

HAWTHORNE



CALIFORNIA

"CITY OF GOOD NEIGHBORS"

EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Administered by:

City of Hawthorne
Housing Department
4455 W. 126th Street
Hawthorne, CA 90250

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Program Guidelines

Program Description

The Emergency Rental Assistance Grant Program (ERAG) provides emergency rental assistance grants to income-eligible individuals and families economically impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic through job loss, furlough or reduction in hours or pay, residing in eligible areas of the City of Hawthorne.

Emergency grants are rental payments made on behalf of an income-eligible applicant, up to \$1,000 per month for a period of up to three (3) consecutive months, to maintain housing and/or to reduce rental payment delinquency in arrears as a result of the economic downturn during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ERAG Program will log all payments made on behalf of eligible individuals and families.

Use of Community Development Block Grant COVID-19 (CDBG-CV) Funds

CDBG-CV funds will be used for emergency rental payments on behalf of income-eligible individuals and families economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Monthly rental assistance is provided for a period of up to three (3) consecutive months through direct payment to a qualified landlord, property management agent or company for current rent and/or to pay down rental arrears within the three (3) consecutive months to be addressed. The City may also use CDBG-CV funds for program implementation costs such as direct personnel and non-personnel costs.

This activity is a public service activity under the CDBG program regulations at 24 CFR 570.201(e) as allowed pursuant to FR-6218-N-01 that provides emergency grant payments made over a period of up to six (6) consecutive months directly to the provider of the housing. The activity is further regulated pursuant to 24 CFR 570.208(a)(2)(i)(B) whereby applicants shall supply information on family size and income to qualify.

Program Marketing and Outreach

Program marketing shall be initiated by the Housing Department and may include any of the following:

- Public Service Announcement/ Advertisement in a media of general circulation;
- Flyer/ Advertisement on the City website;
- Public service announcements on City cable television;

- Posting at Community Centers and other locations where individuals and families seek services;
- Posting at City Hall;
- Posting at other City facilities; and
- Any other means of advertising as approved by Housing Department.

Marketing and outreach shall facilitate fair access and transparency. Information for applicants shall include any necessary pandemic related disclosures and social distancing requirements.

To facilitate meaningful access to program participation for Limited English Proficiency persons, all program marketing intended for the general public shall be provided in English and in Spanish, in accordance with the City of Hawthorne’s current Limited English Proficiency Plan.

A log shall be kept to document marketing and outreach to individuals and families who may be eligible for Emergency Rental Assistance Grant Program funds.

Applicant Eligibility

Applicant’s eligibility for Emergency Rental Assistance Payments shall be determined upon submission of a completed Program Application with all required information and documents.

To be eligible for assistance, an applicant must:

1. Reside within the incorporated City Limits of the City of Hawthorne, CA.
2. Have a current annual family income that does not exceed the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) established “Moderate-Income” limits for Los Angeles County. Family income eligibility is based on the following two (2) factors:
 - a. The total number of people residing in the housing unit; and
 - b. The total amount of current annual family income as stated in the Program Application and confirmed by supporting documentation.
3. Have experienced an economic impact because of the COVID-19 pandemic (job loss, furlough or reduction in hours or pay).
4. Have a current residential lease agreement for a housing unit in the City of Hawthorne, CA.
5. Submit a signed Program Participation-Payment Acceptance form from qualified landlord/property management agent or company.
6. Submit a W-9 form completed by the landlord / property management agent or company.

7. Submit evidence of the current rental balance.
8. Certify on the Program Application that the applicant has not received nor will seek other sources of assistance from any private, local, state, or federal funding source for the same requested rent expense.

Individuals and families that are currently participating in any Publicly Assisted Housing program are ineligible under this program (i.e. Section 8 Housing, Public Housing, Project Based Section 8, VASH, etc.). Those currently residing in City-owned units will be evaluated on a case by case basis to determine if the form of public assistance is eligible pursuant to regulations surrounding duplication of benefits.

Eligibility Determination

Program staff will review applications and begin providing responses promptly. If an application is incomplete, the applicant shall be notified by phone, mail and by e-mail and given 10 calendar days after the date of the first notification by phone or the date of the letter to submit the information. Applicants that fail to respond within ten (10) calendar days shall be denied assistance.

A denied applicant file shall contain all submitted information and documentation, as well as, the reason for denial (e.g., over income limits, incomplete information, reside outside service area).

An approved applicant file shall contain all submitted information and documentation necessary to meet all required eligibility criteria and contain completed forms, documentation, and necessary information for all members of the family.

Documents supplied to the City in connection with Program Applications shall not be returned. Applicants are cautioned not to submit original documents and to only submit copies.

Residency in Eligible Area

Applicants must reside in a rental property located in the City of Hawthorne, CA. Verification that the residence is located within the City of Hawthorne will be completed by program staff.

