

**HHFDC Rent Relief and Housing Assistance Program
FAQs**
(as of September 8, 2020)

ELIGIBILITY

What types of rental properties are eligible for assistance?

Properties with proof of valid and current tenancy are eligible.

Do I qualify if I currently reside in government-funded housing?

Households that receive federal or state rent subsidies (where a percentage of the rent is paid by the household and the balance is subsidized by government) are not eligible.

How do I establish my household's eligibility for this program?

Eligibility includes being a full-time Hawaii resident occupying a primary residence with a current and valid tenancy in the State of Hawaii; being 18 years of age or older; demonstrating a loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and having a total household income that does not exceed 100% of the HUD Area Median Income limits for 2020.

What income is included when determining my household income?

All income from all household members is included.

Do I qualify if I received or am receiving rent relief assistance through another program?

Households may qualify for rent relief assistance even if they receive assistance from another source, provided the total amount of assistance does not exceed the actual rent. However, households that receive rent assistance under the HUD Emergency Solutions Grant program are ineligible for the State's Rent Relief Program.

If I received unemployment benefits, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, or Pandemic Unemployment Compensation, does that count towards my income for this program?

Yes. However, SNAP (food stamps) is not included as income.

Do I need to claim eligible immigration status to apply for this program?

No.

What other services other than rent can I receive from this program?

The program may also provide financial and housing counseling services.

My household is a mixed-immigration status household. I do not claim eligible immigration status, but my child does. Can we still apply?

Yes.

Can I apply if I live with roommates?

You and your roommates may apply for assistance as a household. If one or more household members (roommates) are eligible for assistance, but all members on the lease do not apply or are ineligible for assistance, the rental assistance will be prorated.

What if I'm ineligible but am at risk of losing my tenancy for other reasons?

Please visit the www.hihousinghelp.com for additional resources.

If I don't have a lease but am a month-to-month tenant am I still eligible to receive assistance?

Yes, if your lease has expired but you continue to occupy your rental on a month-to-month basis, this is considered a valid and current tenancy.

APPLICATION PROCESS

What documents do I need to provide in order to apply?

Please visit www.hihousinghelp.com for more information. The required documents are also listed on the application.

In what languages is the application available?

Interpretation services will be provided for households needing assistance.

When is the deadline?

The Catholic Charities Hawaii application deadline is December 15, 2020. The Aloha United Way application deadline is December 28 2020. The current funding expires on December 28, 2020 and will not be available after that.

Who is processing my application?

You can select a provider from the list at www.hihousinghelp.com that will be a part of the application.

How can I follow up on my application status?

You should be notified within three business days of receipt of your application. You should also be notified if you were approved or disapproved within five business days of submitting a complete application.

How are you prioritizing applicants?

Applications will be reviewed and approved on a first-come, first-served basis.

Will I be notified if I am deemed ineligible for assistance?

Yes, you will be notified if you are ineligible and the reason will be provided.

What file types can we upload?

PDF or JPEG files can be submitted. If a document is unclear, the agency will contact you to resubmit the information.

If my application is pending, can I be protected from eviction or foreclosure? Yes, if you are within the period of the eviction moratorium.

PROGRAM DETAILS

If I'm eligible, what assistance will I receive?

You can receive your actual rent amount up to a maximum of \$2,000 per month on Oahu and up to a maximum of \$1,500 per month on the neighbor islands. On initial application you may receive three months of rent.

Is there a maximum amount of assistance I can receive?

Yes, your actual rent or \$2,000 per month on Oahu and \$1,500 per month on the neighbor islands for payments due from August to December 2020.

How will I receive the assistance?

Applicants will not receive payments. The assistance will be paid directly to your landlord who will receive a check or direct deposit using electric fund transfer (EFT).

How soon can I expect to receive assistance?

Once a complete application is approved, the payment will be disbursed to your landlord within five business days.

How will this information be used or shared?

Your sensitive information will be protected at all times and coded to ensure duplicate payments are not made.

Do I need to continue to pay my rent? You will be responsible for any portion of your rent that exceeds the \$2,000/month payment limit on Oahu or \$1,500/month payment limit on the neighbor islands.

Will the rent relief be counted as income on my landlord's income tax?

Yes.

Does my landlord have to accept the benefit?

No.

Will I need to report any funds received from this program as income?

No.

Do I have to tell my landlord that I applied for this program?

You may have to provide some landlord information depending on whether your landlord is also the property owner. In this case, landlord involvement would be required.

Can a landlord apply on behalf of their tenant(s)?

No.

Am I required to pay back the assistance?

No.

DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

I have been selected to receive assistance. How will I know whether my landlord has received the benefit on my behalf?

Both you and your landlord will receive notification that the payment has been made.

I was notified that the assistance was paid to my landlord. My landlord now claims that they never received assistance and is seeking to have me evicted. What should I do?

Please contact the organization that processed your application to verify that the check/EFT was directed to the correct address or account.