

Frequently Asked Questions - Renters

1. **What is the Hawai'i County Emergency Rental Assistance Program?**

It is a County of Hawai'i program to provide grants to low-income renters on Hawaii Island who have lost or reduced income due to COVID-19 for paying rent, utility bills, or both.

For qualified households, the program pays:

- Past rent and utility bills going back to March 13, 2020.
- Current and future rent up to 3 months.
- A maximum of 12 months of total financial assistance, including assistance received from previous local, State, or Federal programs.
- Grant funds directly to the landlord or utility.

2. **Does the program pay for mortgages?**

No. Homeowners are not eligible for this program. Mortgage assistance grants may be available through HOPE Services Hawai'i. Funds are limited and income requirements apply.

Contact

Hope Services Hawai'i

Phone: 808.935.3050

Visit: <https://hopeserviceshawaii.org/rmap/>

3. **What utilities does the program pay for?**

Electricity, water and sewer, and gas.

4. **Does the program pay for phone or internet service bills?**

It can pay for internet bills. Apply with one of our nonprofit partners and they will help determine qualifications for paying internet service bills.

5. **Do I qualify?**

To qualify, you must be:

- A Hawai'i Island renter
- At least 18 years old, and
- Have lost or reduced income due to COVID-19

Your annual household income must be at or below the maximum income limits listed below.

1 Persons	2 Persons	3 Persons	4 Persons	5 Persons	6 Persons	7 Persons	8 Persons
\$47,950	\$54,800	\$61,650	\$68,500	\$74,000	\$79,500	\$84,950	\$90,450
*Add \$5,500 for each additional household member above 8 persons							

We encourage you to apply to one of our nonprofit partners so they can process your application and determine your eligibility.

<p>Hawai'i First Federal Credit Union 1221 Kilauea Avenue, Suite 150, Hilo, HI 96720 www.hawaiiirstfcu.com 808.933.6600 empower@hawaiiirstfcu.com</p>	
<p>HOPE Services Hawai'i 357 Waiuanue Avenue, Hilo, HI 96720 www.hopeserviceshawaii.org 808.935.3050 ERAP@hopeserviceshawaii.org</p>	
<p>Neighborhood Place of Puna 16-105 Opukahaia Street, Keaau, HI 96749 www.neighborhoodplace.org 808-965-5550 ERAP@neighborhoodplace.org</p>	
<p>Habitat for Humanity Hawai'i Island 73-4161 Uluwini Place, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740 www.habitathawaiiisland.org/ 808.843.0071 rmap@habitathawaiiisland.org</p>	
<p>Hawai'i County Economic Opportunity Council 47 Rainbow Drive, Hilo, HI 96720 www.hceoc.net 808.932.2714 ERAP@hceoc.net</p>	
<p>The Salvation Army 219 Ponahawai Street, Hilo, HI 97620 Hawaii.salvationarmy.org 808.935.1277 Hilo.ERAP@usw.salvationarmy.org</p>	

6. What is considered a “household”?

“Household” is defined as all persons living in the rental unit with you and included on the rental lease. However, where tax filings demonstrate that more than one household lives at a single address, the households may be treated separately.

7. I live with roommates, not family. Can I qualify?

Generally, one lease equals one application. When on a shared lease with non-family members, a person may be able to apply for their portion of the lease, with verification of their portion of rent, such as past receipts, proof of payments, etc.

8. Do I need to be on unemployment to qualify?

No.

9. Do I have to be behind on my rent or utilities to qualify?

No. A household may apply for rent (and/or utility help) to cover past rent and/or 3 months of future rent payments.

10. Can I apply for funds to help with utilities, even if I don’t need rent relief?


Yes, a renter may apply for help paying for utilities even if they do not need help paying for rent.

11. How do I apply?

We encourage you to apply directly to one of our nonprofit partners. Applications are being accepting through their websites, emails, or in-person.

See the list below for nonprofit partners that are accepting applications. You can also find a list of nonprofit partners on our website at www.HawaiiCountyERAP.org and click [Where to Apply](#). The website also listed in-person outreach events you can attend to meet with one of our nonprofit partners to learn more and apply.

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<p>Hawai'i County Economic Opportunity Council 47 Rainbow Drive, Hilo, HI 96720 www.hceoc.net 808.932.2714 ERAP@hceoc.net</p>	 <p>Hawai'i County Economic Opportunity Council Helping People - Changing Lives</p>  <p>Helping People. Changing Lives. community Action PARTNERSHIP AMERICA'S POVERTY FIGHTING NETWORK</p>
<p>The Salvation Army 219 Ponahawai Street, Hilo, HI 97620 Hawaii.salvationarmy.org 808.935.1277 Hilo.ERAP@usw.salvationarmy.org</p>	

12. What documents will I need to apply?

The following list of documents are required to apply for assistance. You can also find a list of nonprofit partners on our website at www.HawaiiCountyERAP.org and click [Documents Checklist](#).

