CA COVID-19 Rent Relief Program
Utility Provider Listening Session

March 11, 2021
Legislative Background
AB 3088

- Originally passed in August of 2020 to cover through January 2021
- Provides protection from eviction for tenants unable to pay full rents due to COVID-19
- Requires tenants to pay at least 25% of rents due to maintain protections
- Amended to extend through June 2021.

SB 91

- State’s enactment of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 that allocated $25b nationally for emergency rental assistance
- Permanent solution for rental arrears incurred between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021 provides landlords with 80% of arrears in return for debt forgiveness
- Temporary solution for current rents, provides 25% of rent to maintain AB 3088 protections.
Implementation Options

**OPTION A**  
State-Administered Program  
Jurisdictions that did not receive a federal allocation will have their funds administered by the state program.  
Jurisdiction that did receive a federal allocation may opt into the state-run program.

**OPTION B**  
Locally Administered Program  
Jurisdictions that received a direct federal allocation agree to follow the SB 91 state program parameters and administer their state reservation as a block grant.

**OPTION C**  
Dual Program  
Jurisdictions with direct federal allocation opt not to follow SB 91 program parameters.  
State administers jurisdiction’s state reservation.
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<tr>
<th>OPTION A</th>
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<th>OPTION C</th>
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<td>• City of Moreno Valley</td>
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<td>• City of Fremont</td>
<td>• City of San Bernardino – councilmember mtg</td>
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<td>• Orange County – next week</td>
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<td>• City of Stockton</td>
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<td>• Stanislaus County</td>
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Current as of 2/21/21
State Program Overview
Program Overview

- **Focus**: Stabilize low-income households through the payment of rental and utility arrears to landlords and providers

- **Eligibility:**
  - Income must be below 80% Area Median Income (AMI) based on total household income for calendar year 2020 or the household’s monthly income at the time of application.
  - Household must have a COVID-19 impact.
Program Overview

- Participating utilities will be compensated 100% of unpaid utility arrears from April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021.
- If a landlord declines to participate, eligible households can still apply for and receive 25% of back rent owed for the covered period, however utilities are still at 100%.
- Utilities paid as part of the unit’s rent are managed by the landlord and not eligible for separate utility assistance.
- Rental and utility arrears will be prioritized over current and prospective rental and utility payments.
Partner Network

- Nonprofit and community partners with capacity to provide local on the ground and in-language support to residents.
- Three-tiered strategy:
  1. Promotion of the program
  2. Targeted outreach to eligible households
  3. Technical assistance to provide guidance to individuals as they navigate the application process
Outreach & Education

- People centered and culturally sensitive messaging.
- Outreach campaign includes:
  - Message development
  - Paid and earned media
  - Social media
  - Digital buy
  - Partnership development to supplement local partner network
- Develop local partner network toolkit and materials for jurisdictions.
Program Operations

- Centralized online portal with options for tenants and landlords to apply
- Multiple languages, accessibility assistance, live-person tutorials, and in-person support through the partner network
- Case management for applications that need assistance to reach completion
- Transparent eligibility screening with additional resources
- Portal routes applicants to appropriate jurisdictions for Options B and C
- Portal provides guidance to help applicants prepare necessary documents
- Application designed to collect the minimum information necessary to meet state and federal standards while also addressing de-duplication and fraud prevention
- Application facilitates landlord engagement in tenant submitted applications
- Application allows multiple options for utility assistance
- Utility assistance requests must be verified with the Utility provider and are paid directly to the provider.
Utility Assistance Application Water and Gas

G. Water & Gas Utility Assistance

If you are requesting Water and Gas utility assistance, please complete the amount you are requesting by each month below. Late fees or penalties should be entered in G.7 and G.14.

G.1. Are you requesting Water/Sewer/Trash assistance?
   - Yes
   - No

G.2. If you are requesting water/sewer/trash assistance, you must upload your most recent water/sewer/trash utility statement.

G.3. Water/Sewer/Trash Company Name

G.4. Water/Sewer/Trash Company Address
   - Address Line 1
   - Address Line 2
   - City
   - CA
   - Zip

G.5. Water/Sewer/Trash Account Number

G.6. Water/Sewer/Trash Assistance Request
   - April 2020

G.8. Are you requesting gas/propane assistance?
   - Yes
   - No

G.9. If you are requesting gas/propane assistance, you must upload your most recent gas/propane utility statement.

G.10. Gas/Propane Company Name

G.11. Gas/Propane Company Address
   - Address Line 1
   - Address Line 2
   - City
   - CA
   - Zip

G.12. Gas/Propane Account Number

G.13. Gas/Propane Assistance Request
   - April 2020
H. Electric & Other Utility Assistance
If you are requesting Electric and Other utility assistance, please complete the amount you are requesting by each month below. Late fees or penalties should be entered in H.7 and H.14.

**Electric Utility Assistance Requested**
H.1. Are you requesting electric utility assistance?
○ Yes
○ No

H.2. If you are requesting electric assistance, you must upload your most recent electric utility statement.

- [ ] Electric Utility Statement *Required

**Other Utility Assistance Requested**
H.8. Are you requesting Other utility assistance?
○ Yes
○ No

H.9. If you are requesting other energy cost assistance, you must upload your most recent other energy utility statement.

- [ ] Other Utility Cost Assistance Provider Statement *Required

H.3. Electric Company Name

H.4. Electric Company Address
Address Line 1
Address Line 2

City CA Zip

H.5. Electric Account Number

H.6. Electric Assistance Request
April 2020

H.10. Other Company Name

H.11. Other Energy Cost Address as appeared on bill
Address Line 1
Address Line 2

City CA Zip

H.12. Account Number

H.13. Other Assistance Request
April 2020
Application Steps

- **Tenant Application**
  - Complete applications routed to Landlord for key data confirmation

- **Landlord and Utility Verification**
  - Option for tenants whose landlords elect to not participate – tenant receives payment
  - Participating landlords will receive direct payment
  - Participating utilities will receive direct payment

- **Application Review**
  - Requests for additional documentation if necessary
  - Case management will make multiple attempts to get applications complete

- **Approved Application**
  - Routed for payment via direct deposit or paper check
  - Notification of payment with program participation details sent to both landlord and tenant, and utility provider if applicable
Implementation Timeline

March 2021
- State Program Call Center opens
- Communications and Outreach ramp-up
- March 15, 2021 State Program Portal opens for applications
- Priority Window 1 Priorities – Households earning less than 50% Area Median Income

April 2021
- Applications reviewed and payments issued on a rolling basis
- Ongoing education and outreach
- Add partners to the local partner network as necessary
- Priority Window 2 Priorities – areas disproportionally impacted by COVID-19

May 2021 and beyond
- Communications and outreach efforts continue
- Ongoing support and cooperation with locally run programs
- Program accepts applications and distributes rental payments until all funds are obligated
Opportunities for Utility Engagement

- Help get the word out to potential applicants
  - Inserts, emails, customer communications

- Encourage enrollment in low-income support programs
  - CARE, FERA, ESA, [https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/iqap/](https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/iqap/)

- Establish protocols for inquiries from Rent Relief Program Case Managers looking to validate applicant information

- Continue to engage with HCD and local partners to help identify gaps and bottlenecks in the program
Questions / Comments?

Questions
ERAP@hcd.ca.gov

Landlord / Tenant / SB 91 Information
Housingiskey.com