

Emergency Rental Assistance Program Content Workshop



HAGERTY



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4 points – ERAP Guidance

1. **Set realistic timelines & resource appropriately**
2. **Leverage partners to fill gaps**
3. **Keep the barriers to registration low**
4. **Capitalize on Treasury's increasing flexibility** (e.g., self-attestation and direct payments to tenants)

Set Realistic Timelines & Resource Appropriately

- Program operations will take time to stand up and implement
- Front end costs for establishing programs can be high but will fall over time
- Manage expectations with all stakeholders: renters, landlords, the public, and local officials
 - Need to balance between quickly delivering benefits and protecting against fraud
 - It may take time for a pipeline to develop
 - It may take time for case managers to implement policies and procedures
 - It may take time for funding to reach landlord/tenant applicants

Leverage Partners

- Partners and vendors can help you quickly increase your capacity
- Non-profits and other CBOs are trusted organizations with existing networks
- Partners meet several critical needs such as:
 - Disseminating information
 - Reaching challenging populations
 - Providing application assistance
 - Processing applications
- Case Example: Conserve your time by leveraging the **right** partners for the community

Keep the Barriers to Registration Low

- Applies to tenants and landlords
- Technology can help or hinder – assist applicants in solving access problems
- Offer multiple modes (via phone or in person support at convenient locations) and languages for submission depending on location and demographics
- Use proxy data to reduce documentation burdens
- Leverage third-party data for fraud control and streamlining
 - Example: If a workforce agency or commission has income data, consider integrating with their system to validate income requirements in lieu of requiring other proof of income
- Case Example: In person application support can be necessary in some areas where technology barriers exist

Capitalize on Treasury's Increasing Flexibility

- Steady drumbeat since February to reduce barriers to expenditure of ERA funds
- Use Treasury-endorsed self-attestations aggressively for issues such as:
 - Income
 - Rent obligation
 - Financial hardship
 - Housing instability requirements
- Payments for future rent for the most vulnerable households
- Facilitate direct payments to tenants consistent with Treasury guidance

Philadelphia

- **Administered by Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation – a quasi-city organization that has more flexibility around hiring and procurement.**
 - **Developed a custom application portal that is responsive, mobile friendly and accessible**
- Allowed for self-certification of income and partnered with City agency to receive data on categorical eligibility of applicants
 - Remained flexible and allowing for submission of electronic and paper applications
 - Sharing data with Court system in effort to reduce evictions

Newark

- Hired a vendor to manage administration, provided out of the box application portal, aimed to reduce staff need and make it easier for applicants
- **Partnered with 5 trusted local CBOs to conduct outreach and provide application support – both virtually and in person**
 - **CBOs served as ears to the ground for the City reporting weekly on the number of residents assisted and the challenges residents were experiencing with the application process**
 - **CBOs double the bottom-line impact by providing leveraging rental assistance engagement to enroll residents in other programs and provide additional resources**
- Offered applications and application support in multiple languages
- Took advantage of the ability to accept self attestation
- Enlisted large landlords

Minneapolis

- Able to improve upon existing infrastructure and lessons learned from Minneapolis Gap Funds for Housing and Stable Homes Stable Schools
- Leverage multi-jurisdictional application systems and infrastructure
- Prioritize getting renters to complete applications to take advantage of state eviction protections for those with pending assistance applications
- Close collaboration with Hennepin County to maximize efficiency, capacity, flexibility, and streamline communication
- **Creative use of funding, city staff, and partnerships with community orgs and the housing authority to add review capacity and provide nuanced application assistance for targeted neighborhoods and communities unlikely to complete applications on their own.**

Questions?