



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

Governor Cuomo Announces New COVID Rental Assistance Program - Application period opens July 16th

VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY July 15, 2020

| ISSUE: [COVID RENT RELIEF PROGRAM](#), [EMERGENCY RENT RELIEF ACT OF 2020](#), [COVID-19](#), [HCR](#), [EVICTION PREVENTION](#)

Funding Available to Tenants Impacted by Coronavirus Pandemic

Bolsters Ongoing Efforts to Keep New Yorkers in Their Homes

Program Application Will Be Available Here on Thursday, July 16

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced an emergency rental assistance program that will help keep low-income families throughout New York in their homes. The program, which is designed to reach those individuals and families with the greatest need, will provide direct aid for tenants who lost income due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program is funded through the Coronavirus Relief Fund, which is part of the CARES Act. The program is administered by New York State Homes and Community Renewal and access to program applications will be available here on Thursday, July 16.

"Since day one we made it clear that no New Yorkers should be thrown on the streets because of hardships caused by this pandemic," Governor Cuomo said. "It's critically important that people are able to stay safely in their homes as we progress through our data-driven, phased reopening, and the COVID Rent Relief Program reinforces that commitment with direct assistance to those in the greatest need."

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said, "Despite the progress we have made in fighting COVID-19, millions of New Yorkers are struggling because of this virus and the economic crisis. Providing direct aid to overburdened renters will help these New Yorkers stay in their homes and be able to make ends meet. I applaud Senator Brian Kavanagh for advancing this legislation, my Senate Democratic Majority for passing it, and Governor Cuomo for signing it into law. While this effort will offer some relief, we know that government needs to step up and provide more support during this difficult time. We are going to keep advancing meaningful legislation to help New Yorkers, and we need the federal government to work with us and provide the resources our state needs."

Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie said, "For many New Yorkers, the COVID-19 pandemic has made the challenges of securing affordable housing even greater. The Assembly Majority has fought tirelessly for years to keep New Yorkers in their homes and in the communities that they helped shape. With many New Yorkers still out of work, we still need assistance from the federal government to help states deal with significant fiscal challenges. We must do everything in our power to help New York families. This rental assistance program, while still not enough to meet the tremendous needs that exist, is a step forward to lifting a financial burden off of our most vulnerable families. We will continue to look to do more to help people remain in their homes during this unprecedented time."

Under the new program, eligible households will benefit from a one-time rental subsidy paid directly to landlords and housing providers. Tenants are not required to repay this assistance.

To qualify for the program, applicants must meet all of the eligibility requirements:

- **Must be a renter with a primary residence in New York State.**
- **Before March 1, 2020 and at the time of application, household income (including unemployment benefits) must be below 80 percent of the Area Median Income, adjusted for household size. Applicants can find the Area Median Income for their county, based on household size, on HCR's website here.**
- **Before March 1, 2020 and at the time of application, the household must have been "rent burdened," which is defined as paying more than 30 percent of gross monthly income towards rent.**
- **Applicants must have lost income during any period between April 1, 2020 and July 31, 2020.**
- **The application period will be open for two weeks. Residents can apply any time during the two-week period.**

HCR will prioritize households with greatest economic and social need, accounting for income, rent burden, percent of income lost and risk of homelessness. The rental assistance payment will cover the difference between the household's rent burden on March 1, 2020 and the increase in rent burden during the period the household is applying for assistance.

Households can apply for up to four months in rental assistance for the months of April through July. The program is open to households that rent apartments, single-family homes, manufactured homes and manufactured home lots.

Households with at least one household member with U.S. Citizenship or eligible immigration status are qualified to receive the subsidy. Tenants currently receiving a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher for housing costs or who reside in public housing are not eligible for RRP assistance.

The COVID Rent Relief Program builds upon Governor Cuomo's efforts to protect New York's renters during the coronavirus pandemic. This includes a statewide moratorium on COVID-related residential or commercial evictions; banning late payments or fees for missed rent payments during the eviction moratorium; and allowing renters facing financial hardship due to COVID-19 to use their security deposit as payment and repay their security deposit over time.

More information about the COVID Rent Relief Program, including Frequently Asked Questions, visit <https://hcr.ny.gov/RRP>

RELATED LEGISLATION

2019-S8419

- Introduced

- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- - Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Enacts the "emergency rent relief act of 2020" to establish an interim residential rent relief program

May 26, 2020

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by **Brian Kavanagh**

Do you support this bill?