

EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:	2
REFERENCES:	2
GENERAL POLICY	2
DEFINITIONS:	2
ALLOWABLE COSTS:	5
COMPLAINTS:	8
COMPLETION OF AN APPLICATION:	8
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:	9
DOCUMENTATION:	9
ELIGIBILITY/BASIC RULES:	10
LANDLORD ASSISTANCE:	10
MONTHLY PAYMENT LIMIT:	10
MONTHS OF ASSISTANCE DETERMINATION:	10
PAYMENTS:	11
PERIOD OF AVAILABILITY:	11
PRIORITIZATION OF ASSISTANCE:	11
PROSPECTIVE ASSISTANCE:	11
QUALITY CONTROL REVIEWS AND FRAUD PREVENTION RESPONSIBILITIES:	12
RECORD RETENTION:	13
REFUGEE:	13
RENT-TO-OWN:	13
UTILITY BILLS:	13
CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION	14
SAFEGUARDING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION:	14
WHEN CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION MAY BE RELEASED:	15

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

This program is intended to help tenants who are unable to pay their rent and/or utilities due to circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic. When a situation arises that is not covered in this policy, contact the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program team at rentalassistance@utah.gov.

REFERENCES:

Emergency Rental Assistance program established by section 501 of Division N of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L. No. 116-260 (Dec. 27, 2020) and by section 3201 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Pub. L. No. 117-2 (March 11, 2021)

U.S. Department of the Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Frequently Asked Questions – Revised August 25, 2021

GENERAL POLICY

DEFINITIONS:

APPLICANT — The following are the three types of applicants:

1. Tenant
2. Landlord
3. Community Partners/Advocates

APPLICATION — Applicants may submit ERA applications. The application is located at <https://rentrelief.utah.gov/>. An application may be used to apply for past due rent, current rent, and/or prospective rent. Each application will be processed to a decision. Decisions are made based on current ERA policy for each rent type.

Rental Assistance does not automatically renew for ongoing assistance. Once an application is approved or denied, if further Emergency Rental Assistance is needed, a new application is required even if there is no change to the current Lease Agreement.

AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI) — The AMI for a household is the income limits for families published in accordance with 42 U.S.C. 1437a(b)(2) available at <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html> under the heading “Access Individual Income Limits Areas”. The AMI will be determined by the household size and the county based on zip code. (See ERA Procedure step 7.) For certain counties, the application is programmed to identify the AMI using the information provided on the application.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS/ADVOCATES — The department partners with Community Action

Partners, refugee resettlement agencies, the Utah Department of Veteran and Military Affairs, and organizations who assist in helping tenants and landlords apply for ERA.

DEPARTMENT — The Utah Department of Workforce Services.

ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLD — A household is eligible if it meets each of the following three conditions:

1. One or more individuals within the household has:
 - a. ERA 1 (after March 12, 2020):
 - i. Qualified for unemployment benefits, or
 - ii. Experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs or experienced other financial hardship due directly or indirectly to the COVID-19 outbreak.
 - b. ERA 2 (after November 1, 2021):
 - i. Qualified for unemployment benefits, or
 - ii. Experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced other financial hardship during or due, directly or indirectly, to the coronavirus pandemic.
2. One or more individuals within the household can demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability, which may include:
 - a. A past due utility, past due rent or eviction notice;
 - b. Unsafe or unhealthy living conditions; or
 - c. Any other evidence of such risk, as determined by the worker involved. Document the factors considered in making a determination and upload any relevant information that was used in making this determination in the portal.
 - d. Workers can reference the following Partnering for Change (PFC) Housing Instability Definitions 2019 - <https://www.partnering-for-change.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/PFC-Housing-Instability-Definitions-2019.pdf>.
3. The household:
 - a. ERA 1: Has an annual income for the calendar year 2020 or a current monthly income (extrapolated to calculate annual income) at the time of application that is not more than 80% of the AMI.
 - b. ERA 2: Is a low-income family (as such term is defined in section 3(b) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 ([42 U.S.C. 1437a\(b\)\(2\)](#))).

