



Resident Applicant Frequently Asked Questions

Atlanta COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Fund

Relief Fund to Provide Immediate Support to City of Atlanta Residents in Need

What is the purpose of the Atlanta COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Fund?

As of March 4, 2022, the City of Atlanta has been awarded \$20.2 million in reallocated ERAP 1 funding from the U.S. Department of Treasury Rental Assistance Funds for the Atlanta COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Program. The program provides financial assistance to eligible households for the payment of rent, rent arrears, security deposits, utilities, utility arrears, internet, water, sewer, and trash removal. This program seeks to fill the gaps for those, who have lost income due, directly or indirectly, to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Atlanta COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Program Fund will be administered through United Way of Greater Atlanta (UWGA) in collaboration with local nonprofits to disperse the funds in the community, under the ERAP 1 federal guidelines.

What are the eligibility criteria?

The applicant should be an adult tenant listed on the lease of the rental property in an eligible household. To be eligible to receive the emergency rental, utilities, and/or security deposit assistance, you must meet one or more of the criteria below.

- Your place of residence must be within the incorporated city limits of Atlanta, GA;
- Your place of residence must be a rental property, single or multi-family home, or mobile home;
- You must be able to show that you are unable to pay the full or a portion of past due rent and/or utilities or unable to pay the security deposit as a result of a recent loss of income (job loss, furlough, reduced work hours, or to care for school-aged child(ren) mandated to remote learning, or medical hospitalization/diagnosis of COVID-19, etc.);
- You must have qualified for unemployment benefits (awarded after March 13, 2020), qualified for pandemic unemployment benefits, or experienced a loss of income due, directly or indirectly, to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- You must be living in unsafe or unhealthy conditions, at risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability;
- You must have proof of job loss or reduction in hours/pay (separation notice from employer and unemployment benefits award letter or pay stubs prior to the reduction in pay/hours and at the time of the application, or any other income documentation.
- You must have a current executed lease (signed by both you and the property official/landlord) and, as the applicant, be listed on the lease agreement (unless applying for security deposit assistance – provide welcome/move-in letter); and
 - a. Current household income after March 13, 2020, must be equal to or less than 80% AMI as defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (see Table 1) for renters;

Table 1: Maximum Income Limits for Renters – 80% AMI

Number of persons	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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in household								
Maximum annual income limits	\$48,300	\$55,200	\$62,100	\$68,950	\$74,500	\$80,000	\$85,500	\$91,050
Maximum monthly Income limits	\$4,025	\$4,600	\$5,175	\$5,745.83	\$6,208.33	\$6,666.67	\$7,125	\$7,587.50

What are the allowable expenses I can apply for?

As of March 4, 2022, Atlanta COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Program Funds can be applied to current/past due (arrears) expenses **up to 15 months** or prospective (future months) expenses up to **three (3) months** for rent, gas utilities, electric utilities, apartment security fees, security deposit, trash removal, and internet services. However, the total months of assistance cannot exceed 15 months.

To receive payment for internet fees, applicants must prove that at the time of the expense they have/had a school-age child mandated to participate in remote learning, or they were mandated to work from home as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Is there a limit on how many months of arrears or assistance you can receive?

Yes. As of March 4, 2022, an applicant can only receive up to 15 months of rental assistance, including arrears and prospective months’ rent or utilities. Applicants may receive assistance with prospective months’ rent for up to 3 months.

If I have previously received assistance through the City of Atlanta COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Fund, am I still eligible to receive additional assistance?

Yes. However, as of March 4, 2022, applicants who have received 15 months or more of assistance are not eligible to receive additional assistance. If you have previously received less than 15 months of assistance from the City of Atlanta COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Program Fund, you maybe eligible to submit a recertification for additional funding.

If I submitted my application prior to March 4, 2022, am I still limited to only 15 months of assistance?

