential. Renters who are concerned about eviction should fill out the CDC Tenant Declaration Form and deliver it to their landlord.

Utah began providing rental assistance in May 2020 to keep Utah residents in their homes during the pandemic, despite job loss or other financial impacts. Approximately $26 million in rental assistance was paid through Dec. 2020. Congress then created the Emergency Rental Assistance program to provide rental assistance through Dec. 31, 2021, with Utah receiving $215 million.

While awaiting program guidance and funding from the Department of the Treasury, Utah utilized existing funds to continue paying rental assistance during January and February. The Treasury provided the needed guidance for the new program on Feb. 22, 2021.

Potential applicants can prepare to file their application by visiting rentrelief.utah.gov (/) to learn more about requirements and start gathering documentation.

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