

PHLRentAssist Phase 4
Frequently Asked Questions
Updated March 23, 2021

Who can apply for rental assistance?

There will be a tenant and landlord application, both of which must be completed and reviewed before assistance is offered. Tenants and landlords can fill out their own applications and submit them jointly, landlords can apply on behalf of tenants. If landlords do not wish to participate, the tenant may apply on their own and the funds will go directly to the tenant.

How much money has been allocated to Phase 4 of the rental assistance program?

We have roughly \$97 million to use for rental and utility assistance in Phase 4. It is estimated that with this funding, we can serve between 10,000 and 15,000 families. The American Rescue Plan will provide more funding to Phase 4 of the rental assistance program.

What is pre-registration and how is it different than the standard landlord application?

The pre-registration process refers to a period where landlords can submit their relevant banking and property information before the tenant application and general landlord application opens. The purpose of pre-registration is to make it easier for tenants to associate with their landlords once the general tenant application opens.

Who is eligible to apply for rental assistance?

You are eligible if:

- One or more individuals within the household has qualified for unemployment benefits or experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced other financial hardships due to—directly or indirectly—the Covid-19 outbreak;
- One or more individuals within the household can demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability; AND
- The household has a household income at or below 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). A priority will be given to households at or below 50 percent AMI.

What are the income guidelines for Phase 4?

Households must have an annual income at or below 80% of the Area Median Income, which is \$77,300 for a family of four. The full income chart is below.

| Household size | Program eligible maximum annual household income at 80 percent AMI | Priority review maximum annual household income at 50 percent AMI |
|----------------|--|---|
| 1 | \$54,150 | \$33,850 |
| 2 | \$61,850 | \$38,650 |
| 3 | \$69,600 | \$43,500 |
| 4 | \$77,300 | \$48,300 |
| 5 | \$83,500 | \$52,200 |
| 6 | \$89,700 | \$56,050 |

How much can an applicant receive in rental and utility assistance? And for how long can they receive assistance?

For rental assistance as an applicant you :

- Can receive up to \$2,000 per month in rental assistance for months after April 2020.
- Applicants are eligible for up to 18 months of rental assistance, combining both past rent and future rent.
- At least 1 month of past-due rent **must** be satisfied before an applicant can request assistance for future rent.
- Applicants can only apply for up to 3 months of future rent assistance at a time. After 3 months, they can reapply.

For utility assistance as an applicant you:

- Can receive up to \$2,000 per utility.
- Can receive up to 18 months of utility assistance for past-due and current utility bills.
- Applicants can seek assistance for water (PWD), gas (PGW), and electric (PECO) utilities.

I received assistance in a previous round, am I able to apply again and receive more rental assistance?

Yes, applicants who received funds in Phases 1-3 of PHLRentAssist are eligible to apply for Phase 4, however, applicants may not receive funds for any months which they have previously been paid. Even if an applicant already applied and/or received assistance during Phases 1-3, they still must apply for Phase 4.

I printed a paper application from the State DHS website. Where can I send my application?

We are not accepting the State's paper application. Our tenant application is not open yet. When the application opens, you can apply online at phlrentassist.org. For more assistance with your application, please call 215-320-7880.

What does it mean to “incur significant costs or experience other financial hardship?”

If you or a member of your household is experiencing financial constraints that make paying rent challenging then you qualify as an applicant experiencing financial hardship. Furthermore, any accumulation of costs that have burdened the household financially due to the COVID-19 pandemic qualifies as incurring significant costs.

What does it mean to have “housing instability?”

The application outlines conditions and circumstances that result in an applicant experiencing housing instability. Among the criteria are being at risk of eviction or living in unsafe conditions which are listed in the application.

What is pre-registration and how is it different than the standard landlord application?

The pre-registration process is a period where landlords can submit their relevant personal, banking, and property information before the tenant application opens. The purpose of pre-registration is to make it easier for tenants to associate themselves with their landlords during the application process.

Who can fill out the pre-registration form?

The purpose of the pre-registration form is to gather the landlord’s relevant information before the tenant application opens. As a result, landlords and those who are applying on behalf of landlords can fill out the pre-registration form. This includes property managers and legal representatives.

Why do I need to pre-register my units?

When the tenant application opens, tenants will be prompted to associate themselves with their landlords through their address. If the landlord registers their units with our system ahead of time, then the tenant will be able to associate themselves more easily as the resident of that unit.

If the unit is **not** pre-registered, then the tenant will have to input their landlord’s information manually, at which point the landlord will confirm that the entered information is correct. Once a landlord pre-registers, tenants will not have to input their landlords’ information manually, saving time for both the landlord and tenant.

Do I really need to enter each address individually?

Yes. Entering each address makes it easier for your tenant to match their application with your application. The pre-registration form breaks down the type of property so it can be entered more simply. You can choose to enter a (1) multi-unit property, (2) single-unit condo within a multi-unit property, or (3) a single-unit property.

Do I need to enter all my bank information now?

No, but it is recommended to streamline the application process. Bank information must be entered before the final landlord application is submitted for review.

What if my property manager should receive the payment?

If the property manager should receive the payment, you can enter their bank account information, property management agreement and W-9. The names on the W-9 and bank account must match.

Why do I need to submit a W-9?

We need a W-9 form to make sure that the payment information for your account is correct and to send you a tax document.

What documents are sufficient to show our real estate company is authorized to act on behalf of our owner?

If the applicant's name is not on the deed, then the applicant must submit documentation showing that they're authorized to make decisions on behalf of the owner of the property and/or the corporation. Acceptable forms of documentation include a property management agreement or the legal contract between the owner and the legal representative.

What documents are sufficient to show proof of ownership?

- A sales contract
- Your most recent property tax receipt
- A copy of the mortgage for the property
- Proof of homeowner's or hazard insurance from the most recent year
- Screenshot of your information on the Office of Property Assessment's (OPA) website
- A bank statement with the property address listed as either (1) the owner's primary address, or (2) as a subaccount
- A settlement statement from when the landlord purchased the property
- An IRS ownership document

I already registered for a previous round. Do I need to register in the system again?

Yes, everyone has to register in the system again. This is a new round and we are using a new system so we need people to register again even if you have applied or received funds through a previous phase.

I completed the landlord pre-registration form but think I may have made a mistake or accidentally entered the wrong information. Can I edit the form?

At this time, the application information cannot be edited. If you made a mistake to a property or bank account you can delete it and re-enter that property or bank account.

The site is not working correctly, what should I do?

Please make sure you are using Chrome, Edge or Firefox as your web browsers. The application works best on those 3 browsers.

The application is saying the attachment is too large, what should I do?

Try using a condenser to make the files smaller, like this one <https://www.wecompress.com/en/>