ERA FUNDS — Federal money made available through section 501 of Division N of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L. No. 116-260 (Dec. 27, 2020) and through section 3201 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Pub. L. No. 117-2 (March 11, 2021) to assist households that are unable to pay rent or utilities. The funds are provided directly to states, U.S. territories, local governments and (in the case of ERA1) Indian tribes. Grantees use the funds to provide assistance to eligible households through existing or newly created rental assistance programs.

ERA 1 FUNDS — Approved under section 501 of Division N of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L. No. 116-260 (Dec. 27, 2020). Funds began to be used in Utah starting March 12, 2021.

ERA 2 FUNDS — Approved under section 3201 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Pub. L. No. 117-2 (March 11, 2021). Funds began to be used in Utah starting November 1, 2021.

HOTEL/MOTEL/TEMPORARY LODGE — Outside of an ERA context, this is a facility that primarily provides lodging to individuals for a limited period of time (usually less than one week) as part of their normal business operations. Within an ERA context, an eligible household may stay at this facility for more than the usual one week time period.

HOUSEHOLD - One or more individuals who are obligated to pay rent on a residential dwelling. The following individuals will be considered members of a household:

- Tenant and other individuals residing in the residential dwelling for 182 days or more.
- Tenant's children who are temporarily placed in foster homes.
- Children in joint custody who spend 51% or more of time living in the residential dwelling.
- Children who live in the residential dwelling that are in the process of being adopted.
- Household members who are temporarily residing in a hospital, rehab or a nursing home.
- Other household members who are temporarily absent (less than 182 days). To be considered temporarily absent, the person must intend to return to the residential dwelling when the purpose of the temporary absence ends.

The following individuals will not be considered members of a household:

- Live-in aids.
- Guests (individuals living in the household less than 182 days).

HOUSEHOLD INCOME — The total income for every household member age 18 and above. Items included in income can be in HUD's definition of annual income found at [24 CFR 5.609](#). See also ERA Procedure step 7.

HUD's definition of income includes – but is not limited to – gross payroll, net income from the operation of a business or profession, interest, Social Security, annuities, insurance policies, retirement funds, pensions, disability or death benefits, unemployment and disability compensation, workers' compensation, severance pay, alimony, child support and regular contributions or gifts from persons not residing in the residential dwelling.

Money received in relation to COVID-19 pandemic assistance (e.g., pandemic unemployment insurance) should not be included in income.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE — If the most recent monthly income is used to determine household income, household size is the number of people who occupy the residential dwelling on the date of application. If 2020 annual income is used to determine household income, household size is the number of people who occupied the residential dwelling for at least six months and one day (183 days) in the year the applicant submitted income documentation. If the household size is reported to have changed in a subsequent application, 2020 annual income cannot be used - monthly income statements will be used.

LANDLORD — A person or organization that owns and leases residential dwellings to others.

LONG-TERM/EXTENDED STAY — Outside of an ERA context, this is a facility that primarily provides lodging and space for the storage, preparation and service of food to individuals for a limited period of time (usually more than one week but less than one month) as part of their normal business operations. Within an ERA context, an eligible household may stay at this facility for more than the usual one month time period.

PORTAL — The program workers use to determine whether applications meet eligibility criteria based on current ERA policy.

PROSPECTIVE RENT — Rent that is not currently due, not past due or not due within the next 15 calendar days. Rent that is due within the next 15 calendar days is considered current rent.

QUALIFIED CENSUS TRACTS (QCT) — These areas have been determined to be low-income based on census data. The application automatically determines if a household is QCT eligible based on the zip code and income amount entered into the application. This determination is shown in the portal under “Tenant Demographics”.

REFUGEE — A refugee is an alien who, generally, has experienced past persecution or has a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion. Individuals who meet this definition may be considered for either refugee status under section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) if they are outside the United States or asylum status under section 208 of the INA if they are already in the United States.

RESIDENTIAL DWELLING — Refers to a single unit of residence for a household. RVs and RV lot rentals are not considered a residential dwelling. A permanent structure in an RV park is considered a residential dwelling. Manufactured/mobile homes are considered a

residential dwelling. A manufactured home is a structure that is transportable in one or more sections (see [24 CFR 3280.2](#)).

