

# Emergency Rental Assistance

## Assisting Households Impacted by COVID-19

Program Information and Frequently Asked Questions



### About the Program

Bering Straits Regional Housing Authority (BSRHA) was allocated over \$8 million dollars from the U.S. Department of Treasury for the implementation of the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program, on behalf of our partner Tribes. **The ERA program provides up to 12 months of financial assistance to eligible tribal and other AI/AN households residing in the Bering Straits region.**

#### ERA assistance can be for the payment of:

- rent and rental arrears;
- utilities and home energy costs and arrears; and
- other expenses related to housing incurred due directly, or indirectly, to the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Applications will be accepted until September 1, 2021, or until program funds are spent. Subject to available funds and program availability, the application period and household eligibility requirements may be expanded.*

Applications will be processed as they are received and will be pooled for prioritization and selection every 15 calendar days (approximately) throughout the duration of the program.

*Preference will be given to an eligible household with at least one family member (regardless of age) who is a Tribal Member of one or our regional Tribes.*

#### How do I get a copy of BSRHA's Application?

Do you have access to the internet?

- If you do, please visit our website at: [www.bsrha.org](http://www.bsrha.org).
- You can also request a copy by sending an email to: [era@bsrha.org](mailto:era@bsrha.org).

#### No internet access? No problem!

BSRHA will be working with our local Tribal partners to ensure that applications are readily available. Please contact one of our team members and they will be able to assist you.

#### How do I submit my application?

Completed applications, including all required documentation, can be submitted using one of the following methods:

**Email:** [era@bsrha.org](mailto:era@bsrha.org) **Fax:** 1-907-443-8652

**Mail:** Bering Straits Regional Housing Authority / ERA Program  
PO Box 995, Nome, AK 99762

#### I already applied for this program using AHFC's online portal, can I still sub- mit an application to BSRHA?

Maybe. BSRHA is working with AHFC to ensure that every eligible household in our region has access to these funds. If you already submitted an application using the ir online portal, please continue to work with AHFC directly. To check the status of your application, please visit: [alaskahousingrelief.org/renters/check\\_status](http://alaskahousingrelief.org/renters/check_status). If you have any questions regarding their process, feel free to reach out to one of our team members for assistance.

### How do I know if I am eligible?

You are eligible for this program if:

1. You or a member of your household meets at least one of the following criteria:
  - » Qualifies for or is currently receiving unemployment benefits.
  - » Has been or is currently unemployed.
  - » Has lost income due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - » Has incurred significant costs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - » Has directly or indirectly experienced financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - » Current BSRHA Homebuyers under the Lease-to-Own
2. You or members of your household can demonstrate a risk of homelessness or housing instability. To do so, at least one of the following statements must be true:
  - » Has received a rental eviction notice.
  - » Has received past-due rent or utility notice(s).
  - » Is at an increased risk of exposure to COVID-19 due to overcrowding.
  - » Is delaying the purchase of essential goods/services to pay rent or utilities.
  - » Is relying on credit cards or payday lenders to pay for rent or utilities.
  - » Is depleting savings rather than wages to pay for rent or utilities.
3. Your household income is at or below 80 percent of the area median income (based on household size and the community you live in)  
See income limits below:

#### Alaska

If you live in....

Number of Household Members	Maximum Income Limit
1	\$52,584
2	\$60,096
3	\$67,608
4	\$75,120
5	\$81,130
6	\$87,139
7	\$93,149
8	\$99,158

**Brevig Mission, Council, Diomede, Elim, Gambell, Golovin, King Island, Koyuk, Mary's Igloo, Nome, St. Michael, Savoonga, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, Solomon, Stebbins, Teller, Unalakleet, Wales and White Mountain**

### Questions? Comments? Concerns? Need help completing an application?

Help is just a phone call away! This is a stressful time and we want this process to be as easy as possible. Our team is here to assist you with any questions or concerns that you may have. If you need assistance completing the application, have questions regarding eligibility, or would like to discuss the options for submitting an application, please don't hesitate to call.

ERA Program Coordinator  
907-443-8608

# Emergency Rental Assistance

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***If approved, will I receive the money directly?***

No. Payments will be directed to landlords and utility providers.

### ***Can the assistance be used to pay for expenses other than rent and utilities?***

No. Funds can only be used for rent and utility assistance.

### ***Can the assistance be used to pay rent owed and/or unpaid utilities bills?***

Yes. Funds will be used to first pay unpaid rent and utility bills. However, funds cannot be applied to past rent or utility bills that predate March 13, 2020.

### ***I do not owe back rent or utility payments, can I still apply for future assistance?***

Yes, BSRHA provides up to 12 months of future rent and utility relief to eligible applicants.

### ***If I qualify, how long will I be eligible to receive assistance?***

The program allows for up to 12 months of financial assistance, with the possibility of extending assistance for an additional 3 months. All past-due rent and utilities back to March 13, 2020 will be paid first with remaining funds available for prospective (future) assistance. Funding will be available at least through September 30, 2021

### ***If I don't need help making rent payments, can I still apply for help with unpaid utility bills?***

Yes. Assistance from this program can be used to help you catch up on unpaid utility bills.

### ***Do I have to have been impacted by COVID-19 to be eligible for this program?***

Yes. You must demonstrate negative economic or financial hardship due directly or indirectly to the coronavirus outbreak.

### ***I'm currently employed and have income. Am I still eligible to apply?***

Yes. Funds will be available to renters with household incomes of no more than 80% of Area Median Income (AMI). Area Median Income (AMI) is calculated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) using data from federal entities such as the IRS. To qualify for Emergency Rental Assistance:

- ❖ Your 2020 annual income for all members of your household - including all wages, tips, etc. - must have been at or below the 80% community Area Median Income (AMI); OR
- ❖ Your 2021 monthly income for all members of your household - including all wages, tips, etc. - must currently be at or below the 80% community Area Median Income (AMI).

### ***I own my home. Does this program provide mortgage relief, or help with utilities for homeowners?***

The current program only assists renters, but there may be changes or additional programs in the future.

### ***How will my landlord know if I applied?***

Please notify your landlord that you are applying for assistance under this program. Let your Landlord know they will be contacted by BSRHA inviting them to participate and submit required information.

### ***I am a landlord, can I apply on behalf of my tenants?***

Landlords can help their tenants successfully secure assistance by providing needed information as part of their eligibility process.

If your tenants are struggling to pay rent or utilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, please let them know about this program and have them contact one of our team members for assistance.

### ***What if I didn't live in my current rental when COVID-19 started?***

You can still apply for assistance with rent and/or utility bills. There is no requirement for a specific length of residency in your current rental property.

*Please don't hesitate to contact a member of our team if you have any other questions.*

**DON'T DELAY APPLY TODAY**