

## Texas Rent Relief Program Updates and Resources for Stakeholders 2021-08-11

As TDHCA responds to feedback and improves the Texas Rent Relief Program (TRR), we wish to share recent program updates for Landlords, Tenants, Utility Providers, and other interested stakeholders.

### 1. NEW INFORMATION & RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- The TRR Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) have been updated with more landlord and tenant questions and answers, and a new section of FAQs about anti-fraud, waste, and abuse policies. Visit <https://texasrentrelief.com/faq/>.

- Additional Funding Requests (AFR) Video Tutorial is now posted under "Online Application Instructions" at <https://texasrentrelief.com/forms-resources>. More information on Additional Funding Requests can be found below.

- The "TRR Payment Guide" has been updated to describe program notifications that are sent related to payments, including how to access the payment breakout. Read more at <https://texasrentrelief.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/TRRP-Payment-Guide.pdf>.

- For those who need to return a payment to the program, a new resource has been published titled "TRR Guide to Returning Payments for Tenants, Landlords, and Utility Providers." The resource addresses frequently asked questions on this subject, and can be found at <https://texasrentrelief.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/210810-TRR-Guide-to-Returning-Payments-Final.pdf>.

- Please be advised that [Info@texasrentrelief.com](mailto:Info@texasrentrelief.com) is no longer an active TRR customer service email. TRR Applicants may call 1-833-989-7368 for questions.

- The Consumer Financial and Protection Bureau COVID-19 Housing Insecurity Campaign provides information for homeowners, renters and landlords during the coronavirus national emergency. Visit <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/coronavirus/mortgage-and-housing-assistance/> for more information.

### 2. RECENT TRR POLICY CHANGES

- Tenant applicants who have received a notice of utility disconnection are now prioritized for application review similarly to those applicants being sued for eviction. The program application now allows these applicants to self-attest to their household income, meeting program requirements instead of uploading income documentation. Applicants must still provide all other required program documentation and must provide evidence of the notice of utility disconnection.

- Prior to any payment being made to a tenant directly, TRR will make three attempts to request that the landlord participate in the program via email, phone or text, over no less than a 5 calendar-day period. This time period has been shortened based on direction from the Department of Treasury.

- Approval Notification: The landlord, tenant, and/or utility provider will now be notified automatically that a payment has been approved if an email address is present in the Neighborly system, and the

notification will include the payment breakout. Also, the application status in the Neighborly system will be updated when the payment has been made.

- Sharing of Certifications: As outlined in the Tenant and Landlord certifications, the program may share a copy of the tenant, landlord or utility provider certification with the tenant applicant, a user approved by the tenant, or an associated landlord or utility provider, as well as counsel for any of these parties. To request this information, please contact us toll-free at 833-9TX-RENT (833-989-7368). Release of information or other details will be required under some circumstances.

### 3. ADDITIONAL FUNDING REQUESTS (AFR) INFORMATION

- Eligibility for all applicants who have not yet received the maximum amount of 15 months assistance will receive an email invitation to submit an additional request for assistance 60 days after their previous payment was disbursed. Payment cannot be released until 90 days after the initial disbursement date; however, be advised that review and approval timelines will often exceed 90 days from the last disbursement.

- Tenants who are eligible for an Additional Funding Request may submit requests for rental and utility assistance for the current month and two future months. They may also request assistance with any arrears that have not already been covered by previous TRR assistance or another provider, so long as the total months of assistance for each type of assistance (for example, rent, gas, water, etc.) requested do not exceed the program limit of 15 months.

- Tenants in New Units: Tenants who are living at a new address may request funds through the AFR process for the rent expenses of the new primary residence. In these cases, payments will be made directly to the tenant, who then is required to pay the landlord. Updated information and a lease for the new unit will be required in the AFR application.

- Documentation of Lease: Tenants who are requesting AFR to pay for rent at a new unit must provide a copy of their new lease. Tenants who are requesting AFR and have remained in the same unit as their original request and for whom the months of assistance requested as part of the AFR are outside of the term for the lease submitted with the tenant's initial application (including if the lease is now month-to-month), or if the tenant did not provide a lease as part of their initial application, verbal confirmation with the tenant or landlord to confirm the tenant is still in the unit is acceptable proof of tenancy.

### 4. FUNDING STILL AVAILABLE; APPLY TODAY

Funds are still available and TDHCA encourages eligible households to apply. If you have questions or need assistance with your application, please contact us toll-free at 833-9TX-RENT (833-989-7368) Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### 5. REQUEST THAT LANDLORDS POSTPONE EVICTIONS

As of August 11, 2021, TRR has paid over \$658 million in rent and utility assistance to assist over 107,000 households. TDHCA strongly urges landlords to postpone pursuing evictions and allow time for a tenant's TRR application to be submitted and approved.

For any questions related to the program and these policy updates, please call 833-9TX-RENT.