
Governor Pritzker Announces Applications Now Open For Nearly \$300 Million in Additional COVID-19 Emergency Assistance for Illinois Renters and Landlords

Press Release - Monday, December 06, 2021

CHICAGO - Building on Illinois' COVID-19 support response for Illinois renters and landlords, the Illinois Housing Development Authority announced that applications are now open for the second round of the Illinois Rental Payment (ILRPP) program, which Governor Pritzker announced on October 27.

The reopening of ILRPP will provide an additional \$297 million to renters and landlords in an effort to prevent evictions and keep families safe and secure while they regain their financial footing. It is the third major housing relief initiative in response to the pandemic in Illinois, with the state executing the nation's best assistance program in 2020.

Applications will be accepted beginning today through 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 9, 2022, at illinoishousinghelp.org. IHDA will begin processing applications as they are submitted, and money from this round will begin to be distributed to approved Illinoisans before the end of the calendar year. The additional ILRPP funding is expected to assist more than 32,500 Illinois households.

"I came into the governor's office with a promise to rebuild and revitalize Illinois' social services sector. That begins with doing everything possible so Illinoisans can find an affordable home and stay there," **said Governor JB Pritzker**. "Even with all the challenges of the pandemic, we are delivering on that promise. Illinois has given out more of our rental assistance to help vulnerable renters and their landlords than any other state. We are first in the nation at putting those dollars to work to support our state's residents."

"The need for housing assistance continues to be great in the face of the continued challenges brought on by the pandemic," **said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton**. "We see the struggle and stand with residents as our administration continues to put policies and resources to work to decrease homelessness in Illinois. Housing is also about being well and ensuring we can keep families housed is key to keeping Illinoisans safe and healthy during these unprecedented times."

ILRPP provides direct funding to support Illinois tenants unable to pay their rent due to a COVID-19-related loss of income. Approved applicants will receive one-time grants of up to \$25,000, paid directly to their landlords on their behalf. If the landlord chooses not to participate in the program, tenants may receive payments directly to make rental payments. In this application round, assistance will cover up to 18 months of emergency rental payments, including up to 15 months of missed payments and up to three months of future payments. Rent owed from June 2020 through April 2022 may be paid for with ILRPP funds. Priority will be given to households earning less than 50% of AMI and to households with one or more members who have been unemployed for at least 90 days.

"The initial round of the Illinois Rental Payment Program highlighted the continued need for assistance as we continue our recovery from this terrible pandemic," **said IHDA Executive Director Kristin Faust**. "As we reopen this vital assistance program to help Illinois families, seniors and the most vulnerable, Governor Pritzker is continuing to work with Treasury and our elected officials to advocate for additional funding to ensure no one is forced from their home as a result of COVID-19."

Tenant eligibility requirements:

- Household lives in Illinois and rents their home as their primary residence.
- Household must have experienced a financial hardship directly or indirectly due to the pandemic.
- Household income is below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI), adjusted for household size.
- Household must have an unpaid rent balance.
- Proof of citizenship is not required. Rental assistance is not a "public charge" benefit.
- Tenants residing in state- or federally-subsidized housing are eligible to apply.

"Housing is a right and keeping people in their homes is one of the most important things we can do to continue fighting COVID-19. These new Emergency Rental Assistance funds will prevent homelessness and foreclosures and help people regain the financial stability they lost during the pandemic and get back on their feet," **said Congressman Jesús "Chuy" García (IL-04).**

Renters may apply for ILRPP assistance even if they received emergency rental assistance in the past through IHDA or one of the other units of government administering federal rental assistance. Households that received previous assistance, however, may not receive more than 18 months of total combined assistance, regardless of the source. In addition, households that received federal rental assistance previously may not receive further ILRPP payments for those same months previously covered. IHDA will adjust the ILRPP grant amount in these situations to avoid duplication of assistance.

"While the pandemic created widespread financial hardship across our state, it was households with the lowest incomes, and too often people of color, who shouldered a disproportionate share of the burden," **State Representative Barbara Hernandez (D-Aurora) stated.** "We needed to do all that we could to deploy ILRPP assistance as quickly and as equitably as possible, and we will continue to work with IHDA, IDHS and others to ensure those hard-hit households continue to receive the help and support they need to save their homes."

In the first ILRPP application round, IHDA approved more than 62,400 applications and paid out \$571 million on behalf of renters experiencing pandemic-related hardships. Approximately 55 percent of the approved applications assisted households who had been unemployed for more than 90 days, and 87 percent of approvals assisted very-low-income households to keep vulnerable tenants in their homes. The program provided an average of \$9,152 per household. Since 2020, the Pritzker Administration has provided over \$800 million in emergency rental assistance to help keep more than 108,500 Illinois seniors, families and others safely housed.

"I own three buildings with 17 rental units and, when that pandemic hit, I had tenants who struggled and could not pay rent due to loss of jobs or a reduction of income," **said property owner Luis Campoverde.** "I work hard to pay my bills and to pay my mortgage, but the mortgage companies did not have any assistance for me, and loss of rent meant loss of ability to pay my bills. Luckily, I was able to get rental assistance through ILRPP for five of my tenants, and I want to share how happy I was to have this program available for my tenants and all the others out there still struggling."

According to the latest [report](#) released from the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Illinois continues to be a national leader in providing critical emergency rental assistance to vulnerable households impacted by the pandemic. Illinois leads all other states in disbursing the initial emergency rental assistance from the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, with 94 percent of all funds allocated to the state, as well as directly to other municipalities, now in the hands of eligible renters and landlords as they regain their financial footing.

"The Illinois Rental Payment Program is an extraordinary effort between state and local agencies, the General Assembly and non-profit agencies throughout the state strenuously working to deliver more than half a billion dollars in direct financial assistance to renters, landlords and the communities in which they reside," **said Michelle Gilbert, legal director of the nonprofit Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing.** "Illinois has been a national leader in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, but we're not done yet. More help is on the way, and I encourage anyone still struggling to pay their rent to apply for ILRPP assistance beginning December 6."

This new round of ILRPP is funded through an appropriation in the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2), which was signed into law by President Joe Biden in March 2021. The \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus relief designed to speed up recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic included \$21.55 billion allocated for state and local government rental assistance programs. IHDA and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) are the two agencies with the lead responsibility to provide statewide rental assistance on behalf of the state of Illinois. In addition, IHDA will be partnering with additional grantees in administering this vital assistance program to ensure this assistance gets to renters and landlords as expeditiously as able.

"Having stable housing is critical to families recovering from the economic impact of COVID-19," **said Grace B. Hou, Secretary, Illinois Department of Human Services.** "IDHS and our non-profit partners are committed to provide linguistically and culturally-appropriate housing and legal assistance needed to prevent eviction and homelessness for those who need it most."

In addition to ILRPP, as an extension and expansion of its current efforts, IDHS is assisting with the deployment of housing, utilities and legal assistance. The department also offers other types of support for those who are at risk of homelessness, providing direct legal representation and mediation, court-based rental assistance support and intensive case management interventions to address other barriers to housing stability that people may face. The available support services are designed with equitable policies and practices that focus on those most impacted by COVID-19 and those communities most vulnerable to experiencing homelessness.

For more information and updates on the program, please visit illinoishousinghelp.org.

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