Annual Income Definition and Documentation

All family members are considered members of the family for the purposes of determining income eligibility. As defined at 24 CFR 5.403, "family" includes, but is not limited to, the following, regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status: 1) A single person, who may be an elderly person, displaced person, disabled person, near-elderly person, or any other single person; or 2) A group of persons residing together, and such group includes, but is not limited to a family with or without children (a child who is temporarily away from the home because of placement in foster care is considered a member

of the family); an elderly family; a near-elderly family; a disabled family; a displaced family; and the remaining member of a tenant family.

Therefore, family member information must include, at a minimum, the following:

1. Full names and ages of all family members living in the residence; and
2. Signature of all adult family members age 18 or over, certifying that the information provided related to the annual family income and family composition is correct.

To determine family income for all applicants, the City will use the annual income definition as defined by HUD at 24 CFR 5.609 (commonly referred to as Part 5). The City will use the Part 5 method to calculate the annual income by projecting the prevailing rate of income of the family for the next 12-month period as measured from the date that the City performs the income determination.

The ERAG is classified under the Limited Clientele National Objective of the CDBG Program at 24 CFR 570.208(a)(2), whereby a verifiable self-certification form is permitted by HUD to document that individuals and families receiving assistance are low- or moderate-income. A verifiable self-certification shall be collected and evaluated with each Program Application. The self-certification shall be verified for all applicants receiving assistance at the time of application, except that upon recommendation by program staff, the Housing Manager shall have the authority to waive submission of source documentation on a case-by-case basis. However, in no event shall fewer than 51 percent of all assisted applicant files contain only the verifiable self-certification without supporting documentation to verify the amounts of income listed on the Program Application.

Annual Income Limits

Each applicant will need to provide verifiable documentation to support the applicant's stated income. The income limits for this program are:

Family Size	Extremely Low	Low Income	Moderate Income
	Equal to or less than 30% of Area Median	31% to 50% of Area Median	51% to 80% of Area Median
1	23,700	\$39,450	\$63,100
2	\$27,050	\$45,050	\$72,100
3	\$30,450	\$50,700	\$81,100
4	\$33,800	\$56,300	\$90,100
5	\$36,550	\$60,850	\$97,350
6	\$39,250	\$65,350	\$104,550
7	\$41,950	\$69,850	\$111,750
8	\$44,650	\$74,350	\$118,950

Effective July 1, 2020 for the Los Angeles - Long Beach Metropolitan Area

Documenting Economic Impact during COVID-19 pandemic period

Applicants must submit documentation confirming negative economic impact during the COVID-19 pandemic period. Monthly income from January and February of 2020 shall be compared to monthly income from March 27, 2020 forward. Acceptable documentation of negative economic impact shall include:

1. A copy of family member(s) notification of job loss/termination from employer during the eligible pandemic period (March 27, 2020 to present); or
2. A copy of family member(s) notification of furlough from employer during the eligible pandemic period (March 27, 2020 to present); or
3. A copy of family member(s) notification or employer signed form confirming reduction in hours and/or pay during the eligible pandemic period (March 27, 2020 to present). The Request for Verification of Income or Reduction of Hours and/or Pay Form (Exhibit 3) to the Program Guidelines may be used for this purpose; or
4. A copy of family member(s) application during the eligible pandemic period (March 27, 2020 to present) and/or approval for Unemployment Insurance benefits;
5. A notarized affidavit signed that includes the name of the family member who is self-employed, the name and nature of the business, and narrative confirming economic

impact on self-employment during eligible pandemic period (March 27, 2020 to present); or

6. Other appropriate documentation as approved by the Housing Department.

Landlord Terms and Conditions

The landlord, property management agent or company receiving Emergency Rental Assistance payments from the City on behalf of the applicant will be asked to agree to the following terms:

1. Landlord agrees to waive any late fees and interest on rental arrears, and
2. Landlord agrees to not file for eviction equal to the total number of months that rent is being paid.

Availability of Applications

The City shall make application forms available on September 21, 2020 through October 5, 2020 on its website (for printing at home), mailed by request by calling the Housing Department at (310) 349-1600. and available at the City's Housing Department Tent located at, 4455 W. 126th Street, Hawthorne, CA 90250 during regular business hours on September 21, September 25, October 2 and October 5, 2020.

Program Participation-Payment Acceptance Form

A signed Program Participation-Payment Acceptance form from the qualified landlord/property management agent or company must be submitted as a part of an applicant's emergency rental assistance application.

Current Lease or Rental Agreement

Applicants shall submit a copy of their current residential lease agreement or written rental agreement for the address they reside in and for which rental assistance is requested.

W-9 Form

Applicants shall submit a completed W-9 form from the qualified landlord/property management agent or company. The landlord/property management agent or company will be provided with an IRS 1099 form at the end of the calendar year for tax reporting purposes.

