

SMALL BUSINESS: EMERGENCY RENTAL RELIEF PROGRAM

(American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds)

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The following is the Cumberland County “Small Business: Emergency Rental Relief Program” Policy and Procedures Manual. The purpose of this manual is to assist all businesses, individuals, and interested parties in understanding the program’s policies, procedures, and functions. The objective of the program is to assist eligible businesses and individuals in all municipalities within Cumberland County impacted by COVID-19 by utilizing American Rescue Plan Act funds to provide them with emergency rental relief.

There is approximately \$225,000.00 set aside, which will provide for up to an estimated forty-five (45) tenants/units, net of any program delivery/administrative costs. Financial assistance for this activity is made possible through the provision of Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds from the U.S. Department of the Treasury, in accordance with Section 603(c) of the Social Security Act as amended by Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act, Pub. L. No. 117-2.

I. ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

- Applicants must be a property owner (either a business or individual) engaged in residential rental activities in any Cumberland County municipality and have/had a lease/rental agreement in place with a tenant. For the purposes of this application, residential rental activities shall include single-family and multi-family dwellings. Specifically excluded are vacation/short-term rentals, commercial leases, land, and self-rentals.
- If the Applicant is a business entity (partnership, corporation, limited liability company, etc.), they must provide a statement of ownership that displays all ownership interests of 20% or more. In the event that any one owner is listed on multiple applications under varying business entities, then the aggregate application amounts from all of these related sources shall be combined in consideration of the four (4) unit maximum.
- Applicants must be able to prove that their tenants had a lease and rental payments were current (during the lease term) and then subsequently impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Applicants must be able to provide documentation of a COVID-related loss of rental income after March 16th, 2020. Examples include:

- o Ledgers and Bank Statements showing an absence of rental payments being received
 - o Delinquent notices provided to tenants for which no rents were received
 - o Tax Returns (that must show and detail the rental activity)
 - o Other consequence(s) of the virus that led to a reduction of income
 - o Eviction notices
- Applicants must have a certificate of occupancy, proof of inspection, and registration in the municipalities that require rental registration.
 - Applicant must be in good standing with the respective municipality of the rental property with all property taxes being current on payments and have no current code violations.

II. LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE

The County will provide eligible applicants with up to six (6) months' rent or \$5,000.00, whichever is less, for payment towards the relevant balance owed from the tenant on a per unit/tenant basis – not to exceed four (4) units. A “unit” shall be defined as a single-family dwelling OR a multi-family dwelling unit (e.g., apartment, duplex, condominium). Therefore, multiple awards can be made to single applicants for multiple tenants/units. Payments will be issued directly to the applicant. The applicant must provide the benefit received to the tenant in the form of forgiving the outstanding back rent and any associated late fees. A certification form will be required from the landlord to the tenant indicating the exact amount of assistance provided for each month of arrears. There is approximately \$225,000.00 set aside, which will provide for up to an estimated forty-five (45) tenants/units, net of any program delivery/administrative costs. Financial assistance for this activity is made possible through the provision of Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds from the U.S. Department of the Treasury, in accordance with Section 603(c) of the Social Security Act as amended by Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act, Pub. L. No. 117-2.

III. DUPLICATION OF BENEFITS

The County has a Duplication of Benefits policy for each specific program funded by federal awards. Assistance received from this program cannot overlap with assistance from any other source for the same purposes/time periods, and the total amount of all assistance must not exceed the total amount in arrears. Payments through this program will only cover amounts not paid by or offered to be paid by other sources. Applicants will be required as part of the application (Section V) to list any and all assistance funding received for this purpose from any source after March 16th, 2020. Should the applicant, through other means during or subsequent to this grant period, obtain reimbursement for rents for the same purposes covered under this application, they shall be compelled to report this over-enrichment to the Improvement Authority and/or the County, and shall be required to remit the duplicative income to the applicable party for which it was received.

