



Treasury Reiterates Call for State and Local Governments to Follow Treasury Guidance on Eliminating Undue Documentation Burdens to Speed the Delivery Emergency Rental Assistance

August 4, 2021


Treasury publishes examples of simplified eligibility forms, shares with all Emergency Rental Assistance program grantees

WASHINGTON - Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury reiterated its call for state and local governments operating Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) programs to speed the delivery of assistance to those in need by eliminating undue documentation burdens. To help states and other jurisdictions quickly implement impactful programs, Treasury has [published](#) examples of simplified eligibility forms that are being used effectively by emergency rental assistance programs around the country. In addition to posting these sample forms on its website, Treasury is also sending them to all ERA program grantees, hosting information sessions, and offering technical support to encourage the swift adoption of these types of efficiencies when determining a household's eligibility.

“While Treasury has repeatedly published clear guidance discouraging undue documentation burdens that limit access for eligible families, we continue to hear about programs that will not accept self-attestations, and others that are adding documentation requirements that Treasury does not require,” said Deputy Secretary Adeyemo. “State and local agencies administering emergency rental assistance should make full use of the documentation flexibilities provided by Treasury, and we hope that publishing these sample forms will make it even easier for them to do so with the urgency this moment necessitates.”

Within weeks of President Biden taking office, Treasury issued [revised guidance](#)  streamlining the ERA documentation requirements and began strongly encouraging state and local governments to allow renters to rely on self-attestations to demonstrate eligibility factors like COVID-related hardships, income, housing stability, and the amount of any back rent owed. It also enables state and local governments to allow renters to qualify based on categorical eligibility, such as meeting low-income family requirements in connection with other local, state, or federal government assistance programs. In [further updates](#)  to the

ERA guidance in May, Treasury allowed grantees to verify the income eligibility of renters using fact-based proxies of income (like residence in a low-income neighborhood).

While Treasury continues to push state and local governments to increase the delivery speed of emergency rental assistance and reduce unnecessary documentation requirements, many agencies have implemented Treasury's guidance and effectively ramped up their programs. For example, Virginia – as Deputy Secretary Adeyemo highlighted during his [visit last week](#) – is the second-highest nationwide distributor of ERA funds, having given out \$223 million to tenants and landlords in need. Following Treasury's May [guidance](#)  urging states to use fact-specific proxies for household income, Virginia significantly cut down application processing times by streamlining what is often the most time-consuming part of eligibility verification.

In June, Treasury made clear in updated guidance that ERA program funding could be used to support eviction prevention and diversion programs. And in July, the White House hosted its second convening on eviction prevention that brought together leaders from 46 cities around the country to develop local eviction prevention action plans and emphasize the need for eviction diversion programs. Today, in collaboration with the U.S. Digital Service, Treasury is also releasing an [Eviction Prevention Program Maturity Model](#), to help local eviction prevention collaboratives to assess and identify steps to strengthen their efforts. In addition to the steps being taken to enable state and local governments to distribute ERA funds more quickly, Treasury continues to make clear to state and local governments with underperforming programs that Treasury will take every action necessary to enable these funds to reach as many people in need as possible. This includes reiterating to all grantees that Treasury has a statutory obligation to reallocate funds from underperforming jurisdictions beginning in the fall. Treasury has also sent letters to all states and localities that have not yet begun distributing ERA assistance.

Treasury continues its all-out effort, working with the White House, Members of Congress, state and local governments, non-profits, and advocacy groups to spread the word to renters and landlords in need that assistance is available and that they should use the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's [Rental Assistance Finder](#) to find programs in their area. Treasury encourages those who need help to apply for ERA funding even if rental assistance funds in their area appear to be moving slowly. In some jurisdictions, having an application in the system awaiting review can help prevent an eviction, and in many places, money is beginning to move more quickly as programs are created.

###