

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How and when can I apply to be considered for the lottery?

Prequalification is required. In order to prequalify for assistance, you must complete a prescreen interview with 211LA over the phone or online. 211LA can be reached by simply dialing 2-1-1 or you can apply online by visiting their website, www.211LA.org. For more information or to apply for the City of Lancaster Emergency Rental Assistance Grant Program, beginning August 3 call 2-1-1, Monday – Friday, from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. or visit www.211la.org 24/7 until signups close at 5:00 p.m. on August 10.

How much money is available to help me pay rent and for how long?

Payments of up to \$5,000 to help tenants maintain their housing, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

How often can I apply?

Your household may only apply once. If approved and selected, there is no need to apply again.

How will applicants be selected to receive rental assistance?

Once the pre-screening period ends, eligible applications will be randomly selected by the lottery. Multiple application submissions may deem an applicant not eligible. If an applicant is selected, they will be notified by email or phone and asked to submit documentation to prove their eligibility. Selection in the lottery process does not guarantee the applicant will receive benefits under this Program.

Will I have to pay the assistance back?

No, the payment is a grant; repayment is not required (with the exception of fraud or duplication of benefits).

My past due rent is greater than the assistance being provided; how should I proceed?

This program provides a maximum of \$5,000 towards rental assistance. The Housing Rights Center and Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County are available to assist tenants and landlords with greater needs.

My rent was past due before COVID-19; can I still participate in the program?

No, as a requirement of this Program, rent must have been current as of March 1, 2020.

What is the income qualification criteria?

Total household income must be at or below the following income levels:

Income Level		1 person household	2 person household	3 person household	4 person household	5 person household	6 person household	7 person household	8 person household
Extremely Low	30%	\$ 23,700	\$ 27,050	\$ 30,450	\$ 33,800	\$ 36,550	\$ 39,250	\$ 41,950	\$ 44,650
Very Low	50%	\$ 39,450	\$ 45,050	\$ 50,700	\$ 56,300	\$ 60,850	\$ 65,350	\$ 69,850	\$ 74,350
Low	60%	\$ 47,340	\$ 54,060	\$ 60,840	\$ 67,560	\$ 73,020	\$ 78,420	\$ 83,820	\$ 89,220

How is household income calculated?

To calculate income for households, total the gross income of each person living in the home who is 18 years old or older, regardless of whether they are related or not.

Include wages, salaries and tips, other income such as alimony, child support, Social Security, SSI, cash aid, unemployment, pension, retirement, disability, special pay allowances of a member of the Armed Forces, or other monetary benefits.

Do not include food subsidy payment such as CalFresh, and school lunch program participation, as they are not considered part of your income.

What if my residence is located near the City of Lancaster?

Properties located outside of City of Lancaster limits, including unincorporated LA County, are not eligible.

What if I am not named on the rental agreement/lease but want to apply?

The main applicant must be named on the rental lease agreement and can apply on behalf of the household as long as eligibility requirements are met. Only one application per household will be accepted.

I already receive federal, state, or local housing assistance, can I still apply?

No, duplication of benefits is not allowed. Your residence must not receive any other forms of rental subsidies including, but not limited to, Section 8, FEMA, VASH, TBRA.

What happens after the lottery selection process?

Once the lottery selection is complete and final participants are determined, selected participants will be contacted to apply online or complete a paper application. Paper applications can be secured and dropped off at City Hall Monday through Fridays during business hours. The application must be received before the deadline of 08/19/2020.

I do not live in a single-family residence, a mobile home, or an apartment complex but instead rent out a room. Can I apply for this program?

No, this program is only open to tenants of single family residences, mobile homes, or multi-family unit with current lease agreements.

Can I qualify for rental assistance without the participation of my landlord?

No. Dual participation, by both tenant and landlord, is required.

Who would receive the rental assistant payment?

The rent subsidy is paid directly to the landlord. The rent subsidy will not be paid to the landlord unless the tenant has been qualified by providing documentation and the landlord also agrees to participate in the Program.

Do I have to be a US Citizen to apply?

The program is open to all renters, regardless of immigration status. We will not ask for immigration status nor is it considered to determine eligibility.

Why is demographic information like Race and ethnicity collected?

Information collected is Federally mandated for reporting purposes and is kept strictly confidential. The information collected also helps the City of Lancaster prepare for future programs.

I was not selected in the lottery process, but my household is still in need of financial assistance.

Contact 211LA for a list of available local, regional, and state resources customized to your needs. The City of Lancaster anticipates a high volume of interest in this program, as a result, a limited number of applicants, chosen by lottery, will be approved.

What documents will be required of me if I am selected in the lottery?

If selected, you must provide the following by a determined date:

- 1) Copies of Social Security card or Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITIN) for all household members regardless of age.
- 2) Copies of government issued identification for all household members age 18 or older (Examples: California ID or Driver's License). Name and address must match with the applicant information. In the event that your identification is out of date and does not match your current address, additional documentation will be requested to verify your residence.
- 3) Documentation of income from March 1st, 2020 to the date of your application, for every household member 18 or older (examples: paystub or profit and loss statement, if self-employed).
- 4) Bank statements for March 1st, 2020 to the date of your application, for every household member 18 or older.
- 5) Benefit Award Letter for unearned income for any household member (Examples: current year Social Security letter, pension letter, unemployment, cash assistance, etc.).
- 6) Documentation of loss of income due to COVID-19 (Example: letter from the employer regarding furlough, reduction in hours, layoff/paycheck stub).
- 7) Documentation of all state, federal, or other funds received related to COVID-19, if applicable.
- 8) Illness certification from a qualified medical professional, if you have personally been diagnosed or are caring for someone in your household who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.

What documents will be required of my landlord if I am selected in the lottery?

- 1) Copy of the current rental/lease agreement for the residence listed on the application.
- 2) Copy of the current City of Lancaster Rental Housing Business License.
- 3) Rental statement showing: a) the status of the rent as of March 1st and b) payments made by the tenant and any arrears assessed from March 1st, 2020 to date.
- 4) Arrears re-payment agreement, if applicable.
- 5) Completed W-9 form.

If the \$5,000 benefit is all that I can pay towards my rent right now, will I be evicted?

If your landlord accepts the \$5,000 payment, they agree not to evict you for nonpayment of rent for the month(s) in which the payment is made. Typically the landlord will postpone collecting the balance, until a certain date. At that time, you are obligated to settle the balance of your rent. Landlords within City of Lancaster limits are obligated to adhere to the County of Los Angeles Temporary Eviction Moratorium linked [here](#).

If my application was not randomly selected, will I have the opportunity to apply again?

If your application was eligible but not selected, you will receive an email indicating that you are now on a waiting list. Your application will continue to be on file and may be selected if more funds become available.

I have questions regarding my application, who do I contact?

Contact the City of Lancaster Emergency Rental Assistance Grant Program team at COLRentassist@cityoflancafterca.org or 661-723-6211.

How do I dispute a decision regarding my application?

Applicants have a right to appeal if their application is denied. The appeal must be made in writing within 10 days of notification to the City of Lancaster, ATTN: ACS: Emergency Rental Assistance Grant, 44933 Fern Avenue, Lancaster, CA 93534.

How is the Rental Assistance Program funded?

The Program is funded by The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) pursuant to The Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) that was signed into law on March 27th, 2020. Limited Community Development Block Grant - COVID (CDBG-CV) funds are available to the City of Lancaster to be used to assist Lancaster residents who are experiencing financial hardship as a result of the coronavirus COVID-19.