

Mona Miyasato
County Executive Officer

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Executive Office

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July 20, 2021

Via E-Mail: erap@hcd.ca.gov

Department of Housing and Community Development
Division of Federal Financial Assistance
2020 W. El Camino Avenue, Suite 670, 95833
Sacramento, CA 94252-2054

Re: State Rental Assistance Program Round 2 Letter of Intent

To Whom It May Concern:

Pursuant to that certain Memorandum for State Rental Assistance Program Partners, dated July 13, 2021, this letter indicates Santa Barbara County's intent to change from an Option C to Option B and receive a state block grant to administer Santa Barbara County's local program in conformity with state and federal laws.

I hereby attest that Santa Barbara County has the capacity, ability, resources and commitment to operate all aspects of the emergency rental assistance program, including the requirements of AB 832 related to supporting court inquiries and legal proceedings for the next several years.

Santa Barbara County looks forward to working with the State to ensure a smooth transition and avoid any disruption or delay in the processing of existing applications in light of the urgency of this joint effort to prevent homelessness before the State eviction protections expire in September.

Thank you for your continued partnership.

Sincerely,


Mona Miyasato
County Executive Officer

CC: Geoffrey Ross, HCD Deputy Director
George Chapjian, CSD Director
Dinah Lockhart, CSD/HCD Deputy Director

Attachment: July 13, 2021 Memorandum For State Rental Assistance Program Partners

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

2020 W. El Camino Avenue, Suite 670, 95833
P.O. Box 952054
Sacramento, CA 94252-2054
(916) 263-2771
www.hcd.ca.gov



DATE: July 13, 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR: State Rental Assistance Program Partners

FROM: Geoffrey Ross, Deputy Director
Division of Federal Financial Assistance

SUBJECT: California COVID-19 Rent Relief Program – Options for Round 2 Funds

Dear Local Government Partners:

On June 28, [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 832](#) (Chapter 27, Statutes of 2021), was enacted into law, which included several important changes to the California COVID-19 Rent Relief program and extended critical eviction protections for all California tenants. AB 832 provides three additional months of eviction protections and ties ongoing rental protections to participation in Rent Relief, increases the compensation for rental assistance to 100% of unpaid rent, and aligns statewide program requirements closely with US Treasury guidance. These changes will help all of us work together to help residents statewide.

AB 832 established a window of opportunity for grantees to change the administrative option under which they administer rent relief programs. The changes made within AB 832 address many of the programmatic elements that contributed to initial Option C selections. I invite jurisdictions to elect Option A or Option B going forward to help minimize confusion among residents, streamline application processing, and enable timely payments using all available funds and assist in the coordination with the courts.

No later than July 27, 2021, each jurisdiction must formally select an Option in order to benefit from an allocation of the State Reservation Pool provided under the American Rescue Plan Act (i.e., Emergency Rental Assistance “Round 2” funding).

Your jurisdiction can formally state its intent for Round 2 rent relief funding by sending to HCD at erap@hcd.ca.gov a formal Letter of Intent on City/County letterhead, signed by a duly authorized official (e.g., City Manager, County Executive). A resolution adopted by your local governing body will not be required to select an administrative option initially, resolutions may follow.

Please include in your Letter of Intent a statement indicating one of the following:

1. Your locality reaffirms its intent to remain in the same Option as selected for Round 1.
2. Your locality would like to change from Option C to Option A, close its locally administered program to new applicants, and redirect its direct federal allocation to be distributed to local residents via the state-administered program.

3. Your locality would like to change from Option B to Option A, close its locally administered program to new applicants, and redirect its Round 2 federal allocation to be distributed to local residents via the state-administered program.
4. Your locality would like to change from Option C to Option B and receive a state block grant, if eligible, to administer the local program in conformity with state and federal laws.*

* Please note, if your locality intends to transition to a locally administered program, the Department retains discretion to evaluate the locality's viability to operate a fully conforming program. The Letter of Intent must attest that the locality has the capacity, ability, resources, and commitment to operate all aspects of the local program, including the requirements of AB 832 related to supporting court inquiries and legal proceedings for the next several years.

Earlier this month, the California COVID-19 Rent Relief program made it much easier for applicants to access rent relief by launching a revamped, user-centric application, requiring fewer documents and simplifying questions. We have heard from our Local Partner Network organizations that it now takes only about 30 minutes to apply for rent relief. We have begun increasing messaging and outreach to raise awareness of the program and encourage tenants and landlords to submit applications for assistance. The Housingkey.com website is now fully translated into six languages, is easier to navigate and directs applicants to the right application based on their address. New toolkits are available now to help amplify this message and communicate program changes.

We have three months until the broad state eviction protections expire. This time is critical as it provides both the state and local governments additional time to implement AB 832 and scale our respective rental assistance programs.

Please do not hesitate to contact HCD at erap@hcd.ca.gov with any questions regarding the program or AB 832.

APPROVED:



7/14/21

Geoffrey Ross, Deputy Director
Division of Federal Financial Assistance
California Department of Housing Community Development

Date