**NC HOPE Program still accepting applications from renters impacted by COVID-19 pandemic**

North Carolina renters who are behind on rent or utility payments, or face homelessness or eviction due to the COVID-19 pandemic, can apply for financial help to stay in their homes through the NC Housing Opportunities and Prevention of Evictions, or HOPE, Program.

The pandemic has placed thousands of households across North Carolina at risk of losing their homes, and mid- to low-income renters are among the hardest hit. The HOPE Program provides rent and utility bill assistance to mid- to low-income renters, working to prevent evictions and utility disconnections. To date, the program has paid more than $540 million to landlords and utility companies statewide.

The HOPE Program, which is managed by the N.C. Office of Recovery and Resiliency, is funded with federal pandemic recovery funds provided to the state. North Carolina renters who need help can apply to the program by visiting [www.HOPE.NC.gov](http://www.HOPE.NC.gov). On the HOPE website, applicants will find eligibility requirements, frequently asked questions, and the online application – all available in English and Spanish.

Once approved by the HOPE Program, renters can receive up to 15 months of rent and utility assistance, which may include up to 12 months in past due rent. Applicants may also receive forward rent and utilities assistance, which must be applied for three months at a time.

To be eligible to receive HOPE assistance, applicants must be renting their residence in any of [the 88 counties served by the NC HOPE Program](https://www.rebuild.nc.gov/hope-program/find-program). A renter must also have experienced financial hardship due to COVID-19, and have a household income at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI) for the county where they live.

The program also accepts landlord referrals of tenants struggling to pay rent due to the pandemic. Landlords may submit tenant names and contact information through the [HOPE Program website](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=40211472&msgid=494420&act=M0IH&c=1346310&destination=https*3A*2F*2Fapp.smartsheet.com*2Fb*2Fform*2F3008feed2500441d86671e6524d8ebad&cf=13425&v=d428ae68226d0a56e2f6c51dd482c34b030e2986e1fd509571b975a5b500117a__;JSUlJSUl!!HYmSToo!P2vBuvUNQau9fTWWVlKSRSPd5gcVn6HDVZHvOGPC7rlHovW4DkVbAZm1K7p8noT1isaYvw$) or by contacting the HOPE Call Center. A program specialist will then follow up with the tenant to help start the application process.

The HOPE Program also recently partnered with Legal Aid of North Carolina on their new statewide [Housing Helpline](https://www.legalaidnc.org/get-help/self-help-library/housing/housing-helpline) for residents facing eviction or struggling with other housing issues. North Carolinians across the state can call the Housing Helpline at (877) 201-6426 to receive help.

HOPE applicants who cannot access the HOPE website, [www.HOPE.NC.gov](http://www.HOPE.NC.gov), or who have additional questions may contact the HOPE Call Center at (888)9ASK-HOPE or (888)927-5467 to speak with a program specialist Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.