



CA COVID-19 RENT RELIEF

Media Kit

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**HOUSING
IS KEY**



State of California

BUSINESS, CONSUMER SERVICES AND HOUSING AGENCY

Gavin Newsom, Governor
Lourdes M. Castro Ramírez, Secretary

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 15, 2021

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Rent Assistance Now Available for Income Eligible Households and Landlords

CA COVID-19 Rent Relief application portal opens today

\$2.6 billion in federal aid to assist Californians impacted by the pandemic

Call Center, toll-free line, and community-based organizations assisting with effort; and applications available in multiple languages to connect hardest hit communities to relief

SACRAMENTO – In keeping with Governor Gavin Newsom’s commitment to ensuring individuals and families stay housed during – and despite – the COVID-19 pandemic, Californians who have experienced a financial hardship because of the pandemic and who are most at-risk of eviction can now apply for the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program to help pay past due rent. Beginning today, renters and landlords can check eligibility and apply by visiting HousingIsKey.com or by calling 833-430-2122 toll-free, seven days a week.

“For hundreds of thousands of renters and small property owners, there is more light at the end of the tunnel,” said Governor Newsom. “We have the strongest eviction protections in the nation and, beginning today, we are providing greatly needed financial support to both renters and small property owners in need of assistance to pay their mortgages, with a focus on racial and geographic equity.”

The CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program was created by the [COVID-19 Tenant Relief Act](#), with the strongest-in-the nation eviction protections [signed into law](#) by Governor Newsom on January 29. Funding comes from the \$2.6 billion in federal emergency rental assistance program to states and local jurisdictions.

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“An estimated 1.5 million California families, front-line workers and low-wage earners are behind on their rent due to the economic fallout of this pandemic,” said Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH) Secretary Lourdes Castro Ramirez. “They have accumulated significant debt and their landlords are struggling to meet their financial obligations. The CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program will be a lifeline to renters and landlords. It clears accumulated rental debt, keeps families hardest hit housed and will lead to a more equitable economic recovery.”

Both renters and landlords can apply for CA COVID-19 Rent Relief. If landlords choose to participate, they will receive 80 percent of an eligible tenant’s unpaid rent for the period of April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021 if they agree to waive the remaining 20 percent of unpaid rent.

Renters making less than 80 percent or less of the Area Median Income (AMI) for their location are eligible. For example, a family of four in Visalia in Tulare County is eligible for rental assistance if their household income is \$55,900 or less. Renters’ income eligibility will automatically be calculated during the application process.

Eligible renters with landlords who choose not to participate in the program can apply on their own. Those renters will be eligible to receive payments of 25 percent of unpaid rent accrued from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021, which can help protect them from eviction under SB 91.

“One of our primary goals is to ensure we reach and serve communities that have been hardest hit by the pandemic,” said Gustavo Velasquez, Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development, which is administering the program. “We appreciate the support and partnership of local jurisdictions working with the State to ensure that those in most need of assistance get clear, accurate, consistent, and accessible information on how and when to apply.”

A statewide network of has been established to help individuals answer eligibility questions and submit applications. In addition, a robust statewide multilingual communication and education effort is underway to help inform renters and landlords about the availability of CA COVID-19 Rent Relief.

The application will be available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Chinese and Korean, and help will be available in more than 200 additional languages through the California COVID-19 Rent Relief call center at 833-430-2122.

Applications from landlords or renters must include all required information and eligibility verification items to be processed. Case management teams will be available to help applicants complete their applications. There is a [checklist for renters](#) that includes the paperwork they will need, and [one for landlords](#). Once an application has been successfully submitted and processed, both the landlord and tenant will be notified by a COVID19 Rent Relief case manager about the application status.

For more information on program eligibility, required application information, and to start the application process, visit HousingIsKey.com or call 833-430-2122.

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Rent Past Due?

Renters and landlords have enough things to worry about. Past due rent shouldn't be one of them.

If you're an income eligible renter who has experienced a financial hardship due to COVID-19 and have past due rent, or you're a landlord who has experienced a loss in income because of unpaid rent, you may be eligible to get financial assistance now through the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program.



Who Can Apply?

Landlords who have income-eligible renters experiencing a financial hardship due to COVID-19 with past due rent.

Renters who have experienced a financial hardship due to COVID-19, have past due rent or utilities, and have a household income that is not more than 80% of the area median income.

How Much Rent Relief Will I Get?

Landlords can get reimbursed for 80% of past due rent accrued between **April 1, 2020**, and **March 31, 2021**, if they agree to waive the remaining 20% of unpaid rent.

Eligible renters whose landlords choose not to participate may still apply on their own and receive 25% of unpaid rent accrued between **April 1, 2020**, and **March 31, 2021** through a direct payment to their landlord. If a landlord refuses direct payment, the 25% can be paid to the renter to pay missed rent to their landlord by June 30, 2021. Paying 25% of past due rent by June 30, 2021 can help keep renters in their homes under the extended eviction protections provided in SB91.

Eligible renters can also receive help paying future rent, equal to 25% of their monthly amount to help them stay in their homes, and 100% of up to 12 months of unpaid or future utility bills.

How do I Apply?

