



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DES Announces Emergency Rental Assistance Program to Provide Financial Assistance and Housing Stability

State and Local Municipalities Receive \$492 Million to Assist Arizona Households

PHOENIX - (February 9, 2021) The Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) announced today it will partner with Arizona counties to launch a new Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) to provide financial assistance and housing stability. Funding will be used toward direct payments for rent, rental arrears, utilities, utility arrears, and other expenses related to housing stability incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

ERAP was established by the federal Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021. Arizona will receive a total of \$492 million from the U.S. Department of the Treasury for the implementation of the program. DES was awarded \$289 million and will partner with twelve Arizona counties to distribute emergency rental and utility assistance. The remaining balance was [awarded to municipalities with more than 200,000 people](#) to distribute locally. DES will serve the following counties:

Counties Served

Apache	Graham	Navajo
Cochise	Greenlee	Pinal
Coconino	La Paz	Santa Cruz
Gila	Mohave	Yavapai

*Several large counties and cities, including Maricopa County, Pima County and Yuma County, are receiving funding directly from the federal government. Those counties plan to launch their own rental assistance programs, which will be separate from this DES program. Renters residing in cities and counties other than those listed above are encouraged to contact their local jurisdictions for similar programs. The DES portal will also direct renters living outside these counties to their respective programs.

“Households across the state continue to face economic challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are pleased to be able to provide this new assistance program alongside the other services we have to offer at DES,” said DES Director Michael Wisehart. “We will work quickly and diligently to provide rental and utility assistance to those in need.”

Emergency Rental Assistance Payment Details

Beginning **February 23, 2021**, Arizona households will be able to apply for up to \$3,500 in rental and utility assistance for each month. Payments may also be made for rental and/or utility arrears. After their initial application, households may receive up to 12 months of assistance. After receiving 12 months of benefits, whether for arrears or future payments, the household may apply for a three-month extension of benefits upon providing documentation of eligibility to the Department.

Payments will be issued directly to landlords and/or utility companies on the renter’s behalf.

Eligibility Requirements

The ERAP is available to both landlords and renters. While both may apply for assistance, eligibility is based on the the renter’s address and ability to meet the following criteria:

- The renter has a risk of homelessness, housing instability, or unsafe living conditions demonstrated by the following:
 - Eviction notice
 - Utility shutoff notice
 - Past due rent notice
 - Past due utility notice
 - Any other evidence of unsafe or unhealthy living conditions or housing instability
- The renter or member of the renter’s household is eligible for unemployment insurance benefits or has experienced a financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic
- The renter’s household income is less than or equal to 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI)
 - Assistance priority will be given to renters with household incomes under 50% AMI and to those who have been unemployed 90 days or longer.

During their application, renters will need to provide a copy of lease/rental agreement, photo ID, electricity and/or gas bill, disconnection notice (if any), proof of income, eviction notice (if applicable) and proof of hardship, such as a termination letter.

Individuals may apply online at des.az.gov/ERAP beginning February 23, 2021.

###