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New Rent, Utility Assistance Funds Help Tenants, Landlords Impacted by COVID

FRANKFORT, Kentucky – Governor Andy Beshear announced a new fund today to keep Kentuckians healthy and housed throughout the pandemic. Starting February 15, qualifying tenants can apply for rent and utility assistance to cover their past-due and future bills. If approved, the money will be paid in lump sum, direct payments to landlords and utility providers.

“Nearly a year into the pandemic, Kentuckians are still grappling with the economic effects of COVID-19,” said Winston Miller, executive director of Kentucky Housing Corporation. “This assistance will help keep renters housed, allow landlords to get substantial payments for back rent, and reduce the number of evictions in Kentucky courts.”

The Treasury Department recently allocated \$297 million in federal Coronavirus Relief Funds to the state of Kentucky, Lexington-Fayette County Urban County Government and Louisville-Jefferson County Metro Government to help renters impacted economically by COVID-19. **The money will be distributed as three separate programs:**

To apply in Fayette County:	covid19renterhelp.org
To apply in Jefferson County:	stopmyeviction.org
<u>For all other counties:</u>	teamkyhherf.ky.gov

All of the funds will offer the same benefits to approved applicants – 100 percent of past-due rent, dating back to April 2020, and up to three months of future payments.

Those applying through the Team Kentucky portal can also receive help with past-due and future utility bills.

“Throughout the pandemic, many households struggle with expenses,” said Wendy Smith, KHC’s deputy director of housing programs. “This essential eviction relief can help renters get caught up on rent and utilities.”

Team Kentucky offered a similar plan last year, and from September to December, the state helped 4,135 households avoid eviction with nearly \$15 million in assistance. This new funding is structured similarly.

- Tenants must meet certain income guidelines. An income calculator is available at teamkyhherf.ky.gov
- To qualify, both the landlord and tenant should apply at teamkyhherf.ky.gov. Applications are processed more quickly when **both** the landlord and the tenant apply online.

- Maximum rent relief: 100% of past-due rent since April 1, 2020, and three months future rent.
- Maximum utility relief: 100% of past-due utilities since April 1, 2020, and three months of future utilities.
- Lump sum, direct payments will be made to landlords and utility providers
- Landlords must forgive any late fees, penalties and interest related to non-payment of rent.
- Landlords must also agree to not begin eviction proceedings until at least 45 days after the period covered by assistance.

A detailed description of the program can be found at teamkyhherf.ky.gov.

www.kyhousing.org

Kentucky Housing Corporation, the state housing finance agency, was created by the 1972 General Assembly to provide affordable housing opportunities. As a self-supporting, public corporation, Kentucky Housing offers down payment assistance loans to assist first-time homebuyers obtain home mortgages, housing production financing, homeownership education/counseling, rental assistance, housing rehabilitation, and supportive housing programs for special needs populations. Kentucky Housing Corporation prohibits discrimination based on race; color; religion; sex; national origin; sexual orientation; gender identity; ancestry; age; disability; or marital, familial, or veteran status.