To check eligibility requirements, apply or find a Local Partner Network organization who can assist you further, visit HousingIsKey.com or call **833-430-2122**, toll free.

HousingIsKey.com



Are You Eligible To Apply For CA COVID-19 Rent Relief? (Must check all to be eligible)

- Are you the property owner or the property management/agency who has legal authority to lease the unit?
- Do you have one or more eligible renters with unpaid rent between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021, due to a COVID-19 related event?
- Do you have a renter lease or written agreement with the eligible renter(s)?
- Do you agree to waive 20% of the unpaid rent for the above time period?

If you checked ALL of the above, you are eligible to apply. Before applying, you'll need the following items. (A full list of acceptable paperwork can be found at [HousinglsKey.com](https://www.housinglskey.com))

- IRS W-9 Form
- To verify Residence** (need **ONE** of the following)
 - Lease agreement
 - State issued program id with license
 - Official letter from third party showing name and address
 - Government issued library card
 - Utility statements from provider
- To verify Ownership** (need **ONE** of the following)
 - Property deeds
 - Mortgage note
 - Property tax forms
 - Homeowner insurance
- To verify Rent Owed** (need **ONE** of the following)
 - A current lease, signed by the applicant and the landlord that identifies the unit where the applicant resides and establishes the rental payment amount.
 - In the absence of a signed lease, evidence of the amount of a rental payment may include:
 - Bank statements
 - Check stubs, or other documentation that reasonably establishes a pattern of paying rent
 - Written attestation by a landlord who can be verified as the legitimate owner or management agent of the unit



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Paperwork is subject to cross-referencing across other government and, where applicable, third-party databases. This review is to verify the validity of the submitted items and the information included.

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Are You Eligible To Apply For CA COVID-19 Rent Relief?

(Must check all to be eligible)

- Are you struggling financially and seeking assistance for Rent and/or Utilities for your primary residence, located in California?
- Has anyone in the household experienced reduction/loss of income OR incurred significant expenses OR other financial hardships OR qualified for unemployment benefits since April 1, 2020 related to COVID-19?
- Can anyone in your household demonstrate that they are either at risk of homelessness or housing instability, has past due rent or utilities or is living in unsafe living conditions?

If you checked ALL of the above, you are eligible to apply. Before applying, you'll need the following items. (A full list of acceptable paperwork can be found at [HousinglsKey.com](https://www.housinglskey.com))

- 1. Verify Identity** (All household members listed on the rental agreement must provide at least **ONE** proof of identity)
 - Government issued birth certificate, driver's license, or identification card
 - Employment identification card
 - Marriage license/certificate or certified divorce decree
 - Current school records documenting a student's status as full-time at a degree or certificate granting institution. (Only for household members 18 years and older)

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- 2. Verify Income** (All household members over the age of 18 must provide **ONE** of the following)
 - IRS Tax forms such as 1099, 1040/1040A or Schedule C of 1040 showing amount earned and employment period or most recent federal income tax statements
 - W-2 form, if you have had the same employer for at least two years and increases can be accurately projected
 - Most recent paycheck stubs (consecutive: six for weekly pay, three for bi-weekly or semi-monthly pay, two for monthly pay)
 - Employer-generated salary report or letter stating current annual income
 - Earnings statements
 - Current bank statements
- 3. Verify Residence** (need **ONE** of the following)
 - Lease agreement
 - Official letter from third party showing name and address
 - Government issued library card
 - Utility statements from providers
- 4. Verify Rent Owed** (need **ONE** of the following)
 - A current lease signed by the applicant and landlord or sub-lessor that identifies the unit where the applicant resides and shows the rental payment amount
 - If you don't have a signed lease, proof of your rent amount may include:
 - Bank statement, check stub or other proof that shows a pattern of paying rent
 - Written confirmation by a landlord who can be verified as the actual owner or management agent of where you rent
- 5. Verify Utility Payment(s) Owed/Due**
 - Utility bill showing past or current amount due

Once you've put together the required information above, visit [HousinglsKey.com](https://www.housinglskey.com) and click on **COVID-19 Rent Relief** to apply.

Sublease agreements are not eligible.



Why the state's 80/20 payment for eligible households makes sense.

-  **> 25%** If you are a landlord who has been receiving 25% or more of your tenant's monthly rent, up to 75% is still unpaid.
- \$ = 80%** When you and your tenant participate, the state will pay 80% of unpaid rent, and would ask you to forgive the last 20%.
- \$ = ^{At least} 85%** After reimbursement, you will have received at least 85% of total rents owed from the period.

How the 80/20 payment structure works.

Example rent: \$1,000/month **\$12k** **In total rent owed**

- Example 1**
- Tenant pays \$3,000/25%
 - State of California Pays 80% Unpaid Rent = \$7,200
 - Landlord forgives 20% in unpaid rent over the period = \$1,800
 - Total rent recovered by landlord = \$10,200/85%

- Example 2**
- Tenant pays \$6,000/50%
 - State of California Pays 80% Unpaid Rent = \$4,800
 - Landlord forgives 20% in unpaid rent over the period = \$1,200
 - Total rent recovered by landlord = \$10,800/90%

Participating in the COVID-19 Rent Relief effort gets rents paid, saves money on legal fees, and reduces uncertainty.