

# Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)

## Background

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 included funding for states to establish Emergency Rental Assistance Programs. Pennsylvania received approximately \$569 million to administer assistance to renters, landlords, and utility providers who have been affected by the pandemic and economic insecurity.

On February 5, 2021, Governor Wolf signed S.B. 109 into law, which officially established the state Emergency Rental Assistance Program under the Department of Human Services (DHS). The program is funded with federal dollars and DHS will oversee the distribution of funds to the 67 counties, provide program guidelines, complete program reporting, and manage any funding reallocation process.

## ERAP Benefits

The Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) was created to help renters dealing with financial challenges and landlords who have tenants unable to pay rent related to the COVID-19 pandemic. For eligible households, assistance can be provided for payment of rent, rental arrears, utility or home energy costs, utility or home energy cost arrears, or other expenses related to housing for up to 12 months (plus an additional three months, if necessary, to ensure housing stability for the household, subject to the availability of funds) that has been accrued on or after March 13, 2020.

## Applying for ERAP

ERAP is now taking applications. Applications for most counties can be submitted online at [www.COMPASS.state.pa.us](http://www.COMPASS.state.pa.us). Some counties are not using the COMPASS application. If your county is not using the COMPASS application, COMPASS will provide information on where and how to apply in your county. Pennsylvanians can apply for themselves as tenants or a landlord can apply on behalf of current tenant(s).

## ERAP Eligibility

A household must be responsible to pay rent on a residential property, and:

- One or more people within the household have qualified for unemployment benefits, had a decrease in income, had increased household costs, or experienced other financial hardship due directly or indirectly to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- One or more individuals in the household can show a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability; AND
- The household has an income at or below 80 percent of Area Median Income (AMI). Income limits vary by county. The household's annual income must be equal to or less than 80 percent of the AMI for their county. View income limits for your county on the [DHS ERAP](#) webpage found under the Coronavirus Citizen Resources.