



HCV NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2021



Emergency Rental Assistance Program

Do you need assistance paying your rent, utility bills, and more?

APPLY TO SEE IF YOU QUALIFY!

Has COVID-19 affected your ability to pay rent?
You may be eligible for assistance with current or past due payments.

How can ERAP (Emergency Rental Assistance Program) help?

ERAP provides financial assistance for the following:

- ⇒ Up to 12 months of overdue rent – going back to March 13, 2020
- ⇒ Up to 12 months of overdue utility or home energy costs – going back to March 13, 2020
- ⇒ Up to 3 months of current or future months' rent at a time
- ⇒ Up to 3 months of current or future months' utility costs at a time
- ⇒ Housing-related costs due to COVID-19 such as relocation assistance, security deposit, and rental application fees

Each household is eligible for up to 15 months of total assistance under ERAP.

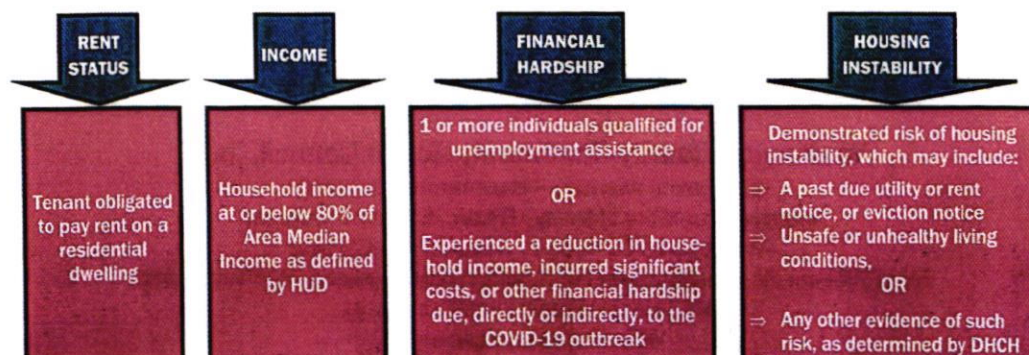
ERAP cannot pay for rental and utility costs which have been or will be covered under another funding source (no duplication of benefits).

The tenant may apply for assistance or their landlord may apply for assistance on the tenant's behalf.

Tenants must sign the application and attest all information in the application is true.

To be eligible for ERAP, a household must meet all four eligibility criteria:

- ⇒ Legally obligated to pay rent or utility costs
- ⇒ Have annual household income under 80% of the Area Median Income for their county
- ⇒ Qualify for unemployment assistance OR have financial hardship directly or indirectly related to COVID-19
- ⇒ Be at risk of losing their housing or utilities, currently homeless, or need to relocate housing units due to unsafe, unsanitary, or overcrowded housing conditions



HCV Contact Info

Inspector

Don Harkcom X 161

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HCV Housing Specialists

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Sharon Deneen X 152

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Portability/Intake Specialist

Liz Donovan X 184

ldonovan@hagerstownha.com

HCV Program Supervisor

Holly Hooper X 123

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Washington County Area Median Income:

If the household has annual income below 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI) for their county or has a household member who has been unemployed for the last 90 days, their application will be prioritized for assistance.

| Persons in Household | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 30% AMI | \$16,250 | \$18,550 | \$21,960 | \$26,500 | \$31,040 | \$35,580 | \$40,120 | \$44,660 |
| 50% AMI | \$27,050 | \$30,900 | \$34,750 | \$38,600 | \$41,700 | \$44,800 | \$47,900 | \$51,000 |
| 80% AMI | \$43,250 | \$49,400 | \$55,600 | \$61,750 | \$66,700 | \$71,650 | \$76,600 | \$81,550 |

Minimum Required Documentation

The applicant must attach the following supporting documents to the application for it to be considered complete and to ensure timely processing:

- ⇒ **Copy of lease or alternative documentation** of rental unit, address, and monthly rent amount (such as letter from landlord)
- ⇒ **Documentation of household income** (examples: paystubs, W-2s or other wage statements, unemployment benefits statements, tax filings, bank statements demonstrating regular income, or an attestation from an employer)
- ⇒ **Documentation of housing instability and overdue payments** (examples: overdue rent, overdue utility notice, eviction notice, letter from homeless program or community-based organization, evidence of unsafe, unsanitary, or overcrowded housing conditions)
- ⇒ **Documentation of relocation or new unit expenses if requesting assistance for other housing-related costs** (examples: bills, invoices, or leases showing security deposits owed, rental application fees, etc.)
- ⇒ **Landlord / property owner W-9** (if landlord agrees to accept payment and ERAP concessions)

Documentation of financial hardship is NOT needed – tenants may self-certify they meet the requirements.

Supporting documentation for the application may be accepted in multiple formats – digital copy, photo, email, etc.

Original documents are NOT required. When copies of third-party source documentation are not available, attestations from caseworkers or other service providers or community organizations may be accepted to document household eligibility.

If the applicant is unable to provide required documentation, the tenant must self-certify they are eligible to receive assistance.

A staff person will follow up with the tenant to determine whether they meet the program requirements.

TO APPLY FOR ERAP

GO TO: <http://www.wccac.org/services/emergency-rental-assistance-program-erap/> to download a copy of the application from CAC's website or stop by the office to pick one up.

Washington County Community Action Council, Inc.

