



WHAT LANDLORDS NEED TO KNOW

Rental Assistance is Landlord Assistance.

What is RentReliefRI?

RentReliefRI is a new rental assistance program for eligible Rhode Island renters struggling to pay their rent or utilities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also helps landlords as it ensures you are able to meet your financial obligations. Both landlords and tenants may initiate an application for the program. Information from both the tenant and landlord will be required to successfully complete an application.

Who is eligible for Rent Relief RI?

Tenant applicants **MUST MEET ALL** the following criteria to be considered for rent relief:

- Household income must meet certain income limits. Limits vary by location and household size.
- Qualified for unemployment benefits OR have experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced other financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to COVID-19.
- At risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability. This may include submitting past-due rent and utility bills or eviction notices when you apply.

What are the income limits?

Eligible households must be at or below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI), which translates to approximately \$69,200 annual income for a family of four in most parts of the State. Income Limits are available online at www.RentReliefRI.com.

What costs are covered?

RentReliefRI can pay for rent and some utilities owed back to April 1, 2020. The program will also cover up to three months of upcoming rent. Applicants are eligible for up to a total of 18 months of assistance. A \$50/month internet stipend is also available to applicants.

How much rent will RentReliefRI cover?

There is no monthly cap on eligible rent relief. The monthly amount is determined by the rent payment agreed to in the lease and documented arrearages.

How do landlords get paid?

Once approved, payment will be sent to landlords as soon as possible via direct deposit.

How will landlords know when a tenant applies for assistance from the program?

Once your tenant has completed all requirements for their section of the application, the landlord will be contacted to verify and complete the landlord section of the application.

If a tenant refuses to apply for the program, is there any way for the landlord to still process a request for rental assistance?

Unfortunately, if a tenant is not willing to participate, we are not able to offer assistance. The program requires that the tenant attest to such items as income, COVID hardship, attestation that benefits are not being duplicated, etc. They are also required to provide backup documentation for that information. Without the tenant providing this information and attesting to the truthfulness of their situation, we are not able to provide assistance.

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What should we do if our tenants are not willing to apply for rental assistance?

Remind your tenants that there are several important incentives to apply to the program:

- Their back rent will be paid
- They won't have an eviction order entered against them for rental arrearages
- They won't have their credit rating negatively impacted
- They maintain a good relationship with their landlord
- Most important: they get to stay in their home

What should landlords do to help tenants prepare?

Share information on the program with your tenants and direct them to www.RentReliefRI.com for further information. You can also help them prepare by:

- Providing tenants with a copy of their current lease.
- Providing a ledger or rent due statement, broken out by month if possible.
- Providing tenants with the business name and address you will use for payment information.
- Providing tenants with your email address

Make sure they know that in addition to assistance with missed payments, three months of future rent is also available.

What documents and/or information do landlords need to have?

When a tenant has completed the application, landlords will receive a request to upload several documents. Be prepared and have these ready to upload into the application portal:

- W-9 for the property owner
- Your direct deposit or ACH payment information.
- Proof of ownership
- Tenant name(s) and email address(es) are required

Any specific information for management companies?

If you are a management company with multiple properties, develop and distribute guidance on what address and contact information property managers should share with tenants to use. Larger management companies can coordinate and designate someone in the corporate office to set up and connect landlord accounts to avoid duplicate applications.

The success of the RentReliefRI program lies in both tenants and landlords knowing about the program and working together to apply.

**FOR MORE ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS,
VISIT WWW.RENTRELIEFRI.COM.**