Yes. All applications that are approved for funding after March 4, 2022, regardless of the original submission date are limited to 15 months of assistance. Unfortunately, City of Atlanta Emergency Housing Assistance Program Fund has expended all funding under the ERAP 2 – Federal Guidelines and is now only permitted to support applicants for a maximum of 15 months.

Does assistance receive during the previous Emergency Housing Assistance Program count towards the limit of assistance?

Yes. The assistance received by an applicant, who received assistance from the Emergency Housing Assistance Program after April 1, 2021, will be counted towards the 15 months of assistance an applicant is eligible for.

What documentation is needed?

- **Verification of Impact during the COVID-19 Pandemic** (ONE of the following is required):
 - Layoff, furlough, or termination letter from a former employer, effective after March 13, 2020



- Letter from employer (or other documentation) indicating reduced work hours/income after March 13, 2020
- Provide one (1) month of paystubs. When the household member has experienced a reduction in hours/income, then one (1) month of paystubs prior to and after the financial hardship was experienced must be provided
- Proof of COVID-19 Related Medical Expenses for one or more household members
- Proof of Unemployment Benefits awarded after March 13, 2020, or proof of awarded Pandemic Unemployment Benefits, or
- Written self-attestation of financial hardship, directly or indirectly, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.
 - Household members who were unemployed prior to the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic and face continued unemployment due to COVID-19 must document proof of their active job search within 90 days of the submission date of the application. Documentation of job search includes, but is not limited to written/printed job search history from an online search engine, resume submission platform, etc., e.g. Indeed's Application History.
- **Income verification** (**ONE** of the following, if applicable, are required for each adult member of the household unless they are a dependent and/or a full-time student – *if a full-time student is Head of Household & applying for funding they must provide one of the following*). All documentation must have identifying information of the applicant and/or household member to be accepted and included in the application file.
 - Self-attestation of Zero Income
 - Self-attestation of Cash Income Only (meaning no financial accounts or financial records)
 - *Self-attestation of current income, when official payroll documentation is unavailable or not accessible.*
 - One (1) month of paystubs, minimally. *The paycheck stub must have the **year-to-date gross** income listed.*
 - A letter from your current and/or past employer stating your pay for the last 4 weeks as well as your year-to-date income, if you are paid in cash, by personal check, or do not have a copy of your paystubs. *Your employer's letter must be on company letterhead with the employer's phone number, email address, and fax number for verification.*
 - Official Determination letter or annual renewal letter to receive benefits from SNAP, WIC, etc. dated January 2020 or later (*if you are unable to provide paystubs/paychecks*)
 - Self-employment Certification form and signed, dated, and filed IRS Tax Form 1040 for tax year 2020 or 2021.
 - Signed, dated and filed IRS Tax Form 1040 for 2020/2021
 - Award letters from pensions and military allotments may be provided as proof of income.
 - Proof of unemployment benefits, if applicable. *If applicant is applying for unemployment benefits, they do not have to provide proof of application, but they will*



need to verify income during the re-certification process if they come back for additional funding.

- Bank statements for the past 90 days (checking and savings accounts) if you are not able to provide income verification from any other source.
- Any and all adult income for the entire household (wages, unemployment benefits, SSI, child support, alimony, investment income, and retirement income [including pensions], etc.).
- **Verification of Residency** (ALL of the following are required)
 - Last four (4) digits of Social Security Number or Consulate ID or Passport for each member of the household. *Applicants DO NOT need to provide a copy of their Social Security Card or comparable documents.*
 - Applicant Photo ID
 - Current Executed Lease – applicant’s name must be on the lease – or written attestation from a verifiable landlord
 - Welcome Letter or move-in notice from apartment complex showing address (*if applying for security deposit; however, a full lease will be required within 15 days of payment*)
 - Tenant Current Billing Statement
 - Proof of Rental/Utility Subsidy (award letter or annual recertification letter)
 - Attestation of any prior rental assistance you have received since March 2020
 - Tenant Rental Ledger (required from Landlord)
 - Verification of Address within the Program service area
 - When applicants/households are currently living in unsafe or unhealthy living conditions, the following additional documentation is required:
 - Copies of written complaints to landlords
 - Copies of work orders to/from landlords regarding living conditions, or
 - Any other sufficient documentation to support the unsafe or unhealthy living condition

What documents are required to be submitted with a recertification?

