



## SAFE HARBOR HOUSING PROGRAM

# Rental Assistance for Tenants in Income-Restricted Housing: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: Some of the tenants in my development receive tenant/project-based rental assistance and others do not. Am I eligible to participate?**

A: You are eligible to apply for assistance, but only for those tenants who meet the tenant eligibility requirements and are NOT receiving tenant or project-based rental assistance.

**Q: My development is income restricted, but was not financed by RIHousing, am I eligible to participate?**

A: Yes, as long as the development is income-restricted to households earning no more than 80% AMI, and you meet the other program requirements, you can participate regardless of how it was financed.

**Q: Some of the tenants in my development earn less than 80% AMI but others do not. Am I eligible to participate?**

A: Yes, you may participate, but you may only request assistance with arrearages for tenants earning less than 80% AMI.

**Q: Do I have to include all of my income-restricted developments in the program if I participate?**

A: No, property owners/managers can choose which developments to include in the program.

**Q: Do I have to include every eligible tenant in a development who is behind on rent?**

A: Yes, property owners/ managers, must include all tenants in a participating development that are income qualified, are NOT receiving tenant or project-based rental assistance and have rental arrearages between March and December of 2020. The only exception are tenants who are currently in violation of lease terms other than nonpayment of rent.

**Q: I don't have government issued IDs for my tenants. Is that a required attachment?**

A: Providing government issued IDs (Driver's license, passport, state issued ID, municipality/city issued ID) for your tenants will expedite the processing of your application, but it is not required. RIHousing staff will follow up with tenants to secure any required documentation not included in your submittal.

**Q: When I fill out the spreadsheet on tenants with rent arrearages, should I just include information on the head of household?**

A: Yes, please include the requested information for the head of household only. We do not require additional information on other household members.

**Q: The program requires me to certify that all tenants listed have incomes at or below 80% AMI. What income is that based on?**

A: Tenant household income should be based on the most recent income certification. If a household's certified income exceeds 80% AMI, but the household has experienced a recent income loss that puts their income below 80% AMI, the tenant's arrearage may be included if they submit a self-certification of income.

**Q: I am seeking assistance with eight months of arrearages for a tenant. How long will I be required to forbear from sending a rental demand notice?**

A: For 90 days after the first of the month in which the final rental payment was paid by HousingHelp RI/Safe Harbor, the property owner/manager will forbear from sending a rental demand notice; charging new fees or penalties for late payment; sending a notice of termination of tenancy; or filing an eviction complaint, unless for material non-compliance with the rental agreement or the Rhode Island Residential Landlord Tenant Act other than nonpayment of rent in consideration of the payment of up to six months of rent.

**Q: Can I evict a tenant during the required forbearance period if they break the lease?**

A: A property owner/manager may only evict a tenant during the required forbearance period if they violate lease terms other than nonpayment of rent.

**Q: How will I get paid and how long will it take?**

A: Property owners/managers will receive payment of rent arrearages through direct deposit. Upon receipt of all necessary documentation and self-attestation from tenants, property owners/managers should expect to receive payment within 10 to 15 business days.

**Q: Will each development receive a payment for arrearages of its tenants, or do I receive one payment for arrearages across all of my developments?**

A: Property owners/managers have the ability to set up direct payments to each development when they set up their account. They will just need to provide the taxpayer ID for each development that will be receiving a payment.

**Q: What is the deadline for submitting applications?**

A: Applications can be submitted beginning December 1, 2020 through 5:00 PM, December 30, 2020.

**Q: I have already received rental assistance for some tenants through HousingHelp RI/Safe Harbor or another assistance program. Can I seek assistance for those tenants through this program as well?**

A: You may not receive rental assistance through this program for the same months that you have already received assistance through another program. However, you may receive assistance for those months in which no assistance was received. For example, if you have a tenant that received rental assistance for March and April, but that tenant now has additional arrearages in May, June and July, you may seek assistance for the May-July arrearages.