

# Emergency Rental Assistance Frequently Asked Question

**How did Caddo Parish get chosen for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program?** On December 27, Congress passed and the president signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, which established a new \$25 billion Federal Emergency Rental Assistance Program for state, county and municipal governments with populations of over 2000,000 people to assist families struggling to make rental and utility payments.

**Who determines the criteria for the program?** The US Department of Treasury set forth all guidelines, qualifications, and eligibility for the program. The guidelines are attached separately.

**Does the Parish have the ability to subcontract the program out?** Yes. Caddo Parish can develop a program that involved other agencies to administer the program. Most entities prefer this option as it does not require hiring any temp staff or creating any office space. They work with agencies that are already doing the work?

**Why are there four organizations instead of 1 or 6?** It is best practice not to put such a large burden on one entity. It also not a best practice to spread funds so thin residents get confused and accurate reporting becomes difficult. There are also agencies that are working on CARES ACT rental assistance. That requires completely separate guidelines, reporting, and eligibility. Four organizations allow for broad enough reach within the parish and while being able to ensure efficient and effective delivery and safeguards.

**Does the Parish have to pay for the program first and be reimbursed?** No. The US Department of Treasury will deposit funds must disburse funds within 90 days of HR 133 becoming law.

**Does the Parish have to provide matching funds to participate?** No. This program does not require the counties or parishes to provide any form of matching funding.

**What is the deadline for utilizing the funds?** There are at least two deadlines associated with the program. September 30,2021 is when excess funds may have to be repaid. Treasury can determine whether to reallocate or redirect the funds to

another jurisdiction. Funds must be completely exhausted by December 31, 2021. Recipients can request a 90-day extension.

**Can funds be used to cover mortgages? In principle no.** However, there are discussions that a landlord who has a mortgage on a property is basically using rent proceeds to pay a mortgage. There is discussion to ask Treasury to change. But at this time. A home mortgage is not allowed to be covered under this program.

**Will an individual receive a direct check?** No. Upon verification, all payments will be made to landlords. However, if a landlord chooses not to participate, payment can be made to the individual. Or the entity can help the individual find another place to stay and cover the rent with new landlord.

**Can an individual receive an unlimited amount of assistance?** Rent can be covered for up 12 months total which is inclusive of arrears owed. Only 3 months' worth of rents can be covered going forward. A total of 15 months is the maximum amount.

**Can resident/landlord go to different organizations to apply?** No. The purpose of utilizing the selected nonprofits is that have existing databases that allows them to see if resident/landlord has received services already. That is also the reason for splitting the Parish into service areas.

**How will residents know where to get assistance?** A resident or landlord can call 2-1-1 and they will be referred directly and electronically to agency that covers that area.

**Can residents in Blanchard, Ida, Keithville, Rodessa, Vivian, Lakeview, Dixie Garden, and other area outside the city limits of Shreveport be eligible?** There is an entity assigned to covered all parts of the parish. This includes rural and unincorporated areas. If they might the criteria set forth by US Department of Treasury they can participate.

**What about residents who do not speak English?** The legislation recommends holding back funds to work with a translator to help fill out application. At this time, all participants must be a documented citizen.

**Will individuals/landlords have to verify need?** Yes. All participants will have to submit leases, employment verifications, verification of reduced hours, reduction in force, or layoff notice (etc). Changes in employment **MUST BE RELATED** to COVID-19. This will be verified by organizations. All participants and landlords will be required to sign affidavit attesting information is accurate.

**Will there be reporting requirements?** Each organization will provide quarterly reports set forth by the Department of Treasury.

