

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)
Emergency Rental Assistance Funding Release

Date: October 8, 2020

OVERVIEW

The Office of Housing (OH) is soliciting applications for Emergency Rental Assistance from owners of City-funded affordable housing. In responding to this NOFA, a property owner will illustrate the financial harm experienced because of COVID-19 due to the non-payment of rent by its tenants. Awards will be made to City-funded affordable housing property owners; ultimate beneficiaries of the funds will be tenants who were unable to pay rent during the COVID-19 pandemic in the 2020 calendar year.

BACKGROUND

Through this NOFA, the Office of Housing will make available up to \$4,000,000 in federal Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) provided to the City. Programs funded through the CRF must illustrate an economic hardship that is a result of COVID-19. For purposes of this NOFA, hardship is caused by the non-payment of rent by tenants who have been adversely impacted by COVID-19. Eligibility for Emergency Rental Assistance will be limited to households in units that were financed in part with capital awards made by the Office of Housing. Households receiving supports from other sources of rental assistance (e.g., tenant- or project-based housing choice vouchers (Section 8) or City operating assistance) are ineligible at this time for Emergency Rental Assistance made available under this NOFA.

The process described in this NOFA has two steps. The first is an application made by a property owner to the Office of Housing for Emergency Rental Assistance. The Office of Housing will review application materials to determine whether to make a conditional award and in what amount. Step two will include final documentation provided by the property owner, which will enable OH to disburse funds.

Please note that this program will support payment of rental arrears. Emergency Rental Assistance cannot be used for operating support or vacancy loss. The Office of Housing intends to provide the maximum assistance possible to each property owner. If requests for funds exceeds available resources, OH may provide less assistance than requested. In this instance, OH will reserve the right to negotiate the outcome of the rent that remains unpaid in order to maximize the assistance provided.

Application Content

Providers seeking Emergency Rental Assistance should submit the following:

- A cover letter by Owner, outlining the total need and the need for each building requesting assistance.
- An Aged Receivables report dated October 6th or later.
 - Report should include all owing units
 - Report should identify which units have an attached subsidy
 - Report should only include rent owed from April 2020 through October 2020
- A Building Affidavit of COVID-19 Impacts signed by an Owners Agent

Letters and attachments shall be directed to the Office of Housing (contact information appears below). Although households receiving any form of rental assistance such as tenant- or project-based vouchers should be included in the list, please note that this information is being requested for informational purposes only. Households falling in either of these categories are ineligible for Emergency Rental Assistance at this time and should therefore be excluded from any summation of the total amount of potential Emergency Rental Assistance being sought.

For ease of review, the list should be organized by building name.

Review Process

The Office of Housing will review applications on the basis of: (a) the total number of households who have been unable to pay rent, and (b) the totality of unpaid rent for the months of April through October. If after the initial review funds remain unallocated, OH will consider payment of rent arrears for the months of November and December. To the extent that the cumulative amount requested by housing providers under this NOFA exceeds the amount of Emergency Rental Assistance available, OH may consider other factors in determining conditional award amounts. Sample factors may include, but are not limited to, agency financials, geographic considerations, and racial equity outcomes. All awards will be made on a conditional basis, until final award is made by OH.

Validation, Supporting Documentation, and Reporting

Upon receipt of a conditional award of Emergency Rental Assistance, successful respondents will need to collect necessary information. These forms will be available as a supplement to the Conditional Award Letter. Sample information will include:

- Owner Affidavit of COVID-19 impact signed by an owner representative that confirms that the awarded funds will not cover rental arrears previously paid through other sources of funds.
- A current building operating statement

The Office of Housing will work with each recipient organization to ensure appropriate attribution of Emergency Rental Assistance to eligible households.

The organization must also submit additional information to include, but not limited to, the number of households that will receive assistance, the building locations where the households reside, the average amount of assistance per household and, when practicable, demographic information of the tenants assisted. Following this verification process, the Office of Housing will finalize the award amount and release payment.

OH may request additional information after disbursement to ensure that the funds have been attributed to tenants.

Deadline and Contact Information

All applications must be submitted by 12 p.m. on Friday, October 16th, 2020. Cover letters (Word or PDF) and attachments (Excel files only) should be directed to Dan Foley:
Dan.Foley@seattle.gov.