TENANT — The primary individual(s) renting or occupying a residential dwelling. Typically, this is the person(s) who signs the lease.

WORKER — The department employee who reviews and approves or denies applications for payment.

ALLOWABLE COSTS:

Funds will be used to provide financial assistance and housing stability services to eligible households. Funds will be paid directly to landlords or service providers, including the payment of:

- Rent — including fees, amenities and utilities included in the lease agreement, plus any reasonable fees (in type and amount) related to rent and maintenance (e.g., not groceries). If the worker is unsure whether a fee is reasonable, they should request additional verification or documentation from the landlord. A separate application is needed for utilities owed at a previous address. These additional payments will count toward the total number of months the tenant has received assistance.
- Rental arrears.
- Lot fees in a manufactured/mobile home park. This includes lot fees for manufactured/mobile homes that are owned by the tenant.
- Security deposit.
- Sober Living Homes/ Rooms. Only eligible for past due rent, current month rent due and one month prospective rent per application.
- Utilities, internet and home energy costs.
 - For more information, see the “Utility Bills” section below.
- Utilities, internet and home energy cost arrears — including late fees, shut off and reinstatement fees.
- For landlord applications only, a landlord may include a fee to prepare an application on behalf of the tenant. This fee needs to be in the lease agreement. The fee may not exceed \$150 per application and is conditional upon the application being approved.
- Hotel, motel or temporary lodging assistance.
 - As of May 6, 2022 this assistance is allowed for households if:
 - At least one of the following conditions are met:
 - The household has been displaced from its primary residential dwelling or does not have a permanent residential dwelling elsewhere. (A hotel, motel or temporary lodge is not considered a permanent residential dwelling. A note should be added in the portal explaining the household’s specific circumstances.
 - The household is a client of a community resettlement agency that is

working to secure permanent housing for the household.

- Documentation of the stay is provided (e.g., IRS Form W-9 (W-9), ledger, invoice, etc.)
- Assistance will not exceed 30 consecutive days.
- A household is not eligible for more than one stay regardless of the length of stay.
- Payments count toward the 18-month maximum of rental and utility assistance. Payment for one day in a month is counted as one entire month toward the 18-month maximum.
- Payment will only be made if the nightly base rate (not including miscellaneous fees and charges) is at or below the rates found in the Nightly Rate Data Sheet located in the ERA Operations Manual under the “Resources” tab. Otherwise, the application will be denied.
- Payment will be from the date of application forward — no arrear payments. The applicant should apply for this assistance at the beginning of the household’s stay. However, payment will not be made until after the stay has ended, when an itemized invoice detailing the allowable charges is received.
- Payment will only cover the cost of lodging and associated parking. Charges related to damages or amenities — such as meals charged to the room, movies, etc. — are not allowable costs.
- Payment will be made directly to the lodging or approved service provider.
- If the lodging has been converted into a studio apartment, treat it as a typical residential dwelling.
- Long-term/extended stay assistance.
 - As of May 6, 2022 this assistance is allowed for households if:
 - The household has been displaced from its primary residential dwelling or does not have a permanent residential dwelling elsewhere. (A long-term/extended stay is not considered a permanent residential dwelling.)
 - The household is a client of a community partner/advocate and the community partner/advocate is working to secure permanent housing for the household.
 - Assistance will not exceed 60 consecutive days.
 - A household is not eligible for more than one stay regardless of the length of stay.
 - Payment can cover retrospective and current months, but not prospective months.
 - Payments count toward the 18-month maximum of rental and utility assistance. Payment for one day in a month is counted as one entire month toward the 18-month maximum.
 - Payment will only be made if the nightly base rate (not including miscellaneous fees and charges) is at or below the rates found in the Nightly Rate Data Sheet located in the ERA Operations Manual under the “Resources” tab. Otherwise, the application will be denied.
 - Payment will only cover the cost of lodging and associated parking. Charges related to damages or amenities — such as meals charged to the room, movies, etc. — are not

- allowable costs.
- Allowable lodging costs will only be paid after the stay occurs, and an itemized invoice detailing the charges is received.
- Room deposits or guarantees will not be paid.
- Payments will be made directly to the lodging or approved service provider.
- Court-related legal services or attorney fees that prevent eviction due to nonpayment and achieve housing stability. Any legal fees associated with proceedings that create housing instability (e.g. fees charged by the landlord or the landlord's attorney to evict a tenant) will not be paid.