The following documents must be submitted with each recertification affidavit request:

- New Landlord Verification Form (for rent request only)
- A current rent ledger (hard copy for recertification requests or attached (uploaded) with the electronic landlord verification form for new requests).
- Proof of rental/utility subsidy, when not clearly indicated in the rent ledger. The ledger must detail the type of subsidy, subsidy paid portion and the required tenant pay portion.
- Current income documentation when 90 days or more has elapsed since the submission of the initial/original application.
- Current utility billing statement for the same address in the initial application, when applicable.



Can I still apply if I live outside of the City of Atlanta?

Unfortunately, this program is only able to serve residents, who live within the incorporated city limits of Atlanta. Please check your address at gis.atlantaga.gov/unitedway.

Does every person in the household need to supply proof of income?

Yes, every adult listed as a household member in the application and on the lease agreement must provide proof of income. In cases where income documentation is not accessible or if the household member(s) have no income, then they may use the appropriate written attestation form.

Can I still apply if I am unemployed?

Yes. However, your unemployment must be a result of COVID-19.

Must I be behind on rent to get emergency rental assistance?

No. The applicant is not required to have arrears to be eligible for emergency rental assistance. However, the applicant will only be eligible for prospective rent expenses or utility expenses up to three (3) months.

Can I apply if I reside in subsidized housing?

Yes, applicants, who receive subsidized housing, (Section 8, Housing Choice Voucher, etc.), are eligible to apply up to the monthly tenant responsible portion. The applicant must submit proof of the subsidy, i.e., initial approval notice or annual renewal notice. If the approval or renewal notice is unavailable, the applicant's rent ledger with the subsidy type, amount, and tenant pay portion is acceptable.

Can I apply for future month's rent?

Yes. In certain situations, with special approval, applicants are eligible to receive assistance for up to 3 months of prospective rent. Applicants do not have to have arrears to be considered for prospective rent and should be able to provide an explanation as to why they believe they will not be able to pay for future months. Also, months paid under prospective rent must still be covered by the current lease on file.

What are the dates for in-person events? How do you register for the in-person events?

You are able to register for in-person events. Once available, applicants can register for in-person events by visiting: <https://unitedwayehaprogram.eventbrite.com/>.

Do you need to have arrears to receive rent assistance?

You do not need to have rental arrears in order to receive rent assistance for prospective months' rent. You can be considered for assistance for up to three (3) months of prospective rent when all eligibility requirements are met and a complete application with acceptable documentation is submitted, including but not limited to a current, fully executed lease covering the prospective paid period or with a valid month-to-month clause covering the prospective paid period. In addition, the landlord must agree to participate in the Program and agree not to evict you for 30



days after the period covered by their prospective rent.

What is required for you to receive security deposit assistance or relocation assistance?

If you are eligible and have not exceeded the maximum number of service months, you are able to receive assistance with relocation expenses, i.e., rental application fees, security deposits, and/or first month's rent, etc. In cases where you reside in the property/unit for less than four (4) months, Landlords must agree to return security deposit funds to United Way.

I am not behind on my rent – just my utilities and fees to the landlord or utility company, may I still apply?

Yes. As long as you meet the eligibility requirements, and have not exceeded 15 months in assistance. However, a full application is required, including but not limited to an executed lease agreement..

I was evicted already or am homeless, may I apply?

