

Illinois Rental Payment Program Distributes Over \$252 Million, 50% Of State's Relief Allocation Paid To Renters And Landlords Impacted By COVID-19

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CHICAGO – Governor JB Pritzker, along with the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA), announced that more than \$252 million in rental assistance has been paid on behalf of almost 29,500 renter households impacted by COVID-19 through the Illinois Rental Payment Program (ILRPP).

Launched in May 2021, ILRPP provides up to \$25,000 in financial assistance — paid directly to the landlord — to cover missed rent payments beginning June 2020 as a result of the pandemic.

With over 50% of the \$500 million in available ILRPP funds paid, Illinois continues to be one of the highest providers of rental assistance among all state grantees per the U.S. Department of the Treasury. This is in addition to the more than \$230 million Illinois disbursed to renters in 2020 through an inaugural pandemic rental assistance program.

“Having a roof over your head is the foundation of a thriving life, and Illinois is fiercely combatting the pandemic’s destabilizing effects on that foundation by keeping our residents on their feet,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “As the need for assistance only grows more urgent, we are proudly one of the top states in the nation at getting dollars out to those in need. With over \$250 million out the door and millions more on the way, we won’t stop until we can make a difference for every family possible.”

“Far too many people are facing housing insecurity and the risk of homelessness, especially during this pandemic,” said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton. “Illinois continues to stand with those in need, building on existing resources and assistance to ensure that the state’s most vulnerable residents keep a roof over their head.”

The Illinois Rental Payment Program provides up to 12 months of past-due rent and up to three months of future rent payments for tenants at risk of housing instability due to the pandemic. To date, IHDA has received nearly 98,865 completed ILRPP applications from renters and landlords in 100 of Illinois' 102 counties. IHDA has reviewed more than 70,000 applications, approved 29,433 applications, and paid out more than \$252.5 million to renters experiencing hardships due to the pandemic for an average of \$8,580 per household.

Application approvals and payouts will continue as IHDA continues to review the pipeline of completed applications through the end of September. Gov. Pritzker recently extended the eviction moratorium through Sunday, Oct. 3.

“In 2020, Governor Pritzker tasked IHDA with developing and implementing an emergency rental assistance program to provide rapid and direct relief to households impacted by the pandemic, something we had never done previously,” said IHDA

Executive Director Kristin Faust. “I am proud to report that IHDA has now provided over \$483 million in rental assistance since Aug. 2020, and staff will continue to review and process applications as quickly as possible to provide aid to vulnerable households. For those who were not initially eligible or missed the application window, more help will be available in the fall.”

The most significant delay in the processing of applications is collecting all federally required documentation needed to approve funding. Of the 70,000 applications to go through an initial review, IHDA has identified 36,000 applications with incomplete or missing documentation (e.g., a government-issued ID, proof of household income, proof of address, or evidence of past-due rent). IHDA is in the process of emailing landlords and/or tenants detailing what is missing, with information on a timeframe and a process to submit the documentation to complete their application for processing. Despite these challenges, Illinois remains a national leader in dispersing rental assistance.

“As Chair of the newly created Housing Committee in Springfield, my colleagues and I passed House Bill 2877, the COVID-19 Federal Emergency Rental Assistance Program Act, into law to efficiently distribute rental assistance to Illinois residents and provide for sealing of eviction records until Aug. 1, 2022,” said State Representative Will Guzzardi (D-Chicago). “Illinois renters should know their elected officials are actively advocating on their behalf to protect them from the effects of this pandemic as the economy recovers.”

“The Illinois Rental Payment Program is something the people of Illinois should be proud of. While many states have struggled to provide comfort to their struggling renters, Illinois is a champion,” said State Senator Robert Peters (D-Chicago). “This is a tremendous milestone, but our work is not done. With additional assistance coming this fall, we will continue to work with IHDA to better provide help to our constituents, so they do not have to live in fear of being evicted.”

“While Governor Pritzker’s eviction moratorium has kept families suffering hardship from losing their homes during the pandemic, the Illinois Rental Payment Program will ensure they have a roof over their heads while they regain their financial footing into the future,” said State Representative Barbara Hernandez (D-Aurora). “While other states have lagged behind in providing help to vulnerable families, seniors and others, Illinois continues to be a leader in stabilizing neighborhoods and not forcing people from their homes thereby increasing the chances of spreading COVID-19.”

This initial funding for ILRPP was provided through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, and additional rounds of assistance, including both rent and mortgage, will be announced later this fall from the American Rescue Plan Act. Tenants and landlords should continue to check their email (including spam folders) for any updates from

IHDA regarding their application. To speak with an IHDA call center representative, please call (866) 454-3571 (toll-free).

“I have spent my life advocating for vulnerable families to have the resources and supports they need to stay in their homes and neighborhoods, and not be put on the streets, especially through no fault of their own,” said State Representative Delia Ramirez (D-Chicago), Assistant Majority Leader. “I will continue working hard in my district, Springfield, and throughout the state to ensure those hardest hit continue to be afforded assistance and protection to keep a roof over their heads.”

“After launching one of the largest assistance programs in the nation in 2020, we knew Illinois was prepared to bring much-needed relief to renters and property owners throughout the state to limit the impact the pandemic may have on communities,” said State Senator Christopher Belt (D-East St. Louis). “The Illinois General Assembly acted swiftly once the federal emergency rental assistance funds were allocated to Illinois to limit housing insecurity and homelessness. Rental assistance continues to be available for all eligible Illinois renters and additional rental and mortgage assistance programs set to launch later this year after an additional allocation of funding from the Illinois General Assembly.”

For renters who missed the window to apply for assistance through IHDA, the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) is currently accepting applications for rental assistance until funding runs out. Households looking for assistance should contact an IDHS Service Provider Agency to ask about rental assistance. Provider Agencies will help you find out if you are eligible and help you apply for rental assistance. A list of Provider Agencies, as well as organizations offering assistance with utility bills, free legal aid, and additional services, can be found at: <https://www.illinoisrentalassistance.org>.

About the Illinois Housing Development Authority

IHDA (www.ihda.org) is a self-supporting state agency that finances the creation and preservation of affordable housing across Illinois. Since its creation in 1967, IHDA has allocated \$18 billion and financed approximately 255,000 affordable housing units for residents of Illinois.