



Portland Housing Bureau

Mayor Ted Wheeler • Director Shannon Callahan

COVID-19 Rent Relief Program (CVRRP) Expanded Partner Network

FAQ's from

Kickoff Meetings – Sept. 8 & 9, 2020

Application and Submission Meeting – Sept. 17, 2020

September 8, 2020 Session

- Q1. For the income requirement, what time period is it for?
- A1. Participants will self-certify that they meet the eligibility requirement of 80% AMI or below. The form collects monthly income information.
- Q2. Is past owed rent (rent arrears) eligible?
- A2. Yes.
- Q3. Can we decide on how to select applicants based on our own organization's processes?
- A3. Yes.
- Q4. Can PHB provide support for creating program 1-pagers for outreach/social media?
- A4. We will provide a program guidance form for organizations. Please contact Jennifer (Jennifer.Chang@portlandoregon.gov) if your organization has specific needs or requests in addition to this information.
- Q5. Will the Sept. 17th application training meeting be recorded (if we cannot attend)?
- A5. Yes.
- Q6. May organizations receive more allocation than the original quota?
- A6. It is a possibility. We will be monitoring progress closely from month to month. If some organizations are having challenges meeting their application amounts, we may reach out to other partners regarding their capacity to make more referrals. We will ensure all the funds are deployed by the December 30, 2020 deadline.
- Q7. For admin fee, it is calculated based on number of completed intakes or actual rent payments?
- A7. The available program delivery costs for each organization will be calculated by taking 8% of the total estimated amount of rent assistance provided (# applications x \$6,000/hh). For example, for an allocation of 40 applications, the program delivery cost for the organization will be up to and not to exceed \$19,200 (40 applications x \$6,000/hh = \$240,000; \$240,000 x 8% = \$19,200).
Organizations will invoice PHB on a monthly basis, for 8% of the total amount of rent assistance they have submitted for that particular month.
- Q8. The average is \$6,000/HH. Should we prioritize rent equal only to 3 months? (Oct, nov, dec)?
- A8. The program guidance is to prioritize payment of current and future rent.

- Q9. If our average rent application per household is lower, like \$2000, may we submit more applications than the original number allocated?
- A9. Each organization will have an established amount of rent assistance allocation which they can spend against and not exceed. Organizations may serve an increased number of households if they find that the assistance per household falls below the average of \$6,000 per household.
- Q10. Can the relief fund be used for both rent and utilities?
- A10. **As of 9/10/2020, due to legislative and policy updates, utilities will no longer be allowed under this program.** Households needing utility assistance should be directed to 211Info at: <https://www.211info.org/energy>.
- Q11. Are pre-paid reimbursements possible? We are already paying landlords to prevent evictions.
- A11. **No, pre-paid reimbursements cannot be made.** Agencies should begin gathering applications and making commitments to landlords now, but payments will need to be made directly from Home Forward to the landlord(s). Tenants should NOT currently be at risk of eviction due to non-payment of rent, due to the eviction moratorium.
- Q12. Will payments for future rents be made by Home Forward in a lump sum, or month-by-month?
- A12. Home Forward plans to make payments as they become due. Payments will not be lump sum, unless they are payment for rent arrears.

September 9, 2020 Session

- Q13. Can we get forms in Somali/Maay and Swahili?
- A13. We will see what we can do to get the forms translated.
- Q14. What about signatures? Can they be scanned?
- A14. Yes, scanned signatures are acceptable. Also, you can obtain an email or other verification from the participant providing approval for a staff person to sign on behalf of the participant.
- Q15. If we serve more households, do we get paid more for the administration fees?
- A15. Organizations will have a set administration amount in their contract with PHB. **Organizations will invoice PHB on a monthly basis, for 8% of the total amount of rent assistance they have submitted for that particular month, not by the number of referrals.**
- Q16. We have several families living in the same apartment building, so it would be the same landlord receiving the payments, but for different families and units. I assume/hope this is OK?
- A16. Yes, as long as the households are different, multiple payments can be paid to the same landlord.
- Q17. Can we sign on their behalf? many HAKI recipients do not have computers/ the ability to 'scan' a signature - and some can't read in any (english or Swahili) language.
- A17. Yes, an agency staff may sign on a client's behalf. You should get an email confirmation from the client granting permission.

