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Financial help available for Idaho renters

Idaho renters affected by COVID-19 may be eligible for financial assistance through Idaho Housing and Finance Association's Housing Preservation Program.

The program provides short-term rent and utility support for Idahoans experiencing financial hardship because of the pandemic. Renters can go to www.idahohousing.com/covid-19 to find out if they qualify or apply for assistance. Further information is available by calling 1-855-452-0801.

The Housing Preservation Program is available only to renters. Applicants must owe past-due rent or utilities or be unable to pay upcoming rent or utilities because of COVID-19 circumstances. To be eligible, applicants can earn no more than [80% of the Area Median of Income](#), must be Idaho residents and must have at least one member of the household legally eligible to reside in the United States. Those receiving a federal housing subsidy are not eligible. Additional eligibility details are available at www.idahohousing.com/hpp-faq/.

The Housing Preservation Program was initially funded in April with a \$250,000 investment by Idaho Housing and Finance Association. Gov. Brad Little and the Coronavirus Financial Advisory Committee allocated \$5 million from the state's Coronavirus Relief Fund, with the option for two more installments based on the needs of Idaho renters.

Application review and processing can take from three to seven days. Payments, which can take from seven to 10 days to arrive, will be made directly to landlords or utility companies.

"This program was a collaborative effort from various members who worked hard to assess the financial burdens citizens are facing because of COVID-19," said Rep. Melissa Wintrow (D-Boise), who chaired the CFAC Housing Assistance Subcommittee that recommended the program. "The committee is hopeful this will offer much-needed relief to renters and landlords, which will help people get back on their feet as they return to work."

"People are heading back to work, but they may not get a paycheck for the next several weeks," said Garden City Mayor John Evans, a member of the CFAC Housing Assistance Subcommittee. "This program will help keep Idahoans in their homes with their lights on and the water running until they can get back on their feet after a global economic crisis."

“As the state reopens, it will be critically important for Idahoans who are feeling the symptoms of coronavirus to stay at home and recover. But, they won’t have a place to go if they aren’t able to pay their rent,” said former Idaho Sen. Shawn Keough, who also served on the CFAC subcommittee.

Idaho Housing and Finance Association is a unique, Idaho-based financial institution and provider of housing and economic development services. As an independent entity, it sustains its business operations through earned fees and revenues similar to any private financial institution.