



INFORMATION FOR UTILITY PROVIDERS



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ST. JOSEPH COUNTY COVID-19 EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

St. Joseph County's Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) is designed to decrease evictions, increase housing stability, and prevent homelessness by helping renters whose income has been negatively impacted by COVID-19.

ERA can provide eligible renters with up to twelve (12) months of rent and utility assistance. Utility assistance may be provided to qualifying applicants for utilities (electric, gas, water, sewer, and trash) and home energy (fuel oil, wood, coal, pellets, and propane) expenses. A utility provider may encourage tenants in need of assistance to apply through Partner Agencies. Assistance payments for approved applications will be directed to the utility or home energy provider.

What should I do now?

STEP 1 – Reach out to customers that have fallen behind on their utility and/or home energy bills.

STEP 2 – Share with them our Tenant flyer and encourage them to visit sjcindiana.com to locate a Partner Agency near them to apply for the Emergency Rental Assistance.

STEP 3 – Review the ERA FAQ

A Utility or Home Energy Provider should know:

- Up to twelve months of utility and/or home energy assistance may be provided (including past due balances accrued after April 1, 2020)
- Past due utilities and/or home energy expenses incurred after April 1, 2020 are eligible for payment
- A one-time benefit of \$750.00 may be made available to those with a nearly exhausted source of home energy
- ERA is unable to pay disconnect, or reconnect fees
- Any unpaid utility and/or home energy obligation, including disconnect or reconnect, is the responsibility of the tenant
- Utility and/or home energy assistance may not be provided for costs included in the lease
- A utility or home energy provider must provide a W-9 and ACH form to receive direct payments
- Multiple bank accounts may be submitted only if multiple Tax ID Numbers are provided
- Tenant may receive direct payments if a utility and/or home energy provider refuses to participate in ERA
- Households that received Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) assistance are eligible to receive utility assistance

To participate in the program, a Utility Provider should:

- Encourage customers to apply for assistance through local Partner Agencies
- Encourage customers to apply using Verify/ provide your account information including (W-9 and banking information)
- Work with participating agencies to provide requested documentation, including but not limited to, utility/ home energy provider forms and confirm past due balances
- Return electronic communications concerning applicants

Please Note: Submission of an Application does not guarantee approval; applications will be approved based upon eligibility criteria in the enabling statute. The program will be administered in a manner that treats all applicants equally regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, familial status, age, and disability, and in a manner compliant with federal, state, and local laws. This project is being supported, in whole or in part, by CFDA 21.023 awarded to St. Joseph County, Indiana by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