Generally, assistance will not be provided for a period greater than 12 months. A worker may determine that up to an additional six months is necessary to ensure housing stability for a household. Workers can reference the following Partnering for Change (PFC) Housing Instability Definitions 2019 - <https://www.partnering-for-change.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/PFC-Housing-Instability-Definitions-2019.pdf> - to assist them in making the determination. When they do so, they must make a comment in the portal stating, "I determined that an additional [number] months of assistance is necessary to ensure housing stability for the household because [reason the determination was made]. The household still meets eligibility requirements. They have used a total of [number] months."

All assistance is subject to the availability of funds. An eligible household may not receive funds through this program that duplicates any other rental assistance. In ERA1, an eligible household may receive up to 12 months of assistance, plus an additional three months (i.e., 15 months maximum) if necessary to ensure housing stability for the household. The aggregate amount of financial assistance an eligible household may receive under ERA2, when combined with financial assistance under ERA1, must not exceed 18 months.

COMPLAINTS:

If an applicant disagrees with a decision or has an issue with how services were provided, the person may make a complaint by email to rentalassistance@utah.gov. The response to a complaint will be given by email within three business days.

COMPLETION OF AN APPLICATION:

To apply for assistance, applicants must complete and sign an application. The following steps are required:

1. Create a UtahID at idhelp.utah.gov/account-creation.html.
2. Go to rentrelief.utah.gov.
3. Click "Apply Now".
4. Click "I Am A Landlord" or "I Am A Renter".
5. Review the "Program Information" page.

6. Click "Continue".
7. Enter the UtahID created in step 1.
8. Complete the application.
9. Sign and submit the application.

The department will only accept online applications. Applicants must complete the online signature, which is the check box at the end of the application certifying that all the information is accurate and complete.

When the application is approved, an email will be sent to the tenant or landlord. If it is a landlord application, the tenant will receive a notice via USPS mail notifying them of the approval decision. This notice will include the following:

- Application ID.
- Head of household name.
- Residential dwelling address.
- Approved months and amounts for:
 - Rent (past, current and future).
 - Utilities (past, current and future).
 - Attorney and/or eviction fees.
- Contact information for the complaints and appeals processes.

If the worker finds that the application is missing documentation necessary to determine eligibility or the amount of assistance to be provided, the application is not considered complete. The worker will make two attempts to contact the applicant by email or phone to request the missing documentation or information. Every attempt to contact the applicant must be noted in the portal. The note must include specifics.

Example:

If a call is made, the phone number should be included in the note. The applicant will have 14 full calendar days to fulfill the request. Otherwise, the application may be denied.

When an application is denied, an email with the denial decision will be sent to the tenant or landlord. Within the email, instructions are given to allow the applicant to appeal the decision. The applicant will need to complete a new application to request assistance again.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

A worker may not access, review, deny or approve an application for a person that is related to them or for those with whom they have a close personal relationship. A related person is someone who is related to the worker through blood or marriage, as defined by U.C.A., Section 52-3-1(1)(e),

as father, mother, husband, wife, son, daughter, sister, brother, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, first cousin, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law or daughter-in-law.

If the applicant is a worker, their application must be processed by the supervisor or manager over the program. The worker may not access their own application from the worker's portal. The worker may not use work resources (e.g., time or computer equipment) to access, make inquiries about or work on their application in any way.

If the tenant is related to the landlord or if the tenant's and landlord's addresses match, a minimum two-months history of rent paid must be provided. This may include canceled checks or bank statements. The worker should ensure that a history and the amount of rent paid can be established with the related party.