Q18. Can the families receiving the CVRRP also receive the housing assistance funds/gift cards?

A18. Yes, as long as they meet eligibility criteria for both.

Q19. Are we expected to obtain the landlord's W-9, and is it covered under the 8% fee?

A19. Yes. We request organizations to assist with reaching out the landlord to request the W-9, which can be sent directly to Home Forward.

September 17, 2020 Application and Submission Process Meeting

Q20. Is it eligible to cover January 2021 rent, as long as it is prepaid by/before the program deadline of Dec. 30, 2020?

A20. Yes.

Q21. Can we assist with rent payments for people who already have section 8?

A21. Yes. However, the amount of rent paid for by CVRRP must only be used to cover the tenant portion of the rent (cannot pay for the duplicate amount covered by Section 8).

Q22. Can we cover moving expenses?

A22. Yes, this is an eligible activity.

Q23. Is it our responsibility to get the W9 or the clients from the private landlord?

A23. Partner organizations will send the Landlord Information Form to the landlord. The landlord should send that form, along with their W-9, directly to Home Forward. Home Forward staff can assist in following-up with the landlord if the information is not received. The landlord must submit the W-9 in order to be paid.

Q24. Can the signature part be typed in for no contact signature?

A24. Due to social distancing measures, agencies may use alternative methods to gather documentation (via phone, email, text, mail, etc), such as an email from a participant to verify information on a form, or a verbal confirmation in place of a signature. **Agencies should have a written policy describing their remote application and documentation process and apply it equally across all applicants.**

Q25. What audit requirements are required? are organizations required to collect/keep any data?

A25. Record keeping requirements is five (5) years for this program. Details on the record retention and audit requirements will be contained in the PHB contract and Home Forward MOU documents.

Q26. For residents of Home Forward properties, will they need to be connected to one of the participating organizations to initiate an intake, or can they be directly connected to Frank or Hannah at Home Forward?

A26. Under the CVRRP Expanded Partners, referred households should be made through one of the partner organizations.

- Q27. Can you confirm that SSN is optional?
- A27. Yes. SSN is on the intake form and can be collected, but household have the option to decline this item.
- Q28. Who is responsible for that data entry into service point?
- A28. Staff from Multnomah County Department of County Human Services will do intake and reporting into Service Point system for this program.
- Q29. Are paper copies of the form available? If so, when?
- A29. The forms and intake process are designed as being all digital, given we are amidst an environment with social distancing requirements. PHB staff will follow-up on requests for paper copies.
- Q30. Is SSN on W-9 required from the landlords.
- A30. Yes, a W-9 from the landlord is required in order for Home Forward to make the payment. The W-9 form requires either a SSN or EIN.
- Q31. Can you please provide us a list of partners outside of Multnomah County so that when someone from Washington or Clackamas, for example, come to us then we know who to refer them to?
- A31. Below are contacts for rent assistance outside of Multnomah County:
<https://covid19.211info.org/rental-assistance/-/eviction-info>
- Q32. When do you expect the submission to start?
- A32. Organizations may begin submitting applications once they have signed their MOU with Home Forward. Frank Tworek-Hofstetter sent out draft MOUs last week. If your organization did not receive it, please email Frank at: Frank.Tworek-Hofstetter@homeforward.org.
- Q33. How do we determine a household is in Multnomah County?
- A33. More details on how to verify that the address is in Multnomah County:
<https://www.portland.gov/phb/rental-services/verify-eligible-properties-portlandmaps>
- Q34. What is the starting point for finding HCP Anywhere? Do we need a sign-in?
- A34. No sign-up or log-in is required. Wendy Smith from PHB has sent an email on 9/17/2020 to each organization with their individual folder link and access code. Please contact her if you did not receive it at: Wendy.Smith@portlandoregon.gov.