Virginia Rent Relief Program

Rent Relief Program Informational Session

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Virginia Rent Relief Program – The Basics

- The Virginia Rent Relief Program (RRP) is designed to support and ensure housing stability across the Commonwealth during the coronavirus pandemic.
- This program has two doors of entry, one for landlords and one for tenants.
- The same information is required of both parties, regardless of where the RRP application is initiated.
- RRP is offered to tenants and landlords statewide, with two exceptions:
  - Chesterfield and Fairfax Counties have elected to administer rent relief programs at the local level as allowed by Treasury’s Emergency Rental Assistance program.
  - Applicants are referred to these local programs for assistance and contact information for those programs is provided on all RRP websites.
Two Doors, One Program

- Tenants can apply for rent relief through the RRP Support Center online or by telephone
  - Online: applications.deval.us
  - Telephone: 703-962-1884

- Landlords can apply for rent relief on behalf of tenants through Virginia Housing’s online portal:
  - www.VirginiaHousing.com/RentRelief
RRP Tenant Eligibility

Three core eligibility requirements of the program:

1. Household’s current gross income must be at or below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI)

2. Household’s rent cannot exceed 150% of Fair Market Rent (FMR)

3. Demonstrated inability (self-certification) to make rent payments due to COVID-19
Required Documentation

1. Rental Agreement (valid lease or alternative lease documentation) which must include:
   - Tenant and Landlord’s full names
   - Monthly rent amount
   - What is included in the monthly rent (e.g., utilities, Internet, etc.)
   - Term of the lease (i.e., what month and year does the agreement begin and end)

2. Tenant/Landlord Ledger

3. Tenant Income Documentation

4. Landlord’s Virginia W-9

5. RRP Landlord/Tenant Agreement
Changes & Clarifications to RRP Guidelines

- Trusted third parties can now assist tenants and landlords with completing their applications and receive updates on the application status.
- ERA dollars now allow us to pay three months prospective rent for eligible tenants.
- Landlords and tenants can receive rent relief for no more than 15 months total, with reverification every three months.
- Tenants do not need to be in arrears in order to receive assistance.
- Individuals who qualify for Unemployment Insurance benefits do not need to attest to a COVID related negative financial impact.
  - Total household gross monthly income still cannot exceed 80% AMI.
  - Monthly rent must still be at or below 150% of FMR.
Other Important RRP Updates & Reminders

- Average payment amount is increasing
  - This is due to the length of time tenants have been in arrears and the fact that three prospective months are now automatically included for all eligible tenants
- Tenants can now email Virginia Housing and receive an update on the status of landlord initiated applications
- Households of three or less who access TANF, WIC, SNAP or LIHEAP do not need to provide additional income documentation
- Households receiving a housing subsidy are eligible for RRP assistance
  - However RRP can only pay for the tenant’s portion of their arrears and the current month – not the prospective three months
  - These households are also required to complete an income recertification with their housing provider before assistance can be provided
- The RRP Support Center and Virginia Housing are hiring additional staff
  - This has contributed to the increased rate of spending – most recent week cleared $10 million/week
## RRP Results as of March 24, 2021

### PROGRAM SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Unique Households Approved Since July 2020</td>
<td>28,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Amount Disbursed Since July 2020</td>
<td>$138.7 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Rent Relief Payment</td>
<td>$4,789</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Since July 2020, RRP has prevented more than 33,000 evictions – making landlords whole and keeping low to moderate income Virginians housed.

The household’s total gross income must be equal to or less than 80% of area mean income to qualify. 73% of those approved had average median incomes below 30%.
Households by Race

Race by Approved Households

- **25%** White households accounted for just over a quarter of those served
- **52%** Black households accounted for more than half of those served

- American-Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Multi-Racial
- Don't know/refused
- Asian
- Black or African-American
- White
- Missing Data
Useful RRP Links

Landlord Application Process: How it Works

1. Landlord submits a request for a profile in VH’s Grant Management system.
2. VH reviews landlord’s request – if approved, provides User Name and Password.
3. Landlord submits individual applications for eligible tenant.
4. VH staff reviews application and evaluates eligibility (two levels).
5. Application is awarded.
6. Request for funds is submitted.
7. VH sends funds to landlord.
Final Points for Landlords

- Download the User Guide
- Read, take your time with the User Guide
- Pay attention to the User Guide
- Follow the Instructions in the User Guide
- We have a User Guide
- Repeat

Questions? Email RentRelief@VirginiaHousing.com
Tenant Application Process: How it Works

Tenants go to applications.deval.us

Tenant affirm they are applying for help for a property not in Chesterfield or Fairfax counties

Tenant creates profile with their contact information and their landlord's email

Landlord receives email requesting a Virginia W-9 and a signed landlord agreement

Tenant completes application

Application submitted w/ all documentation; goes through two review levels

1. Check mailed via USPS to landlord
Outreach and Engagement

- **Outreach Goal:** to double-down on outreach within rural area, ESL communities, small landlords, communities of color

- **Strategies**
  - Creating Marketing Toolkit for partners
  - Marketing Flyer in five languages
  - RRP Outreach and Engagement Grant
  - Training third parties to assist with application process

- **We need your help!**
Next New Funding Tranche

- **American Recovery Plan Act**
  - ERA 2.0 – *estimated* $450 million
    - Deadline to spend is September 30, 2025
  - Homeowner Assistance (Mortgage Relief)
    - More info to come
Contact Information

General RRP Inquiries:
rrp@dhcd.virginia.gov

Virginia Housing Inquiries:
RentRelief@VirginiaHousing.com

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Questions?