

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program?

The CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program is an emergency program that helped eligible renters and landlords by providing financial assistance for rent and utilities due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Who was eligible to apply for the program?

The program was targeted toward low-income renters and their landlords who met financial eligibility requirements. Applicants were able to request up to 18-months in assistance covering the time between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2022

When did the program end?

In accordance with state law, the application portal to the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program closed after March 31, 2022. The program will continue to review and process funding for all eligible applications received by that date.

Will I still be able to access my application after March 31?

If you submitted your application by March 31, you will be able to access your application to check the status, respond to tasks, and provide additional information requested by your case manager.

When do the statewide eviction protections end?

AB 2179, signed into law on March 31, 2022, extended the state's eviction protections for nonpayment of rent to applicable applicants that submitted a complete application to the state or local rental assistance programs on or before March 31, 2022. These statewide protections were in place from April 1 to June 30, 2022. Some cities and counties have additional eviction protections in place. Please contact your local jurisdiction to see what may be available to help you.

How do I appeal if my application is denied?

If your application is denied, you will receive an email notifying you of the denial. The email will include a link directing you to the Appeal Portal. There you can review a brief description of the appeals process and submit an appeal directly. If you have any questions about the appeals process, please contact the call center at 833-430-2122 or you can email appeal@ca-

rentrelief.com. If you need additional help submitting an appeal including help in another language, please contact 833-687-0967.

Where can I find out why my application was denied?

The email notifying you of the denial will provide the reason your application was denied. If you choose to submit an appeal, you can then upload new or different document(s) that may address the reason for the denial in order to support your appeal.

How will I know my appeal was submitted?

After successfully submitting an appeal, you will be redirected to a confirmation page and will also receive an email confirming the appeal was submitted. You will also notice that your application status in Neighborly has been updated from Denied to Appeal Submitted.

How do I check the status of my appeal?

If you have submitted an appeal, your status will show the appeal has been submitted. Please watch your email to see if there are any questions the team needs answered while reviewing your appeal.

How long does it take to review an appeal?

Our goal is to complete appeal determinations within 30 days, however, each appeal is unique and may take longer.

What do I do if my appeal was denied?

The program will allow you to appeal your denial or awarded amount only once.

How are you determining who gets rent relief first?

While we know rent relief is an urgent issue for all applicants, to ensure that those most in need receive assistance, the state will first review and commit funds to applicants who are income-eligible and who are at the greatest risk of eviction. It is critical that applicants act as quickly as possible to complete their application and reply to any requested action or response. This will ensure an application can be processed as quickly as possible.

How do I check the status of my application?

Once applications are submitted, applicants may monitor the status of their applications by logging into their Neighborly account [here](#) or by calling a program representative at 833-430-2122 (toll free) between 7 am and 7 pm

seven days a week. Applicants will be automatically contacted by a program representative once their application is reviewed, or if the application is found to be missing required documentation.

Will renters and landlords be notified when a payment is made?

Yes. The landlord, renter, and/or utility provider will be notified automatically of payment by email after the renter, landlord, and pay request have been determined eligible and payment calculation has been completed and verified by the payment team. Applicants can also check the status of their applications at any time through the online application portal at HousingIsKey.com, or by calling a program representative at 833-430-2122 (toll free) daily from 7 am – 7 pm Pacific time. The status report will indicate whether and when a payment has been made.

How will payments be made to my landlord?

If the landlord agrees to participate in this program, payment will be made directly to the landlord on behalf of the eligible household. If the landlord refuses to participate, payment will be made directly to the renter. The same is true for utility payments that are owed to the landlord as required by the lease agreement.

Can tenants receive legal support?

The CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program has established direct connections with legal aid organizations across the state and will continue to connect applicants that wish to access legal aid support. Applicants in need of legal aid who do not submit a rent relief application to the portal by March 31 are encouraged to visit lawhelpca.org.

I'm a landlord and received a Form 1099 from the IRS. What does this mean?

Per federal guidelines for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief Program will send a completed IRS Form 1099-MISC to all landlords and utility providers that received assistance from ERAP

. An email that includes a secure link to retrieve the form will be sent via Track1099 Software to the registered email address used to submit the original ERAP application. Please check your junk and spam folders. If the email fails then the form will be postmarked and mailed via U.S. Mail on January 31 with delivery expected within 7-14 days. Do not discard this form, as you will need to keep it on file for your taxes.

If you do not receive your form either by email or U.S. Mail by February 15, please call the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief Program Contact Center at 833-430-2122.

ERAP payments to landlords and utility providers are considered taxable income. For more information, visit Internal Revenue Service: Emergency Rental Assistance Frequently Asked Questions. Please direct tax specific questions regarding the Form 1099-MISC to your qualified tax professional.

Do I request an IRS form W-9 from the program if I return funds?

No. The funds returned to the program are not “income” to the program reportable on Form 1099. Therefore, no Form W-9 is required as the program is not a taxable entity and would not be a Form W-9 vendor given that no services were provided. The returned amount would be an offset to your income in year-end reporting. Please consult with your advisor on the tax treatment of this item.