DOCUMENTATION:

All decisions must be backed by documentation, or in certain circumstances, a written attestation. If there is a conflict between the documentation and a tenant or landlord attestation, the documentation supersedes the attestation. If after reviewing the required documentation, the worker still identifies something that seems questionable, they will communicate their concerns to the QC team. (Refer to the Fraud Process section in the ERA Procedure.)

Additional documentation that is requested as necessary may include photocopies or digital photographs of documents, e-mails, or attestations from employers, landlords, caseworkers, or others with knowledge of the household's circumstances.

ELIGIBILITY/BASIC RULES:

United States citizenship is not required to receive assistance. An individual who moves to Utah from another state with the intent to become a Utah resident can receive assistance. Assistance may not be provided to homeowners to cover their mortgage, utility costs, other energy costs or other costs associated with homeownership.

LANDLORD ASSISTANCE:

The landlord may apply for assistance on behalf of a tenant. When this assistance occurs, the landlord must obtain the tenant's signature on the Tenant Application for Assistance Form 1063. This form may be signed electronically.

If an application is only waiting on documentation from the landlord, then reasonable efforts to obtain the cooperation of the landlord must be made. Outreach will be considered complete if 1) a request is

sent in writing by mail to the landlord with no response after seven calendar days from mailing, 2) three attempts are made to make contact by email, call or text over a five calendar-day period or 3) the landlord confirms in writing that they will not participate. All outreach attempts or notices to the landlord must be documented in the portal. The worker should be specific in their notes.

Payments to the landlord under this program must be used to satisfy the tenant's rental obligation to the landlord.

MONTHLY PAYMENT LIMIT:

Starting May 6, 2022, new applications will be ineligible and should be denied if the monthly base rent amount (i.e., not including utilities or other fees that may be included on the lease or ledger) is more than 150% of Fair Market Rent (FMR). The monthly limits are determined based on how many bedrooms are in the residential dwelling and can be found in the ERA Operations Manual under the "Resources" tab in the document called "FMR Data Sheet".

Existing, or renewed leases that exceed the 150% FMR and were signed prior to May 6, 2022, may still be approved unless the rent is deemed excessive (e.g. exceeds 200% FMR).

Only one deposit per household per residential dwelling is allowed. The amount of that deposit may not exceed two month's worth of base rent. If it does, the deposit will not be paid. Pet deposits are allowed if the pet deposit combined with the security deposit does not exceed 2 month's worth of base rent. If it does, the pet deposit will not be paid. Refundable deposits paid by the department will be returned to the tenant according to the pathways established by the landlord of the residential dwelling.

MONTHS OF ASSISTANCE DETERMINATION:

Any assistance received for a month (e.g., rent, utilities included on a ledger or utilities from an external service provider) at any time counts as one month toward their total months of assistance.

Example:

In March, an application is submitted requesting assistance for March's rent. In April, another application is submitted requesting assistance with a utility bill for March. The rent and utilities paid for March count as one month of assistance received even though the applications were submitted in different months.

PAYMENTS:

All payments must be made directly to the landlord or utility provider on behalf of the eligible household. Documentation of these payments must be provided to the tenant or landlord by the department. No payments will be made directly to the tenant.

PERIOD OF AVAILABILITY:

Assistance may be provided for allowable costs incurred after March 12, 2020. Assistance requested for the month of March 2020 must be prorated.

PRIORITIZATION OF ASSISTANCE:

Applications for assistance must be prioritized according to the following conditions:

- The household income does not exceed 50% of the AMI for the household.
- One or more individuals within the household aged 18 or older are unemployed and seeking employment as of the date of the application for assistance and were not employed for the 90-day period preceding such date.
- More than 15 calendar days have passed since the application was received.
- The tenant received a three-day pay or vacate notice or other eviction notice that is dated within the last week.
- The tenant received a shut-off notice from a utility provider that is dated within the last week.
- The tenant is a refugee.
- The tenant is a homeless individual who needs to secure housing.
- The application was submitted after a fair hearing request was received or after a fairing hearing was held.

In addition to this list, a supervisor or manager may prioritize applications as needed.