IV. APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants must complete an application and submit documentation to receive assistance. For convenience, required documents may be scanned or photographed using a mobile phone or device and uploaded with the application. This documentation will be used to determine eligibility and must be clear and legible. Applicants should not submit an application until all required documentation has been gathered. Incomplete applications will be returned, and applicants will have five (5) business days to resubmit the application with the required information or the case will be closed. Funds are limited and will be distributed on a **first-come, first-served basis**. Submission of an application does not guarantee that financial assistance will be provided.

V. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The following documents are required. All documentation will be reviewed to determine eligibility.

| Verification Needed | Required Document Copies |
|--|---|
| Current lease or rental agreement, if applicable (Personal Information Section) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of signed lease • Copy of certificate of occupancy • Copy of rental registration • Statement of Ownership Disclosure (if a business entity) |
| Pre-COVID Income (Personal Information Section) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2019 Tax Return (complete with all schedules and statements) that clearly identifies the rental unit/activity. Must include K-1 forms as applicable • Eviction Notice/Docket • Accounting ledgers detailing transactions with the tenant • Bank Statements showing rental payments being received from the tenant (matching the ledgers) • IRS W-9 Form (attached to Application) |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Proof of COVID-related financial loss (Personal Information Section)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2020 Tax Return (complete with all schedules and statements) that clearly identifies the rental unit/activity. Must include K-1 forms as applicable. • Accounting ledgers detailing transactions with the tenant • Bank Statements showing rental payments being received from the tenant (matching the ledgers) |
| <p>Landlord statement and balance due (Arrears Information Section)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement issued to the tenant with current balance due. (If balance due spans multiple months, please attach these as well) • Signature from the tenant attesting that the balance due is correct and has not otherwise been paid/covered. If tenant is no longer in the unit, there must be some notice issued by the tenant of their intent to vacant the premises, which would be reflective of the period claimed. • Certification by Landlord/signed by the tenant of exact use of assistance, rental unit and months of rent |

VI. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

Applicants should write their full name on each page of the documents that are required to be submitted. Applications may be submitted in one of three ways: e-mail, mail or drop-off.

Applicants who choose to submit their application by e-mail should scan or photograph each page, attach the .PDF application and required documents to the e-mail, and submit the completed package (application form and required documents) to at ymoreno@theauthoritynj.com with the subject line “Cumberland County Small Business: Emergency Rental Relief Program, [your legal entity’s name].”

Applicants who choose to submit their application by mail should mail the completed package in a single envelope addressed to: **Cumberland County Improvement Authority, Attn: Yazmin Moreno, 745 Lebanon Rd. Millville, NJ 08332.**

VII. DETERMINATION OF APPLICATION STATUS

Applications submitted without complete documentation cannot be processed. Applicants will be contacted via e-mail or phone if there is any missing documentation. Missing documentation needs to be submitted within five (5) business days. If missing documentation is not submitted within five (5) business days, the application will be considered incomplete, the case will be closed, and the file will be shredded.

Once an application has been processed, applicants will receive an e-mail or letter notifying them that their application is either approved or denied. The eligibility decision cannot be appealed. If an applicant's situation changes, they may reapply. If an applicant is approved, the tenant in the applicable unit will be contacted.

An Internal Revenue Service W-9 form must be obtained prior to payment being made. Please be advised that you will be required to show that any assistance provided will be properly credited to the unit applied for and that it shall not result in a duplication of benefits where rents for these periods are subsequently collected by the tenant. All payments made shall be considered to be taxable income, for which you, as the applicant, would expect to receive a 1099-G form as required.

VIII. AFFIRMATIVE MARKETING

The County participates in various steps to make available to the public information on the Small Business: Emergency Rental Relief Program. The County partakes in actions to provide information to persons in the County without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, familial status or disability. The following steps are exercised:

- Printed literature (printed applications, flyers, etc.);
- Information provided on the Cumberland County website and social media;
- Information provided to local community organizations, neighborhood groups, counseling agencies, employment centers, etc.;
- Posting at various County and Local Public Libraries;
- Information posted with participating municipalities in the County;