



Emergency Housing Assistance Program Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How much can be spent on administrative costs?

A: 8 percent.

Q: How much should be spent on HPRR versus ERA?

A: The Continuum of Care can determine the distribution of funds by type based on local needs.

Q: Can funds be used to pay for hotel/motel stays?

A: Yes, funds may be used to place high-risk individuals in hotels/motels. Eligible individuals include those who are elderly aged 60 and older, individuals with pre-existing or underlying health conditions, domestic violence survivors, or pregnant women. Please note that hotel/motel assistance must be tracked in the OHFA COVID-19 reporting spreadsheet or in HMIS.

Q: Domestic violence survivors are vulnerable individuals who require specialized assistance. Are DV survivors eligible for hotel/motel assistance?

A: Yes.

Q: Traditional homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing activities involve significant staff time and resources dedicated to providing referrals, negotiating with landlords, providing case management, etc. Can any funds be used to provide such services?

A: The majority of funds should be provided directly to clients' housing costs. However, up to 25% of funds may be used to provide the aforementioned services to clients to ensure successful diversion and rehousing.

Q: Are households that already receive CoC services or support eligible for new assistance?

A: Yes. There is no requirement that households are new to the CoC or to services provided by the CoC. Any household that receives funding can be currently enrolled in a CoC program or have received assistance in the past. Persons cannot receive the same type of assistance from another source of funds for the same period of time.

These Households should, however, be recorded as a new entrance. HMIS captures entrances for individuals, and assistance through the COVID-19 funding can be captured as a unique entrance. Each Head of Household assisted through this funding should be tied to COVID-funding through the tracking sheet. The Head of Household ID Number should be tied to amount of funding, outcome of funding, etc. using the COVID-19 reporting spreadsheet provided by OHFA. The standard information about the household should still be captured in HMIS.

Q: Is there a limit on the amount of funds that can be used for hotel/motel expenses?

A: No, however, the majority of funds should be used to provide or maintain permanent housing opportunities. Funds provided in **Round 2** (for which grantees will have a grant amendment) can be used exclusively for hotel/motel expenses for purposes of providing or maintaining non-congregate sheltering. Assistance provided should still be tracked in HMIS COVID-19 tracking sheet.

Q: What Household data must be captured in HMIS for households receiving assistance?

A: In the COVID-19 reporting form, the Head of Household ID must be connected to the amount of funding expended, type of assistance, and outcome of assistance (Stay in place, New Housing, Temporary Housing).

Within HMIS, all households assisted should be recorded as a standard in-take. All individuals assisted should receive a Unique ID, and record Name, SSN, DOB, Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Relation to Head of Household within HMIS. The Head of Household will also record Name, SSN, DOB, Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Relation to Head of Household. This captures the number of children and adults in a household. Head of Household should also include total household income for the household,

Income details (i.e. income source), collection of non-cash benefits such as TANF, SNAP, or WIC, health insurance, and disability status do not need to be captured.

Q: Is 'loss of income due to COVID-19' sufficient for reporting hardship category? If not, what are the data items to be collected for this question?

A: Yes, the appropriate categories for this are in the codebook: Wage Decline; Health Impact; Unemployment. Descriptions for each category are in the Codebook in the COVID-19 reporting spreadsheet.

Q: Are there any additional options that should be collected as outcomes other than 'stay in place' or 'acquire new housing'?

A: Placed in temporary housing (i.e. hotel, motel, other temporary shelter) is the third category in addition to "Stay in Place" and "Acquire New Housing" for potential outcomes.

Q: What are the reporting requirements for 'reason for funding approval'?

A: "Reason for funding approval" is not a category that is required for reporting. Hardship Claim is captured using three potential codes including Wage Decline, Health Impact, and Unemployment. Reasons for assistance include Imminent Loss of Housing for those who are receiving rental assistance to stay in place. Reasons for assistance include emergency assistance for those who are currently homeless.

Q: What is the difference between Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing (HPRR) and Emergency Rental Assistance?

A: The distinction is that Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing should be individuals that are CURRENTLY housed but face eviction and due to lack of resources and support networks will be homeless but for this assistance AND for persons who are literally homeless and are in need of a "New" unit.

Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) is primarily for individuals that are CURRENTLY housed and in need of assistance to avoid eviction. These individuals/families will likely be referred by other providers as they are not shelter seeking and would be set up in HMIS as a separate provider group. ERA is distinct from HP because it does not require the level of assessment that would be required for an individual receiving HP assistance.

Q: OHFA's Emergency Rental Assistance is available to individuals at or below 50% of AMI, which presents challenges to reporting in HMIS as a Prevention Activity (targeted at 30% AMI and below). Can we use a separate reporting mechanism for ERA?

A: Yes, please use the COVID-19 reporting spreadsheet for ERA or create a separate provider group in HMIS. Eligible individuals will include those who are unable to pay their rent and are at imminent risk of eviction. This includes, but is not limited to, individuals who have experienced a decline in income, weekly wage reduction, job loss or other financial challenges stemming from COVID-19 related matters. *This language was revised in the guidelines to remove "but for this assistance, they would become homeless."

Q: Can Emergency Rental Assistance be used to assist individuals or households who weren't directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic?

A: Individuals and households who have experienced a decline in income, a weekly wage reduction, job loss or other financial challenges stemming from COVID-19 should be prioritized for assistance. However, others who have experienced such challenges unrelated to COVID-19 are eligible for assistance.