



Essential Home & Accessibility Repair Program Guidelines

The **Essential Home and Accessibility Repair Program (EHARP)** assists residents in Virginia by funding local administrators to undertake bricks and mortar activities that improve housing conditions for low-income persons and/or low-income persons who are physically or mentally disabled.

Essential Repairs *

- Structural hazards (i.e., leaking roof, rotted or unsafe floors, ceilings, walls, stairs, etc.)
- Electric and other fire hazards (including smoke detectors when other work is being performed)
- Roof repair/replacement
- Repair/replacement of heating systems
- Repair/replacement of air conditioning systems
- Water sources, plumbing (includes main water line which may include branch lines and well pump repair or replacement) and sewer/septic repairs
- Deteriorated Exterior Doors that cannot be securely locked for safety

**** All repairs must meet code requirements and have required permits as required by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).***

Accessibility Repairs *

- Wheelchair ramps
- Hand railings, grab bars
- Kitchen and bathroom modifications – i.e. ADA height toilets and tub replacement with walk-in-shower
- Doorway widening for wheelchair and walker accessibility.

**** All Accessibility Repairs must be made in compliance with current American Disability Act (ADA) Standards. For more information, please visit <http://www.ada.gov/>.***

NON eligible repairs:

- Replacement of windows where the existing ones are not broken or missing
- Replacement of exterior doors where the existing ones are not broken, missing or deteriorated and cannot be locked securely for safety.
- Tree, bush, shrub or grass cutting
- Repairs that are covered by homeowner's or flood insurance
- Cosmetic improvements such as interior or exterior painting
- Repairs to sheds, storage buildings, or accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
- Propane or fuel refills when there are no heating system repairs being done
- Mold remediation
- Pest control
- The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) reserves the right to determine the eligibility of repairs not listed.



Essential Home & Accessibility Repair Program Guidelines

DEFINITIONS

The following words and phrases, as used in these guidelines shall be defined as shown, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENT - a modification to a property which makes it more accessible to persons with disabilities (e.g. ramps, wider doorways, grab bars, bathroom and kitchen adaptation, etc.).

DISABLED - any person receiving Social Security Disability, Railroad Retirement Disability, Supplemental Security Income as disabled, One Hundred Percent Veteran's Administration Benefits, or is determined to be disabled by a licensed practicing physician.

ELDERLY - any person sixty (60) years of age or older.

HOUSEHOLD - all persons related or unrelated living together as one economic unit.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME - total income, from all sources, before taxes, of all members of the household.

HOUSING UNIT - a detached single family house; a townhouse; a unit in a duplex, apartment, or condominium; a mobile home.

CLIENT ELIGIBILITY

An applicant need not be elderly or disabled to apply for EHARP funding, but must meet the income guidelines and have an urgent need for repairs.

Total gross household income from **all sources** cannot exceed 80% of area median income (AMI), adjusted for family size, as currently determined by HUD.

The most current area median income information may be found on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's website:

- https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il2023/2023summary.odn?inputname=STTLT*5199999999%2BVirginia&selection_type=county&stname=Virginia&statefp=51.0&year=2023

From the table, use the Low-Income figure under the column for the number of persons in the household for the appropriate city or county. Income, property ownership and, if applicable, rental documentation, and disability supporting documentation must be provided by the applicant and maintained in the client file.

Note: Please do not show the client's full Social Security Number on collected documents. If the only proof of income contains a client's SSN, blacken out the number if the document is necessary.



Essential Home & Accessibility Repair Program Guidelines

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

No EHARP funds are provided for program administrative costs. Agencies must absorb the cost of participating elsewhere in their agency budgets.

MAXIMUM ASSISTANCE

EHARP assistance per job may not exceed **\$5,000.00**. However, there is no maximum job cost if an agency is able to leverage funds from other sources above the **\$5,000.00** funding from EHARP. While agencies may try to serve as many clients as possible, they should not deny an applicant solely based on cost if it is under the program limit and funds are available.