Yes, as long as you meet the eligibility requirements, have not exceeded 15 months of assistance, and are relocating to a new eligible residence within the City of Atlanta limits. Applicants will need to provide approval to occupy the unit and a welcome letter with move-in fees from the new landlord/property management company with their application to receive assistance with a security deposit and first month's rent at a new residence. Applicants are also eligible to receive up to three months' prospective rent. Within 15 days of receipt of payment or at the time of an additional funds request, whichever comes first, the applicant must provide a fully executed lease agreement for the file.

What if I do not have a written lease, but just pay month-to-month?

You are a tenant for the purposes of this application, and you may complete an application. You will need to provide either an expired lease with a "month-to-month" clause or provide a written attestation from a verifiable landlord, which includes:

- Full address of the property
- Landlord/property owner contact information (name, address, phone, and email)
- Tenant name and all approved occupants of the property
- Terms of lease
 - Base rent, plus any other fees included with rent (including eviction fees and/or month-to-month fees)
 - Dates of the lease agreement and month-to-month provisions
 - Approved subsidy type and amount (subsidy and tenant-paid portion)
 - Date and signature

I am not a tenant – I am a homeowner behind on my mortgage. May I apply?

Unfortunately, no. This program only provides assistance for residential dwelling rental obligations. However, if the applicant is residing in a rent-to-own property and still paying rent, the applicant is eligible, when all other requirements are met.

How much is the payment?

Assistance will be based on current household income and total monthly rent, utilities, and/or security deposit amount. There is no cap to on the dollar amount of assistance received but amounts



above \$15,000 will require special approval and additional supporting documentation. Financial assistance is only available for up to 15 months per household.

Will individuals who received Atlanta COVID-19 Housing Assistance have to pay the money back?

No. This is not a loan. It is a grant and will not have to be paid back. However, if we discover that a recipient has falsified documents and has somehow defrauded the program, the money will need to be repaid.

Will I have to pay 2021/2022 taxes on this money?

No, the assistance is not income for the applicant and will not be considered taxable income for the tenant. The payment will not affect household income for purposes of determining eligibility for other Federal Government assistance or benefits.

How will I get the money?

The Atlanta COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Funds will be distributed directly to landlords or utility companies.

Are there preferences for specific households to receive priority funding?

Yes. Prioritization of assistance will be given to households with income less than 50% of area median income or households with one or more individuals that have not been employed for the 90-day period preceding the date of application.

HH Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Annual Income	\$30,200.00	\$34,500.00	\$38,800.00	\$43,100.00	\$46,550.00	\$50,000.00	\$53,450.00	\$56,900.00
Monthly Income	\$2,516.67	\$2,875	\$3,233.33	\$3,591.67	\$3,879.17	\$4,166.67	\$4,454.17	\$4,741.67

Is the process for choosing awardees equitable and fair?

Yes. We will not discriminate based on race, sex, marital status, physical or mental disability, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, presence of children, source of income, sexual orientation, and family responsibilities.

Why do you need my personal information and documents?

This program is funded by the United States Treasury. The Treasury Department requires information and documentation to show that City of Atlanta and its designated representatives has properly used the funds for this program. Required documentation includes information such as income information, social security numbers, and/or other information and documents.

City of Atlanta and its designated representatives may need to provide the information you share with the Treasury Department to facilitate proper tracking use of funds. If you fail to provide any required



information and/or documentation, your application may not be processed.

What documents are landlords required to provide?

Landlords will need to complete the Landlord Rent Verification Form, provide a copy of the tenant ledger, and provide a copy of a W-9 tax form. The required W-9 tax form may be found here:

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf> .

How and when will landlords and/or utility companies be notified?

Service providers will contact landlords and/or utility companies via email/phone within 10-14 business days of you being approved.

Does my landlord and/or utility company have to accept the emergency assistance payment?

