



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**July 6, 2021**

## **Pennsylvanians Reminded of Support Available for Rent and Utility Bills, Anyone at Risk of Eviction Urged to Apply Today**

Department of Human Services (DHS) Acting Secretary Meg Snead reminded Pennsylvanians of assistance available through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) that can help people who have been affected by COVID-19 and are facing eviction be able to pay past due and upcoming rent or utility bills or other costs necessary to help them be safely housed.

Last week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced a final, one-month of extension of the federal moratorium on evictions through July 31, 2021. Pennsylvanians experiencing housing instability or at risk of eviction are strongly encouraged to not wait until the moratorium ends and to start their ERAP application now.

“Having a safe, stable place to call home is foundational to good health and overall well-being. The CDC’s eviction moratorium has been critical in helping people stay housed and avoid a wave of evictions and homelessness as Pennsylvania and the nation experience continued economic insecurity, but we must prepare for what may come when the moratorium ends,” said Acting Secretary Snead. “I urge any Pennsylvanian who is having trouble paying rent or utilities or who is concerned about losing their home to not wait and apply for ERAP today. This program is here to help, but please do not wait until you are in an especially difficult or desperate situation to start your application.”

The Wolf Administration built the [ERAP](#) in partnership with the General Assembly through Act 1 of 2021 and the recently passed 2021-22 state budget to make available over \$1 billion to Pennsylvania households through partnerships with local leaders. An additional \$498 million in rental assistance was directly allocated to Pennsylvania’s largest counties by the federal government, making a total of \$847 million available to support renters and landlords feeling the strain of this economic insecurity across Pennsylvania. Funding for ERAP comes from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, and further rental assistance funds included in the American Rescue Plan Act were appropriated in the 2021-22 state budget.

Households may be eligible for up to 18 months of assistance to cover past-due or future rental and/or utility payments. The amount of a household’s monthly rent or utility bills does not preclude eligibility, but the amount of ERAP assistance provided to a household is determined by program administrators at the county level. Assistance can be provided to a tenant for future rental payments, and for unpaid rental or utility arrears that were accrued on or after March 13, 2020 on a residential rental property. Counties may choose to provide additional assistance to eligible households if funds remain available.

Either tenants or landlords can apply for this assistance, but a tenant does not need a landlord’s permission to apply and use this assistance. This program is an opportunity to help ease circumstances for both parties, so landlords and tenants are strongly encouraged to work cooperatively to secure this stabilizing assistance.

To qualify for assistance, a household must be responsible to pay rent on a residential property and meet each of the following criteria:

- One or more people within the household has qualified for unemployment benefits, had a decrease in income, had increased household costs, or experienced other financial hardship during or due directly or indirectly to the COVID-19 pandemic; AND
- One or more individuals in the household can show a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability; AND
- The household has an income at or below 80 percent of area median income, which varies by county. [Income limits by county are available on the DHS website](#). Resources (like bank accounts and cars) are not relevant to ERAP eligibility.

Applicants will need to provide the following information: head of household's personal information; income information for all household members 18 and older; rental lease and amount owed; landlord's name and contact information. If applying for utility assistance, applicants must provide utility expenses and utility provider information.

About two-thirds of Pennsylvania counties have partnered with DHS to make ERAP applications available to their residents online at [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us). The remaining counties opted to accept applications from county residents through their own application process. Residents of all counties can visit COMPASS for information on how to apply for ERAP, including residents of counties that have developed their own process. If a person tries to apply through COMPASS but indicates that they reside in one of the 22 counties with its own application, they will be provided with information about how to apply, including a link to the county application if available.

“For too many Pennsylvanians, this crisis has destabilized financial situations and further strained resources for those already living at or near the poverty line – forcing them to choose between meeting basic needs, paying for housing or utility costs, and keeping their families safe,” said Acting Secretary Snead. “ERAP has the potential to stabilize the lives of millions of Pennsylvanians in vulnerable housing situations and provide a reprieve to the residential rental industry and utility providers. This is our opportunity to invest in our long-term economic recovery and prevent a wave of evictions and homelessness that will create yet another public health crisis that could persist beyond the pandemic. Please do not wait – apply today.”

For more information on ERAP, promotional materials, program data, and to learn how to apply, visit [www.dhs.pa.gov/erap](http://www.dhs.pa.gov/erap).

**NOTE: Video bytes of Acting Secretary Snead are available for use in coverage of ERAP and are available to download here.**

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