



# PROGRAM CHANGES

## To Make Applying Quicker And Easier

The Texas Rent Relief Program (TRRP) provides up to 15 months of rental and utility assistance to tenants facing financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to prevent housing instability and potential eviction and allow people to stay in their homes.

TDHCA launched TRRP on February 15, 2021, with the goal of assisting those individuals in need of assistance with past due and future rent. Based on feedback received from applicants, TDHCA worked to streamline the application to make applying even easier for applicants and to make reviewing applications and paying out assistance faster. The result of these changes are the new policies summarized in this document. Changes are effective as of 04/21/2021.

April 21, 2021

BEFORE	NOW
<p><b>Income Documentation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Categorical Eligibility.</b> Households with 6 or fewer members could provide benefit letters from the following programs dated after January 2020 to show they were income-eligible:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ SNAP</li> <li>■ LIHEAP/CEAP or</li> <li>■ SSI (for the head or co-head of household)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Income Documentation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Categorical Eligibility.</b> Households with 6 or fewer members receiving benefits from the following programs may demonstrate income eligibility by providing benefit letters from:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Head Start, LIHEAP/CEAP, or SNAP</li> <li>■ SSI, TANF, or Tribal TANF for head of household</li> <li>■ VA Disability Pension, Survivor Pension, Enhanced Survivor Benefits, or Section 306 disability pension (not standard VA pension)</li> <li>■ WIC (households with 3 or fewer members)</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ <b>Income Documentation Waiver for Persons Facing Eviction.</b> Applicants who have been sued by their landlord for eviction and who provide their eviction case information in their application can certify that their household income is below the program limit without providing additional income documentation.</li> </ul>

BEFORE	NOW
<p><b>Tenant Eligibility Requirements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Subsidized tenants not eligible.</b> Tenants living in public housing, receiving tenant-based or project-based voucher assistance (e.g., Housing Choice Voucher, Section 8) were ineligible to receive assistance through the TRRP.</li> <li>■ <b>Documentation of unemployment benefits.</b> Applicants receiving unemployment insurance (UI) benefits were required to provide the following documents to demonstrate program eligibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ UI Statement of Benefits letter dated after March 13, 2020, or</li> <li>■ Validation through UI data from the Texas Workforce Commission</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Tenant Eligibility Requirements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Subsidized tenants now eligible.</b> Tenants living in public housing, receiving tenant-based or project-based voucher assistance (e.g., Housing Choice Vouchers) are eligible to receive assistance for the tenant-paid portion of their rent and utilities.</li> <li>■ <b>Documentation of unemployment benefits not required for eligibility.</b> Documentation of unemployment insurance (UI) benefits is no longer required to prove program eligibility. Instead, applicants must attest to having qualified for unemployment benefits and certify that this information is true in the designated sections of the tenant application.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landlord Documents Required:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Proof of ownership required.</b> Landlord was required to demonstrate proof of unit ownership.</li> <li>■ <b>Proof of relationship between landlord and management company.</b> Landlords were required to provide one or more documents to establish a relationship between the entity owning the property (entity in the real property record), and the entity listed on the lease and W-9 (if different entities).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Landlord Documents Required:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Proof of ownership no longer required.</b> Landlords are no longer required to provide proof of ownership documentation and instead will be asked to attest to property ownership in the application.</li> <li>■ <b>Proof of relationship between landlord and management company.</b> Landlords are no longer required to provide documentation establishing a relationship between the entity owning the property (entity in the real property record) and the entity listed on the lease and W-9. Instead, landlords will be asked to attest to this relationship in the application.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Rent, Rental Arrears and Fees:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>SAFMR/FMR Limit.</b> For assistance, the monthly contracted rent could not exceed 150% of Fair Market Rent (FMR) or 150% of Small Area Fair Market Rent (SAFMR), whichever was applicable.</li> <li>■ <b>Documentation of past-due rent required.</b> For assistance with past-due rent, a late notice was needed covering the full amount of arrears and/or late fees requested.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Rent, Rental Arrears and Fees:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Statewide monthly rent limit of \$4,600.</b> Households can request and receive rent assistance up to the total amount of monthly rent listed on the lease. A household with a monthly rent amount that exceeds \$4,600 is not eligible for rental assistance.</li> <li>■ <b>Documentation of past-due rent not required.</b> For assistance with past-due rent, the landlord's and tenant's certifications as included in the application will be acceptable documentation for certifying the amount of assistance requested. No additional documentation will be necessary for past-due rent.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Utility Provider Certification:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>10-day repayment requirement.</b> Utility providers that received a duplicated benefit were required to repay the TRRP within 10 business days of receiving duplicate payment.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Utility Provider Certification:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>30-day repayment requirement.</b> Utility providers that have received a duplicated benefit must repay the TRRP within 30 business days of receiving duplicate payment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority Applications and Eviction Diversion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Priority based on income and unemployment.</b> Applications received during the first 21 days that applications were accepted were prioritized for review if the household income was at or below 50% AMI, or if one household member had been unemployed for 90+ days at the time of the application.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Priority Applications and Eviction Diversion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Priority for eviction diversion cases.</b> Applicants who report they have been sued for eviction will be prioritized before all previously described priority applications. Previous priorities will still apply after eviction diversion cases are reviewed.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tenant and Landlord can apply online (<a href="https://www.texasrentrelief.com">TexasRentRelief.com</a>) or by phone (833-9TX-RENT). If Texas Rent Relief application is eligible and complete, payment to landlord is generally within 14 days.</b></p>	