



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Additional Utility Assistance Now Available Statewide**

### *Emergency Rental Assistance Program Utility Assistance Expands to Maricopa, Pima and Yuma Counties*

**PHOENIX - (June 16, 2021)** The Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) today announced another opportunity for Arizona renters to receive assistance on their utility bills. As part of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), renters statewide can now apply through the DES website to receive assistance with their past due and future utility bills. Previously, rental and utility assistance through ERAP was available in twelve rural counties; however, families in Maricopa, Pima and Yuma Counties were required to apply with their local program for assistance. Now, renters residing in Maricopa, Pima and Yuma Counties may be eligible for past-due and future utility assistance through the program operated by DES.\*

This expansion provides another resource for families living within these counties. Alternatively, individuals can apply for utility assistance through their local jurisdiction as well as through their [local Community Action Agency](#).

"As Arizona returns stronger, many households continue to face hardships as they recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic," said DES Director Michael Wisehart. "The expansion of DES ERAP Utility Assistance will help to ensure Arizonans can remain cool, comfortable and safe in their residences. As temperatures continue to rise, we are pleased to be able to expand this opportunity for eligible individuals to receive assistance with their utility bills."

### **How to Apply**

Individuals can apply for the Statewide Utility Rental Assistance Program through the ERAP portal on [our website](#). Eligibility for Utility Assistance is based upon the same criteria as ERAP, which includes the following:

- The renter has past-due utility bills or is having trouble paying current or future utilities
- The renter or member of the renter's household has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic
- The renter's household income is less than or equal to 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI)

When submitting their application, renters will need to provide a copy of each utility bill for which they are seeking assistance and answer a few questions related to their eligibility. Utilities covered by this program include electricity, gas, propane, water and wastewater, sewer, and garbage collection.

Eligible applicants may receive 100% of their past due utility assistance as long as that amount was not incurred before March 13, 2020. They may also apply for future assistance in three month increments, for a total combined period of up to 18 months of assistance. Payments will be issued directly to the applicant's utilities provider.

### **Rental Assistance**

*\*The expansion of this opportunity applies to utility assistance only; those residing in Maricopa, Pima and Yuma Counties will still need to apply for rental assistance via their respective city or county-operated program--they are **not** eligible for rental assistance through the DES program. Renters and landlords in the other twelve Arizona counties can apply for rental assistance through ERAP at [des.az.gov/ERAP](https://des.az.gov/ERAP). Eligible applicants can receive up to \$3,500 per month in rent and utility assistance.*

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