Unfortunately, no. The Service Provider will contact your landlord and/or utility company and explain how the program works. Your landlord and/or utility company will need to decide to accept this housing assistance payment and sign the required forms. The service provider cannot force your landlord and/or utility company to participate. If your landlord and/or utility company decides not to agree to participate, the service provider will have to deny the application for their current property but can help with assistance to relocate by providing security deposit and first month's rent and up to three (3) months of prospective rent. The Service Provider will notify you if that happens.

How can I apply for the Atlanta COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Program?

Please apply to the Atlanta COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Program by completing your application at the following link: <https://www.unitedwayatlanta.org/atlanta-covid-19-emergency-housing-assistance-program/>. In-Person Events will be available for households to apply to the program, please stay on the lookout for more information via the United Way website. Registration will be located on the UW website and is required to receive in-person assistance.

You will be required to upload all of your documentation to your application through the application link above. If all documents are not uploaded, your application will not be processed. If you need assistance with completing the online client application and/or a list of service providers performing intake by phone or in person, then please contact 2-1-1.

Ways to Contact 2-1-1:

- Access the client application by visiting www.unitedwayatlanta.org or by <https://www.unitedwayatlanta.org/atlanta-covid-19-emergency-housing-assistance-program/>
- Visit <http://211online.unitedwayatlanta.org/> (must use Google Chrome to change language preferences)
- Call 2-1-1 to speak with a live 2-1-1 Community Connection Specialist. Hours are limited from 8:00 am to 7:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

Due to high call volumes, the above listed options are preferred.

Which Service Provider Organizations are supporting the Atlanta COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Program?

Please find a list of the 8 Service Provider Organizations, who will be accepting new applications below:



Buckhead Christian Ministry	Homes of Light, LLC	Housing Plus, Inc.
CHRIS 180-Martin Luther King Jr. Resources Collaborative	Rebecca’s Tent, Inc.	Urban League of Greater Atlanta

When is the deadline to submit an application?

The last date that the Atlanta COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Program will receive and approve applications is December 29, 2022. However, the program may stop accepting applications prior to December 29, 2022 if funds are depleted.

What is the application review and approval process?

After submitting your application, documentation must be provided at the time of application or within 3-7 business days of the application submission date. The Service Provider will notify you by e-mail or phone once application has been received. Please allow up to 14 business days for a team member to review your case once your documentation has been fully submitted. After your case has been reviewed, the team member will contact you to notify you of next steps. If requested documentation is not received within 7 business days, your application will be closed, and you will have to contact your service provider to reopen your application.

If I am denied assistance, can I appeal the decision?

Yes. Applicants, who are denied participation or terminated from the program may appeal the decision to the Atlanta COVID-19 Housing Assistance Fund Program Manager with the Service Provider. Appeals must be requested in writing and received by the Program Manager within five (5) days of the date of notice of denial or participation or termination of continued participation. Upon receipt of an appeal request, the Program Manager will schedule an in-person (or virtual) interview for case review with the applicant within 10 days of receiving the request. Applicants/former participants shall be allowed to present their case for an appeal at the review (including presenting documentation, explanations, and clarifications). The Program Manager will make an appeal decision and notify applicants within 10 days of the case review. The decision of the Program Manager is final and cannot be appealed.

If an applicant or former participant is successful in their appeal, their ability to receive assistance will depend on whether any Atlanta COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Program funds are available on the date of the appeal decision. A successful appeal decision does not guarantee receipt of assistance.

How can I find out more information about the Atlanta COVID-19 Housing Assistance Program?

You can contact United Way 2-1-1, which is a free, confidential, and available in 140 different languages. Ways to Contact 2-1-1:

- Access the client application by visiting www.unitedwayatlanta.org or by <https://www.unitedwayatlanta.org/atlanta-covid-19-emergency-housing-assistance-program/>
- Visit <http://211online.unitedwayatlanta.org/> (must use Google Chrome to change language preferences)
- Call 2-1-1 to speak with a live 2-1-1 Community Connection Specialist. Hours are limited from 8 am to 7 pm, Monday through Friday.

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