Workers will select applications meeting any of the criteria above before processing non-prioritized applications.

PROSPECTIVE ASSISTANCE:

Prospective rent payments may be made for tenants with a termed lease of at least six months. If the tenant has past due or current rent, the tenant and/or ERA program must pay off that rent and associated late fees in whole before prospective rent is considered. Prospective rent payments are limited to three months per application, unless the termed lease ends within that three-month time frame. In that case, prospective rent can be paid up to the lease end date.

Example:

If a tenant has six months of current and past due rent, three months of prospective rent may be paid as long as 1) the termed lease does not end during those three months and 2) all six months of current and past due rent and associated late fees are being paid off by the tenant and/or ERA program. In this example, all past due, current and prospective rent may be paid on the same application.

QUALITY CONTROL REVIEWS AND FRAUD PREVENTION RESPONSIBILITIES:

The department conducts reviews of applications to determine the accuracy and quality of eligibility decisions made by the workers. To do this, the department's quality control (QC) team (which consists of staff with a background in program compliance and auditing) conducts an overall review using read-only software tools to determine if applications should be approved for payment or rejected for correction or additional information. Applications that are reasonably complete and sufficient and that meet policy, procedure and other guidance (in consultation with management as necessary) will be approved.

The QC team reviews a sample of at least 10% of the worker-approved applications for both accuracy and completeness. For each application they review, they compare it to the documentation provided and measure it against policy, procedure and other guidance. The QC team has developed a common, general understanding of acceptable quality with management and staff. The QC team also identifies trends in worker errors and provides regular error feedback to promote more timely approvals.

Applicants of rental assistance will be asked to cooperate with the department to complete these quality control reviews. Applicants will be asked to provide complete and accurate information about factors related to their application, services received or eligibility. The QC team may ask the applicant to provide verification of the information being reviewed. The applicant must provide any requested information to the QC team within 10 business days of the request. Failure to provide the requested documentation may result in the tenant or landlord being required to repay assistance received.

The QC team assists workers and other staff to identify possible trends in fraud and prevent issuing suspected fraudulent payments. As needed, QC attempts to determine if an application is eligible, a non-fraudulent overpayment or suspected fraud. In cases of suspected fraud, QC will make a reasonable effort to review the facts and decide whether payment should be issued or stopped or whether a request for repayment should be issued. (Refer to the Fraud Process section in the ERA Procedure for more details of this process.) If an application that was awarded more than \$5000 is determined to be fraudulent, the application will be referred to the Office of State Debt Collection. In cases of overpayment (whether deliberate or otherwise and whether made by the tenant, applicant or department), QC will request the funds paid be returned to the department.

RECORD RETENTION:

All determinations will be maintained in the portal. They will be accessible there for subsequent audit or review purposes.

REFUGEE:

These applications are assigned to designated staff on the ERA team.

- Refugee rental expenses are funded through ERA2 funds.
- Household income may include the federal funds refugees receive as part of Reception and Placement assistance. This assistance is one-time and is given to refugees upon arrival to the United States. It is considered income in the month received and not considered ongoing income in following months.
- If there are multiple adults in the same residential dwelling, you must collect the ITIN (i.e., alien number) for all adults residing in that residential dwelling to track months used in the ERA program.

RENT-TO-OWN:

Payments may be granted to tenants that are renting their residential dwelling under a rent-to-own agreement, under which the renter has the option (or obligation) to purchase the property at the end of the lease term, provided that a member of their household:

- Is not a signer or co-signer to the mortgage on the property,
- Does not hold the deed or title to the property, and
- Has not exercised the option to purchase.

Homeowners may be eligible for assistance under programs using funds under the Homeowner Assistance Fund, which was established by the U.S. Department of the Treasury under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

UTILITY BILLS:

Utility bills will be paid for March 13, 2020 or later. Prospective utility payments cannot be paid unless the charges have been established as recurring at the same amount each month by a ledger, previous bills or a lease. Utilities may include (but are not limited to) garbage, gas, power, propane, sewage, water or other utilities. Anytime past due utilities are not broken down by month, the total past due balance (besides when the exception in the “Internet bills” section below occurs) will be paid as a lump sum in the month before the current month. If a call to a service provider is made, document the details of the call (e.g., the name(s) of the service provider employee(s) spoken with) in the portal.

