

**Vermont State Housing Authority  
COVID-19 Rental Housing Stabilization Program**

**Program Summary**

The Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA) Rental Housing Stabilization Program (RHSP) is for tenants who are at risk of losing their housing due to non-payment of rent during the Coronavirus pandemic. This program will provide the VSHA Payment Standard or the actual amount due for the month(s) being claimed, whichever is less, per household at a single address who meet eligibility criteria. The goal of this program is to prevent eviction and homelessness and to compensate landlords for some of their losses due to CARES Act moratorium, Judicial Emergency, and stay of eviction proceedings.

**Eligibility:**

Tenants in the state of Vermont may qualify if they are at risk of losing their housing due to non-payment of rent during the Coronavirus pandemic. This may include but is not limited to being laid off, reduced work hours, place of employment closing, or other loss of income due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Tenants may also qualify if they are at risk of losing their housing during the Coronavirus pandemic due to non-payment of rent or money owed to their landlord.

Tenants who are in unsustainable tenancies and families or individuals who are homeless, including households that received emergency housing benefits from the Department of Children and Families' General Assistance Program may also qualify for assistance with first and last months' rent and security deposit and/or rental assistance through December 30, 2020 at a new unit if they agree to accept navigation and support services. These families and individuals would need to come to the RHSP through a referral from The VT Agency of Human Services through the Coordinated Entry system. All assistance is subject to the availability of funding.

Additionally, for landlords to be eligible to receive payment they must certify the following:

- The dwelling unit for which the tenant will be receiving assistance is operated and maintained in compliance with Vermont Rental Housing Code or will be brought into compliance within 30 days. Units with serious life safety code violations will be referred to the local Health Officer and Vermont Legal Aid.

[https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/REG\\_Rental\\_Housing\\_Code.pdf](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/REG_Rental_Housing_Code.pdf)

- Funds received in excess of the actual amount due and received for the purpose of stabilizing the rent at the dwelling unit for which the tenant will be receiving assistance will be returned to the appropriate agency.
- Monthly rent in excess of VSHA payment standards for the months' rent was in arrears will be waived.
- Late fees will be waived.
- The contract rent will not be increased before January 1, 2021 or the end of the rental term, whichever is later.
- Eviction for cause that arose prior to receipt of this payment will be waived.
- No action will be taken to evict for nonpayment of rent for a time period equal to the number of months covered by the grant.
- IRS W-9, the VSHA Direct Deposit form and a voided check will be furnished for payment.

### **Decisions and Appeals**

1. All decisions will be made within 10 working days of submission / receipt of a complete application package (certification from landlord and tenant). Incomplete applications will maintain their position on the list until a complete application is received, no more than 10 working days.
2. All decisions will be in writing by email or First-Class mail if necessary and conveyed to the tenant and landlord.
3. The Administrator will have an expedited appeals process by which a hearing will be held with anyone designated by the Administrator who was not the original decision-maker or that person's subordinate, and a decision is made within 10 days of the request for an appeal.

### **Applications**

Only digital applications will be accepted through the online portal at [www.vsha.org](http://www.vsha.org) No paper applications will be accepted. For questions or assistance with applications and submittals please contact:

- Tenants call VT Legal Aid – 1-800-889-2047 or fill out [Legal Help Request Form](#).
- Landlords call VT Landlords Association - 802-985-2764 or 888-569-7368

### **Payments:**

All benefits will be paid by Direct Deposit to landlord's, but the tenant household or the landlord/owner can be the applicants. Beneficiaries may apply as often as needed but cannot exceed the maximum total benefit during the program timeline. Landlords must also certify to the rental amount the tenant is in arrears.