Current Balances Due

Applicants shall submit a confirmed copy of their current rental balance from the qualified landlord/property management agent or company.

Landlord, Property Management Agent or Company

A qualified landlord/property management agent or company is defined as the legal owner and/or representative of a Single-Family or Multi-Unit residential property leased for the purposes of permanent housing, entitled to collect rent as prescribed in a valid lease agreement.

To process and disburse payments to a qualified landlord/property management agent or company, signed and completed W-9 and Program Participation-Payment Acceptance forms are required. The landlord/property management agent or company will abide by Emergency Rental Assistance Grant Program requirements and will be provided with a clear summary and schedule of payments to be made on behalf of eligible individuals and families.

Under no circumstances will the ERAG program staff be a party to any lease for which assistance is provided or a resident or owner/landlord of such housing unit.

Intake and Assessment Process

Funding is limited. Therefore, applications are due to City Hall no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, October 5, 2020. Each applicant will be assigned a number and a lottery will be conducted on October 6, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. to determine the order that applications will be reviewed. Results will be posted on the City's website for viewing. Program staff will review applications and begin providing responses promptly. If an application is incomplete, the applicant shall be notified by phone and by mail and given 10 calendar days after the date of the first notification by phone or the date of the letter to submit the information. Applicants that fail to respond within ten (10) calendar days shall be denied assistance.

All applications shall be mailed or hand-delivered to:

City of Hawthorne
Housing Department
4455 W. 126th Street
Hawthorne, CA 90250

OR submitted online via the following link: www.cityofhawthorne.org/erag

Appeals

Applicants may appeal application denials. Appeals shall be submitted to the Housing Department at the address listed above within seven (7) calendar days of the date of the application denial letter. The written appeal shall state the reason(s) why the applicant believes the application denial was in error

and provide any additional documentation necessary to support the applicant's assertion of same. The decision of the Housing Manager shall be issued in writing within 14 calendar days and shall be final.

Duplication of Benefits

All applicants shall certify on the Program Application under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the State of California, that they are not able to receive, and have not received, other federal or non-federal benefits or assistance for rental assistance for the period of time between March 27, 2020 and the date of last signature on this application form. Applicants shall further certify that they will not pursue other federal or non-federal benefits for the same uses of this grant program for rental costs for the period of March 27, 2020 until the final assistance payment made by City under the Emergency Rental Assistance Grant Program.

False Claims

Applicants shall certify on the Program Application under penalty of perjury that "The information provided on this form is subject to verification by HUD at any time, and Title 18, Section 1001 of the U.S. Code states that a person is guilty of a felony and assistance can be terminated for knowingly and willingly making a false or fraudulent statement to a department of the United States Government."

Applicant Confidentiality

Employees and agents of the City will not disclose any applicant's Personally Identifiable Information (PII) as part of the program. All confidential information of applicants will be kept in a locked secured storage facility or password protected electronic files and unavailable to persons outside of the program. At all times, the City will abide by all requirements stated within the Privacy Act of 1974 as amended. If the City receives a request for public records related to the program, only non--confidential information, as verified by the City, will be provided.

Nondiscrimination

The Emergency Rental Assistance Grant Program shall be implemented consistent with the City's commitment to State and Federal equal opportunity laws. No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity funded in whole or in part with CDBG and CDBG-CV program funds on the basis of their disability, family status, national origin, race, color, religion, sex, marital status, medical condition, ancestry, source of income, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, or other arbitrary discrimination.

The City of Hawthorne will provide reasonable accommodations and/ or modifications, or provide language assistance to individuals requesting such assistance to benefit from the services provided by the Emergency Rental Assistance Grant Program.

Conflict of Interest

In accordance with 24 CFR 570.611, no member of the governing body and no official, employee or agent of the City of Hawthorne, nor any other person, either for themselves or those with whom they have business or immediate family ties, who exercises policy or decision making responsibilities will financially benefit from this program.

Program Guidelines Changes or Modifications

Minor changes to these Program Guidelines involving administrative procedures or accommodations to adapt to unique applicant situations or opportunities, or regulatory changes may be performed with the approval of the Housing Manager. Federal regulatory requirements for the CDBG and CDBG-CV programs are not subject to modification or revision, except when HUD issues guidance superseding prior regulatory requirements.

In the event program funds are not exhausted after all eligible applicants have been processed, the City may consider covering an additional month of rent, if and only if, an additional month of rent can be paid for all approved beneficiaries. If funds do not permit an additional month, the City will market the program and accept another round of applications.

Frequently Asked Questions

(Attached)

Program Application

(Attached)

Request for Verification of Income OR Reduction of Hours and/or Pay

(Attached)

Program Participation-Payment Acceptance Form

(Attached)

Landlord W-9 Form

(Attached)