Utilities included on the ledger:

- Include the utilities with rent under the payment type “Past Due Rent” or “Current or Future Rent”.
- If rent payments are not being made, still include the utilities under these payment types.

Utility bill in the landlord’s name:

- The charges must be included on the ledger in order for them to be paid.
- The utilities will be included with rent under the payment type “Past Due Rent” or “Current or Future Rent”.
- If rent payments are not being made, still include the utilities under these payment types.

Utility bill from an external service provider:

- The bill must include the full account number, the date and the address the payment should be sent to. Utility bills may be in any name other than the landlord’s name as long as the service

address matches the addresses on the lease and application.

- These amounts will be input under the payment type “Past Due Utilities” or “Current Utilities”.

Utility bill from an external service provider with multiple service addresses:

- The current service address must match the addresses on the lease and application. The account number must be the same for all of the addresses.
 - If the account number is not the same, the applicant will need to submit a separate application to receive payment for the previous service address’s utility bill.
- The bill must include a date.
- The amounts for the current service address will be input under the payment type “Past Due Utilities” or “Current Utilities”.

Internet Bills:

- All internet bill amounts will be added to either the “Past Due Utilities” or “Current Utilities” payment types.
- The bill must include a date.
- Non-itemized (i.e., unable to determine actual cost):
 - Only \$75 will be paid for the current amount due and \$75 for the past due balance (i.e., \$150 maximum per invoice if paying current and past due balances).
 - To pay more than what is stated above, additional itemized bills or statements must be provided or a call to the service provider with the customer must be made.
 - If a call to the service provider is made, document the name(s) of the service provider employee(s) who confirmed any non-documented information found.
- Itemized (i.e., able to determine actual cost):
 - The current month and one past due month listed on the invoice will be paid at actual cost.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

SAFEGUARDING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION:

All confidential information must be safeguarded from unauthorized disclosure and use. Workers who fail to safeguard confidential information may be subject to both civil and criminal penalties.

First, confidential information includes identifying information about applicants or tenants – such as names, addresses, telephone numbers, social security numbers, etc. Second, it includes information used to determine eligibility – such as income, names of persons obligated to provide financial support, household members, etc. Third, it includes information about benefits provided to individual applicants or tenants.

Information that cannot be identified to particular applicants or tenants is not confidential information. For example, information stating the total number of applicants is not confidential information because no one person can be identified by the general information.

WHEN CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION MAY BE RELEASED:

Confidential information may only be disclosed and used under limited circumstances. Do not

disclose or use confidential information unless it is for one of the purposes described below.

Administration of the Program – Confidential information may be disclosed and used for purposes directly connected with the administration of the program. However, only disclose and use the minimum information necessary to ensure valid administration of the program. Email rentalassistance@utah.gov to obtain approval to release the information.

Public Request – The public may view policy manuals and receive non-identifying information about applicants. The public is not entitled to information about particular applicants. People who may demand to see confidential information because of their status as a taxpayer must be denied access to all confidential information.

- Do not publish or otherwise disclose applicants' or tenants' names or addresses.
- Do not use applicant or tenant information to distribute commercial information, political information, holiday greetings, general public announcements, etc.

Permission Granted by Applicants – An applicant can give written permission to release information. A valid permission form must include the following:

- The applicant's name.
- The applicant's date of birth.
- The name of the person or organization to whom the applicant is authorizing the release of information.
- The purpose of releasing the information.
- The calendar date the release ends. (It starts the calendar date it is signed by the applicant.)
- The signature and date of the applicant.

Exceptions to this policy may be granted with the approval of both the Housing and Community Development assistant director and manager over the ERA program. The worker should send an email requesting an exception to rentalassistance@utah.gov. The worker's email to the assistant director and manager should include the reasons an exception should be granted. Once approval is obtained, upload the email chain that shows approval from the assistant director and manager and any additional factors considered in making the decision into the portal.