

2021 ACDS EVICTION PREVENTION PROGRAM
FAQ FOR LANDLORDS
Eff., May 12, 2021

1. Is the tenant application completed online?

Yes.

2. Does the application have to be completed online?

No, but online is strongly preferred. If a tenant is not able to complete the application online him/herself, we have staff who can work with the tenant over the phone to complete an application. We can also provide a paper application as a last resort, but we do not encourage paper applications.

3. How do Spanish or other non-English speakers apply?

The online application is available in several languages by simply choosing the preferred language on a drop down menu. If applicants would like assistance in Spanish, we have Spanish-speaking staff available at ACDS, or those applicants may be referred to our partner agency, [Center of Help](#) for processing of their applications by bilingual staff. We have access to translation services for other languages and will work with applicants to ensure language is not a barrier to receiving assistance.

4. Can we help the tenant complete the application and submit the LL required paperwork at the same time?

Absolutely! We encourage landlords to assist the tenant with completing the application! Landlords will generally interact by email with case managers for providing documents needed from the landlord.

5. Does the tenant have to be impacted by COVID?

Yes. Pursuant to the rules associated with funding for the ERAP, the tenant's financial hardship must be directly *or indirectly* related to COVID-19.

6. If the lease provides for the payment of water and/or other utilities, is that included in what the rental assistance program will cover?

Yes.

7. Is there a requirement for the tenant to notify the LL if they vacate? Do we need to notify you if they move out?

The tenant is obligated to let us know if they move during a period when we are covering rent. We would expect you to tell us if you know a tenant has moved out while we are providing rental assistance, but we understand there may be instances when a tenant has moved out without your knowledge.

8. Are there limits to what arrears can be paid?

Yes. Because ERAP funds are to assist with the effects of the COVID-19 crisis, assistance can only be provided for expenses incurred after the crisis began. The ERAP can only provide payment for arrears incurred April 1, 2020 or after (unpaid rent for April, 2020 or later; March, 2020 cannot be covered).

9. Can a tenant get assistance with both arrears *and* assistance with their rent going forward?

Yes! In fact, we are encouraging applicants who are eligible for assistance with rental arrears to apply for prospective rent for the following three months at the same time. Ideally, eligible applicants will have their arrears paid and be approved for three months going forward as part of the same application. See the question below for more on prospective rent.

10. How does advance approval for future rental assistance work?

If tenants are eligible (at or below 80% AMI and affected by COVID), tenants will be pre-approved in three month increments. They may re-certify their eligibility and receive assistance for additional three month increments for up to a total of twelve months of assistance, including arrears, subject to funding availability. Tenants at or below 60% AMI will receive rental assistance for 100% of their rent. Tenants at 61-80% AMI will receive rental assistance for 75% of their rent; the tenant will be responsible for the remaining 25%. If the tenant's income dips to 60% AMI or below during a payment period, they can be considered for assistance at 100%.

11. How does ACDS know how much the tenant owes?

We prefer getting a ledger from the landlord so everyone is on the same page about what is owed. The tenant may also submit a copy.

12. What is the typical amount of time from beginning to end to receive the payment?

We so wish we could give you an estimate! If all documentation is provided and everything is signed properly, etc., the actual processing of an application does not take long. However, as of May 1, 2021, we have more than 1,800 households in the queue for

processing. We have hired additional case managers, but getting through the backlog will take a while. Generally, the last step will be completing all information for the landlord agreement and getting the agreement back from the landlord. Once the case manager has the signed agreement, the file will be submitted for approval and payment. Files are generally reviewed on the Friday after they are submitted, and assuming approval, payment is issued by check or EFT the following Friday.

13. We aren't allowed to evict a tenant for Tenant Holding Over for at least three months after we receive a payment for arrears or while the tenant is receiving ongoing rental assistance, but what if the tenant does something really bad during those three months and we believe we need to evict them before the three months are up?

The Landlord Agreement only prevents you from evicting the tenant as a tenant holding over. In other words, you can't evict solely because the tenant's lease has expired. The agreement does not prevent you from initiating eviction proceedings for other reasons, should circumstances warrant such action. However, if you evict before a three-month period of rental assistance has expired, we would expect you to notify ACDS and not accept rent payments if the tenant is no longer in your property.

14. We have properties in Prince George's County and in Baltimore City. Why are their requirements for landlords different from yours?

While tenant eligibility for ERAPs is set by the funding source for the Program, jurisdictions have some latitude in determining policy for how their programs will be run and what requirements are necessary and appropriate for the needs of their jurisdictions. As a result, programs differ in some respects from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

15. How much money is available for the ERAP, and where does the money come from?

The bulk of the funding for Anne Arundel County's ERAPs was appropriated as part of the Consolidated Act, 2021 – the massive federal budget bill that passed late last year and was signed into law. Maryland received over \$400 million in rental assistance funds. Of that, Anne Arundel received approximately \$17.3 million. Anne Arundel County has also been allocated \$13.7 million through the American Rescue Plan. Another \$5 million will come from HUD Community Development Block Grant funds designated for COVID-related rental assistance. Our program also has additional funding (though not nearly in the same amount) for ERA, but the majority comes from these three funding sources.

16. I evicted my tenant because they owed past due rent, can I get those arrears covered through this program?

No. ERAP funding can only be used to prevent eviction and to support and maintain housing stability. If an applicant for Emergency Rental Assistance no longer resides at the location where they had arrears, those arrears cannot be paid through this program. Eligible applicants in that situation are generally provided with funding to help them relocate and to pay prospective rent.

