San Francisco Emergency Rental Assistance Programs – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

QUESTION	CITY PROGRAM	STATE PROGRAM
What are the eligibility requirements?	You must: (a) be a tenant residing in San Francisco with unpaid rent or utilities; (b) have experienced financial hardship related to the COVID-19 pandemic; AND (c) have a household income that is at or below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI). * *For example, 80% AMI for an individual is $102,450; a single person who earns more than that will not eligible for rental assistance. 80% AMI for a family of four is $146,350; if the 4-person household exceeds that, they will not be eligible for rental assistance.	
What months are covered?	April 2021 and the following months	April 2020 through March 2021
Is there a maximum amount of assistance that I can be awarded?	No. However, there are limits to the number of months of assistance.	
How will applications be prioritized?	Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and are not first-come, first-served. Applications will be prioritized through a screening to determine the resident's economic and social vulnerability. Priority applications are those that meet the program's vulnerability threshold. A range of vulnerability factors are considered when determining priority applications, including past homelessness, extremely low income, family composition and other factors. Only priority applications are selected for financial assistance.	Applications are accepted on an on-going basis and are not first-come, first-served. The Program first prioritizes applicants whose household income is at or below 50% of Area Median Income (AMI) or between 50-80% AMI with nine or more months of unpaid rent. The Program then prioritizes applicants in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 before finally processing all other eligible applications based on available funding.
Does immigration status matter?	No. You will not be asked about immigration status.	

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Can I apply to both programs?	Yes. Since the programs focus on different time periods and have different priorities, it may be wise to do so. If you do apply to both programs you cannot receive assistance for months for which you have already received assistance. You must authorize the programs to share data to verify your application information and to ensure that rent was not paid for the same months. You must also disclose any rental assistance you have received either by these programs or other programs.	
I have already filled out an application for Give2SF. Will you use that application?	No. These are different programs. The Give2SF Housing Stabilization Program has ended.	
The unit I rent might not have been built with permits. Will the City send inspectors if I apply for assistance?	You can apply and be eligible for rental assistance regardless of whether your housing was built with permits. The information you provide will not be used for other purposes.	
What if I don't have pay stubs or other documents showing decreased income or increased expenses?	Other methods can be used to document income and expenses, including self-attestation. However, do your best to gather these documents ahead of time to move through the process more quickly.	
If my application is approved (all required information is verified) what happens next?	City Program will pay up to 3 months back rent owed and 3 months forward rent. For example, if your application is approved in June 2021, then the City Program will provide rental assistance for April-June (back rent) and July-September (forward rent). You will be contacted periodically with application status updates by one of several community organizations.	State Program will contact landlord and ask that they agree to waive 20% of the unpaid rent. If they agree, State Program will pay landlord the remaining 80% of unpaid rent. If the landlord doesn't agree, State Program will pay tenant 25% of unpaid rent. You will be contacted periodically with status updates by email.
What if my landlord will not cooperate with the program?	State and City Programs must first attempt to work with landlords on getting the information/documents they need. However, if landlords do not respond or cooperate, then programs offer direct-to-tenant payments subject to program rules. The financial assistance may be less than if the landlord were to cooperate with the program.	
If the owner accepts the rental assistance will I still owe rent?	No, you will no longer owe rent.	No, you will no longer owe rent.

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I still don't have a job and are unable to pay rent. Am I eligible to apply?	Yes. You do not need to be able to pay the rent moving forward to be eligible for rental assistance.	
How long will it take to process my application?	It may take two to three weeks from submitting an application to learn whether or not your application has been selected for assistance. Do not submit multiple applications because this slows down the entire process. If your application is selected for assistance, the rest of the process may take an additional two to six weeks, depending on the volume of applications.	
Are subtenants who owe rent to a master tenant eligible to apply?	Subtenants are eligible for assistance with or without the involvement of the master tenant.	Subtenants are eligible for assistance if the master tenant also applies for assistance in the same application.
What if several different families rent a house or apartment together, can they apply separately?	City Program considers them separate households. Each household must apply separately.	State Program considers them a single household. All persons living in the house or apartment must apply together in a single application.
What if I borrowed money and don't owe any rent?	You are still eligible to apply because the City Program doesn't only provide back rent owed but also future rent. However, your application may not be prioritized.	You are only eligible if you owe rent for the covered period.
What if I had to move because I couldn't pay rent, but still owe past rent?	Both Local and State Programs are considering serving these households. However, at this time, these households are not eligible to apply.	
How do I apply?	Please apply online at **sf.gov/apply-rent-help** starting on **May 28**. We strongly encourage you to apply on your own if you can. Community organizations are available to assist you in completing the online application. Paper	Online application is available at housingiskey.com. Community organizations are available to assist you in completing the online application. Paper applications are available but must be inputted onto the online application in order to submit the application.

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	applications are available but must be inputted onto the online application in order to be submitted. Community organizations will be available to help applicants who filled out a paper application submit an online application.	
Do I need to pay anything to apply or to get help applying?	No, the application is completely free! There are trained community organizations that can provide assistance. You can find them either by calling 211 or online at www.sfadc.org. If a person or organization offers to help you with your application for a fee, please report them to www.sfadc.org.	
Can I apply for assistance if I live in City or Federally subsidized housing?	Yes.	
My landlord says that they will apply for me. Is that allowed? What if I want to apply on my own?	Only tenants may apply. Landlords must provide certain information/documents, such as amount of unpaid rent and fill out a W9.	Either the landlord or the tenant may apply. Landlords may submit applications on behalf of tenants, but tenants must agree to participate in the program before rental assistance is provided. Tenants do not have to provide their personal information/documents to the landlord because they can provide it directly to the program if they prefer.
Is my information safe? How will it be used?	Yes. Both programs are required to use strict system security and data privacy protocols.	
How will I know if I am awarded assistance	One of the City's Community Partners will contact you via email or telephone with next steps in the application process.	Program will contact you and your landlord via email with next steps in the application process.
Can I appeal if I am not awarded assistance?	No. However, if you discover that information in your application is inaccurate, you may reach out	

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	to a Community Partner to correct your application and have it re-screened.	
What do I do if I am not awarded assistance? Can I be evicted?	Certain months of unpaid rent are "un-evictable" if they had to do with the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information, click here.	
My neighbor got assistance, but I didn't. Why?	Programs prioritize applications based on a set of factors that consider the vulnerability of a household. Each household is unique.	
My landlord is threatening to evict me if I don't pay rent. What do I do?	You have rights! Visit the San Francisco Anti-Displacement Coalition website.	