

## **Subject: Texas Rent Relief Program Updates and Resources for Stakeholders 2021-09-27**

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. RECENT TRR POLICY CHANGES:

- Responding to feedback from applicants and partners and new guidance from the Treasury Department, TDHCA has streamlined the Texas Rent Relief (TRR) program application and policies to make applying easier and get payments out faster. The new changes are reflected in the materials and online application available at <https://texasrentrelief.com/>.

- SELF-ATTESTATIONS: Tenant applicants will now certify COVID-related financial hardship and risk of homelessness or unsafe/unhealthy housing conditions eligibility requirements as part of the Tenant Certification located at the end of the application. The corresponding questions related to these eligibility requirements have been removed from the tenant application. This change responds to new Treasury guidance encouraging programs to accept self-attestations to make applying easier and application processing faster.

- UPDATED TENANT CERTIFICATION: The TRR terms of participation for Tenants and has been updated, effective 9/15/21. Approval notices will notify all approved applicants of this change. Please review new Tenant Certification here: <https://texasrentrelief.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/TRR-Tenant-Certification.pdf>

### 2. NEW INFORMATION & RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- How to sign up for and review these “Ongoing Program Updates and Announcements” may be found here: <https://texasrentrelief.com/forms-resources/#ongoing-program-updates--announcements>

- The TRR Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are updated regularly and can now be sorted by an assigned FAQ ID number or by the most recently posted by using the “Search” or “Sort By” features; see here: <https://texasrentrelief.com/faq/>

- A Mobile Tenant Application Tutorial for those who apply online using their mobile phone is now available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vx9u4x562hw>

- Landlords are provided with the breakout of the months and amounts for tenant payments. This can be found in the landlord account under the “Draws” tab for “Tenants.” See the Payment Guide pages 3-4 for details: <https://texasrentrelief.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/TRRP-Payment-Guide.pdf>

- TDHCA recently awarded a \$20 million Housing Stability Services (HSS) Program grant package for COVID-19-related housing legal services across the state. Tenants facing eviction are encouraged to visit <https://texaslawhelp.org/> or call 855-270-7655 for help understanding their options and seeking free legal assistance in their area. More information about the grant package may be found here: <https://www.teajf.org/news/releases/TAJF%20receives%20funds%20from%20TDCHA.aspx>.

### 3. ADDITIONAL FUNDING REQUESTS (AFRs)

- Due to high volume of Applications received, Additional Funding Requests (AFR) may take several weeks or more for approval. All applications are handled on a first-in, first-out basis, and applicants experiencing an eviction who have a court docket number or are experiencing a utility disconnection and provide a copy of the disconnection notice are prioritized. Right now, the current processing time from application submission to payment is an average of about 62 days for regular applications and about 32 days for prioritized eviction diversion or utility disconnect notice applications. We are taking additional steps to shrink these timelines.

-If rental or utility arrears are incurred during the waiting period, these months and any fees may be requested, along with the month of the review and two future months, as long as the total amount of assistance for a tenant does not exceed 15 months.

#### 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 September 24, 2021, TRR has paid approximately \$811 million in rent and utility assistance to assist 136,569 households. TDHCA strongly urges landlords to postpone filing or 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.