Proof of Resident and Age for Applicant

- Copy of photo ID

Income Documents for ALL household members (provide all that apply)

- All pages and scheduled for 2020 Federal Tax Form
OR
- 30 days most recent pay stubs
- 1 month most recent business bank statements (if self-employed)
- Unemployment or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefit letter
- Public benefit statements
- Other income documentation (i.e. child support or alimony letter, pension/retirement earning statement, etc)

Housing (provide 1 of the following)

- Copy of complete, current, and signed rental lease/contract
- Bank statements or cancelled checks verifying payment of monthly rent (if no signed lease)
- Bank statements or cancelled checks verifying payment of utilities for the residential unit (if no signed lease)

Proof of Hardship (provide 1 of the following)

- Unemployment or PUA approval letter
- Written attestation (request from nonprofit)

If requesting assistance for previous months

- Past due rent notice with amount owed
- Eviction notice with amount owed
- Past due utility notice

13. I have applied for emergency rent and/or utility assistance. How do I check the status of my application or contact a representative for assistance?

To check the status of your application, please contact the nonprofit partner where you submitted your application. A representative from the nonprofit will be able to assist you.

14. How long will I have to wait until my application is approved?

Many of our friends and neighbors are expected to apply, so it will take a few weeks for our partners to review applications and verify documents.

Using our nonprofit partners' online application will decrease your wait time, but you can apply by phone or in-person at the physical locations of our nonprofit partners. A list of in-person outreach events can be found at www.HawaiiCountyERAP.org. You can apply with a nonprofit partner at these events.

15. What happens if the program runs out of money while my application is being Processed?

The program has limited funds available on a first-come, first-serve basis. We have \$21.5 million in total assistance available. In the future, it is possible that the funds will run out before we can cover all the rental and utility arrears. Your nonprofit partner who receives your application will communicate the status of program funding with you.

16. I'm getting help with my rent/utilities from another program. Can I also get help from the Hawai'i County Emergency Rental Assistance Program?

You may be able to get help with any rent or utilities for a month that has not been covered by other local, State, or Federal programs. We encourage you to apply to one of our nonprofit partners so they can process your application and determine your eligibility.

17. If I'm approved, will I stay enrolled in the program or will I have to reapply to pay future bills?

Approved households are eligible to receive up to 3 months of future payments but may not exceed 12 months of total financial assistance from local, State, or Federal programs. Households will have to reapply by completing an affidavit or updated financial documents every 3 months to verify your financial situation.

18. Can I be evicted while waiting for these funds?

It is unlikely you will be evicted through June 30, due to the federal eviction moratorium. Landlords can still file eviction cases in Hawai'i courts for circumstances related to health, safety, or property risk. People who are worried about eviction can contact one of these organizations:

- Ku'ikahi Mediation Center Landlord-Tenant Mediation. Visit <https://hawaiimediation.org/landlordtenant/> or call 808.935.7844, ext. 2.
- West Hawai'i Mediation Center Landlord-Tenant Medication. Visit <https://whmediation.org/> or call 808.885.5525.
- Legal Aid Society of Hawai'i. Visit legalaidhawaii.org/housing-covid-19.html or call 808.329.3910.
- State of Hawai'i Landlord Tenant Hotline. Visit <https://cca.hawaii.gov/blog/what-should-i-do-if-i-have-a-landlordtenant-problem/> or call (808) 586-2634.

19. Will payment be made to me, or to my landlord/utility company?


Payments are made directly to the landlord or utility company.

Frequently Asked Questions – Landlords

1. I'm a landlord/property manager. Can I apply on behalf of my tenants?

Yes. Landlords may apply, but must provide your tenant's financial documents and the application must be signed by the tenant. Please contact one of our nonprofit partners listed below to help you through the process. You can also find our list of nonprofit partners at www.HawaiiCountyERAP.org and click [Where to Apply](#).

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2. What do I need to do if my tenants are applying?

Landlords can support the process by working with tenants to ensure all necessary documentation is prepared to complete an application and that the application is signed by the tenant.

3. Is there a limit to how many tenants of mine can get help from the program?

No, but only one tenant from each household can qualify.

4. If a tenant does not qualify for the funding can they be evicted?

The federal eviction moratorium is in place through June 30. It prohibits landlords from evicting their tenants for unpaid rent through June 30.

We encourage you to go to free landlord-tenant mediation through one of the mediation centers below to work out a plan that is agreeable to all parties:

- Ku'ikahi Mediation Center Landlord-Tenant Mediation. Visit <https://hawaii-mediation.org/landlordtenant/> or call 808.935.7844, ext. 2.
- West Hawai'i Mediation Center Landlord-Tenant Medication. Visit <https://whmediation.org/> or call 808.885.5525.

5. **If I qualify, how will I get paid?**

Depending on what information was provided on the application and agreement, funds will be delivered by direct deposit or check.