117 Summit Avenue ~ Hagerstown MD 21740

Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday, 8:30 am–4:00 pm

Phone: 301-797-4161 Fax: 301-791-9062

For ERAP specific questions and information please email: ERAP@wccac.org

CAC General Email: info@wccac.org

Website: www.wccac.org



- Pay your rent portion and utilities on time to avoid unnecessary late fees and court costs and to remain in good standing with the program.
- Report maintenance issues to your landlord in a timely manner.
- Report income changes within 14 days of occurrence.
- Do not allow people who are not on your voucher to live in your unit. This is a violation of the program and will get you terminated from the program.
- Abide by your lease requirements.
- Be a good neighbor.
- Do not pay more than your portion of the rent which is determined by your HCV Housing Specialist. Other charges such as maintenance are between you and your landlord.
- Report increases in family size to your HCV Housing Specialist and provide a birth certificate and Social Security Card for new babies and request an add on application to add adults to the household. Remember, adults need to apply and be approved before they came move in.
- Make sure you complete your recertification each year. It is a HUD requirement.
- LANDLORDS-ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS HAVE TO BE AUTHORIZED AND APPROVED BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY. ADDING ANYONE TO THE LEASE WITHOUT PRIOR HHA APPROVAL TO ADD THEM TO THE VOUCHER CAN BE CONSIDERED FRAUD.

Landlord and Tenant Portals

Have you registered for access to the tenant or landlord portal??

If you haven't, you are missing out on landlord payment histories, inspection dates, rent adjustments and more right at your fingertips. Contact your HCV Housing Specialist for your registration code if you do not have it.



What to do if you want to Move with your Voucher

1. Give a written 30 day moving notice to your landlord AND to your HCV Housing Specialist
2. Make sure you are in good standing by having your rent and utilities paid up to date and your recertification completed if due. You can not move with your voucher if you are not in good standing.
3. Decide if you want to stay in our jurisdiction or go portable to another area.
4. Start looking for units on Facebook Marketplace, Zillow, Apartments.com or MDHousingsearch.org
5. You will be mailed a Mover's packet which you will need to complete and return in order to get your voucher and landlord packet.
6. Drop of the completed landlord packet in our drop box to schedule an inspection.
7. DO NOT MOVE IN UNTIL YOU ARE NOTIFIED BY YOUR HCV SPECIALIST THAT YOUR UNIT PASSED INSPECTION!!!



Inspector's Corner

You will be notified by mail when your biennial inspection is scheduled. Please make the process easier for you and the inspector by being prepared. Units must pass an inspection at least biennially to stay on the program. Do not risk your housing assistance by not being home, or not getting repairs completed by the scheduled reinspection date. Landlords and tenants both need to do their part for inspections to pass and to ensure HAP payments are not interrupted.

Avoid Reinspection fees by completing required repairs before the reinspection date.

Inspection requirements can be found on our website www.hagerstownha.com

Rent Increases

Landlords please submit written requests for rent increases 60 days before your tenant's recertification date. For example, if your tenant recertification date is October 1st then submit your request to their Housing Specialist by July 31st. Rent can only be increased once a year. If you wish to change utility responsibility, this needs approved by the Housing Authority, please contact your tenant's Housing Specialist for more information.

City of Hagerstown Codes

Exterior Inspection Checklist

302.1 Sanitation

Property is free from litter, trash, discarded items, rubbish, and debris; only furniture designed for exterior use is on the exterior of the property including porches; property is free from accumulations of yard waste; property is free from animal feces

302.3 Private Sidewalk/Driveway

Sidewalk is good condition; sidewalk is free from tripping hazards; sidewalk is continuous

302.4 Weeds

Grass is maintained to a height of less than 10 inches; property is free from any noxious weeds; property is free from hazardous or injurious weeds to human health

302.4.1.5 Weeds in the Sidewalk

Sidewalk is free and clear of any grass or weeds

302.7 Accessory Structures (Garages, Sheds, fences, retaining walls, gazebos, carports)

Structure is structurally sound; roof shingles are in good repair and free from defects; all windows are free from breaks or holes; garage and man doors are intact and free from breaks or deterioration; fences are intact and free from deteriorating conditions; gates are capable of performing functions as intended

Visit our Website to view the HUD Waivers put into place due to COVID-19.

www.hagerstownha.com



Family Self Sufficiency Program

Have you considered joining the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program? More individuals who have the Section 8 Voucher are learning how becoming a participant in the FSS program can assist them with their future goals.

Your goals can be anything you set your mind to, and as a participant you receive:

- An individual case manager to assist you in identifying your goals within time frames.

- Goals will vary based on each individual's needs and may include:

- * Employment

- * Going back to school

- * Budgeting

- * Credit repair

- * Financial Literacy

- * Home Ownership

- Connections to Community Resources to help you accomplish your goals.

- For eligible participants, as employment is obtained or earned income increases, FSS participants may be eligible to build an escrow savings account that is held by the Housing Authority.

- Any individual who is a recipient of the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program and Public Housing is eligible to enroll and take advantage of this opportunity!

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about the

Family Self-Sufficiency Program, please contact:

Tacy Myers, 301-733-6911, ext. 157. tmyers@hagerstownha.com

HCV PARTICIPANTS

The Annual

Recertification and

Biennial Inspection

are required by HUD for

you to maintain your

assistance. Do your

part by providing all the

necessary documents needed to recertify you and complete all repairs required

by the inspection. We can not continue assistance without completing those two

program requirements. Don't risk a program termination by not completing

your recert or completing your tenant repairs!