COVID-19 Rent Relief Program

Frequently Asked Questions

The MaineHousing COVID-19 Rent Relief Program is for renters who cannot afford to pay their rent due to circumstances related to the Coronavirus pandemic. The program is designed to provide a one-time bridge payment of up to $500 for rent until the federal relief funds arrive. 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.

1) Who is eligible?

- **Income.** You may qualify if your anticipated monthly income is within the income limits, based on household size, in the chart below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Person</th>
<th>2 Person</th>
<th>3 Person</th>
<th>4 Person</th>
<th>5 Person</th>
<th>6 Person</th>
<th>7 Person</th>
<th>8 Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$3,696</td>
<td>$4,833</td>
<td>$5,971</td>
<td>$7,108</td>
<td>$8,245</td>
<td>$9,382</td>
<td>$9,596</td>
<td>$9,809</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Ability to Pay.** You may qualify if you are unable to pay your rent due to circumstances related to the Coronavirus. Examples include: being laid off; having your place of employment closed; reduced 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 Coronavirus pandemic.

- **Subsidized and Tax Credit Housing Excluded.** If you live in housing that receives any kind of rental subsidy, you are not eligible. For example, people who receive Section 8 Vouchers or live in Section 8 apartments or receive Rental Assistance from USDA’s Rural Development are not eligible. Renters who live in housing developments with mortgages financed by MaineHousing or a federal agency are not eligible. Renters in developments using low-income housing tax credits are not eligible. Renters in public housing are not eligible. In each of these cases, the renter is protected by other programs. Ask your landlord or property manager if you’re not sure.

- **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.

- **Pad Rents Allowed.** If you own a mobile home and rent space in a park, the park fee is eligible.

2) How much will the program pay?

The program will pay up to $500. This is a one-time benefit and limited to one payment per household.
3) **How do I apply?**

Apply on-line at MaineHousing’s web site, [www.mainehousing.org](http://www.mainehousing.org). Click on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Updates and Information section. Fill out the application and submit it as directed. If you do not have access to a computer, call your local Community Action Agency.

4) **How often can I apply?**

Once. This is a one-time benefit to help ease the burden until the federal relief funds start flowing.

5) **My rent is more than $500. What about the rest of it?**

Talk with your landlord. This benefit will help but you will still be obligated to pay the rest of your rent.

6) **If the $500 benefit is all I can pay right now, will I be evicted?**

No. If your landlord accepts the $500 payment, they agree not to evict you for non-payment of rent for the month for which the payment is made.

7) **Should I tell my landlord that I am applying?**

Yes. Communication between renters and landlords is important. Most landlords do not want to lose good tenants and good communication can only help.

8) **How will the application be processed? How will the landlord get paid?**

When you submit your application to MaineHousing, we will forward it to your local Community Action Agency who will process it. They will contact you and 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, the Community Action Agency will transfer the funds.

9) **How long will the program run?**

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

10) **What if my landlord refuses to participate?**

We hope that will not happen but if it does, there is nothing we can do to require the landlord to participate.