NOTE: Case-by-case exceptions where there are extenuating circumstances must have prior written approval from DHCD, but may not exceed \$7,500.00 per project per year. If a provider feels the applicant's situation does require special financial consideration, please contact DHCD prior to submitting the EHARP application.

MATCHING FUNDS

Matching funds are not required for EHARP jobs. The agency cannot require an applicant contribution, particularly where an applicant clearly has no resources or ability to contribute. If the repair exceeds \$5,000.00, is an extenuating circumstance, and no other resources can be leveraged, the agency can request an exception to exceed the limit. However, the agency must receive DHCD approval before proceeding.

APPLICATION PROCESS IN CAMS

Local service providers are required to submit an application for every job for which they wish to receive funding through the Department's electronic Centralized Application and Management System (CAMS). Instructions for using CAMS can be found on the DHCD website. Click on the CAMS System Link at the top right corner of the webpage.

CLIENT-AGENCY FORMS

The local administrator must ensure the following EHARP forms are appropriately completed and signed by the client where applicable: 1) APPLICATION; 2) AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE FORM; 3) HOMEOWNER/RENTER AGREEMENT FORM. 4) CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION



Essential Home & Accessibility Repair Program Guidelines

CERTIFICATION

When the project is completed, the local agency must upload into CAMS documentation of the cost of the work completed (i.e. contractor invoice) and after pictures along with the Certification of Completion Form for reimbursement.

FUNDS DISBURSEMENT

- Initial contracts will be made to local service providers only to establish and assign coverage areas for the upcoming funding year.
- Prior to beginning each job, the local service provider will submit in CAMS an application for reservation of funds for each of its jobs to DHCD for approval and funding. ‘Before’ pictures must be provided with this request. Pictures should be clear, oriented correctly and labeled. Black and white photos will not be accepted.
- Once the application has been approved in CAMS, providers will fund each repair upfront and will then be reimbursed by DHCD once the Certification of Completion, financial supporting documents (i.e. contractor invoices, receipts) and after pictures have been submitted in CAMS as a remittance request. ‘After’ pictures should be clear, oriented correctly, taken from approximately the same position as the before pictures and labeled. Black and white photos will not be accepted.
- Local providers may pay for the repairs and seek reimbursement or request funds to pay the contractor invoice upon completion. DHCD will not reimburse for work that exceeds the approved scope of work or is sub-standard.

REALLOCATION OF UNSPENT FUNDS

Beginning with the 2024 allocation, allocation benchmarks will be implemented. Agencies are required to commit at least 40% of their allocation by the end of the calendar year (December 31). Agencies that have not committed 40% may be asked to submit a spending plan or asked to reallocate funding toward another agency. Assessment of final reallocation may begin as early as March to avoid leaving unspent funds at the end of the fiscal year (June 30).



Essential Home & Accessibility Repair Program Guidelines

LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDER CLIENT FILE MUST CONTAIN:

- Application for Assistance
- EHARP Authorization and Release Form- SIGNED by Local Administrator and Homeowner or Tenant and Landlord
- Homeowner/Renter Agreement SIGNED by Local Administrator and Homeowner or Tenant and Landlord
- Contractor or subcontractor work estimate and change orders when applicable
- Itemized contractor or subcontractor invoice: providing minimally a material & labor breakdown
- Certification of Completion
- Photos of 'before' and 'after' repair(s)
- Income, property ownership, and disability supporting documentation must be provided by the applicant and maintained in the client file



Essential Home & Accessibility Repair Program Guidelines

CONTACT INFORMATION

EHARP Mailing Address:

Department of Housing and Community
Development
Division of Housing/EHARP
Main Street Centre
600 East Main Street, Suite 300
Richmond, Virginia 23219

EHARP Program Contact:

Jennifer Bissett
Housing Program Administrator
Telephone: 804-664-4141
E-mail: jennifer.bissett@dhcd.virginia.gov



Essential Home & Accessibility Repair Program Guidelines