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RE: Important Update/Advisory: Tri County Rental Assistance Programs

Dear Valued Client,

We understand that this past year has seen near unprecedented challenges for your businesses, your families, and the community as a whole. We appreciate what you are going through and understand the difficulties that you are navigating. With that in mind, and in our ongoing effort to keep you informed amid this current climate of delinquencies, we wish to provide you with this informational guide on rental assistance programs in the Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami Dade county areas.

The State of Florida and its largest cities and counties have received roughly **\$1.4 billion** in federal funds for rental assistance programs, and some of that money is now being made available.

The federal [Emergency Rental Assistance](#) (ERA) program was established by the Consolidated Appropriations Act (Dec. 27, 2020). Under the federal statute, each state receives a share of the \$25 billion for rental assistance based on population.

Cities and counties with populations above 200,000 were eligible to request payments directly from the U.S. Treasury. While many of these eligible cities and counties are still in the process of establishing rental assistance programs, some have recently launched programs that may be able to assist your residents.

Should you wish to retain our firm we would be more than happy to help address any questions you may have regarding these programs. However, as these programs are relatively new and the funding, eligibility requirements, and application periods are changing rapidly. Please find below a contact list for the programs by county so that you may have your questions addressed directly by program representatives in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

County	Program Name	Phone Number
Palm Beach	CARES Act Assistance	561-355-4792
Broward	Broward Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) Eviction Mediation	954-357-6367
Miami-Dade	Miami Emergency Rental Assistance Program 2.3 (ERAP)	786-688-2440
Miami-Dade	City of Miami Emergency Rental and Utility Assistance Program	305-468-5900
Miami-Dade	City of Hialeah Emergency Rental Assistance Program	305-231-7667



The following is a breakdown of the ERA programs by county along with an overview, the eligibility criteria, and program requirements. We have also provided a link to the program websites should you wish to obtain additional information.

Palm Beach:

CARES Act Assistance

Overview:

CARES Act Assistance will begin accepting new rental intake applicants in March of 2021 but has not yet begun accepting new applications as of the date of this letter. The amount of rental assistance received will be up to \$10,000 but may be modified depending on funding availability, program requirements, and past assistance.

Eligibility & Requirements:

To be considered eligible tenants must meet the following criteria:

- Must be a resident of Palm Beach County;
- Must not be over the income guideline (total household income must be at or below 150% of the [Federal Poverty Guideline \(FPLG\)](#));
- Applicants must provide a bill showing past due amount;
- Additional requirements may apply once the program officially begins accepting new applicants for rental assistance.

It should be noted that, for the purpose of assessing program eligibility, any unemployment income received by the tenant will not be included in calculation of household income. For up to date information on the Palm Beach County CARES Act Assistance program please visit www.rentalassistancepb.com.

Broward:

Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) Eviction Mediation

Overview:

The Broward ERAP was implemented for residential eviction cases to prevent homelessness. This rental assistance may cover rent beginning from April 2020 to what is currently owed for up to 12 months of payments. Eligible tenants could be assisted with 75% of rent in arrears up to six (6) months, and 60% of rent in arrears up to an additional six (6) months if applicable. **For eligibility the landlord must agree to accept the rent at a discounted rate.** Payments will only be mailed directly to the landlord.

Eligibility & Requirements:

To be considered eligible tenants must meet the following criteria:

- They must reside in eligible cities within Broward County;
- They must have lost their job or had a reduction of employment;
- They must meet household income guidelines; and
- They must complete an online orientation at:

<https://www.broward.org/FamilySuccess/Pages/TutorialOrientation.aspx>

If the tenant is eligible for the program and the Landlord wishes to participate, the Landlord must provide the following:

- Signed and witnessed agreement that Landlord will not attempt further collections activity for the months paid through the Broward ERAP;
- A general ledger showing all rents past due;
- Eviction notice;
- Copy of the lease agreement;
- Management agreement (if applicable);
- Federal W-9
- Broward County ERAP Landlord Acknowledgement Form (provided to you for signature upon receipt of the above documents and after tenant has been determined eligible).

The Landlord and the Tenant will be contacted by a Broward County representative before the scheduled mediation date in the eviction proceedings. You will then have three (3) business days to submit the required documentation to the representative. It should be noted that this program is operating on a first come first served basis and is subject to funding availability. For more information on eligibility requirements and funding availability please visit <https://www.broward.org/FamilySuccess/Pages/shipfunds.aspx>

Miami Dade:

Miami Emergency Rental Assistance Program 2.3 (ERAP):

Overview:

Commenced on March 1, 2021, the Emergency Rental Assistance Program 2.3 provides rental payment assistance for up to 12 months in arrears, if the tenant meets certain income qualifications and are experiencing financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The amount of rental assistance received will depend on the amount of unpaid rent and will be the lessor of the monthly lease rent or up to \$3,000 per month. **Applications will be accepted from Monday,**

March 1, 2021, through 5:00pm on Monday, March 15, 2021. It should also be noted that residents of the City of Miami and the City of Hialeah are not eligible through this program because the cities received separate funding. We have provided links to the City of Miami and City of Hialeah ERAP programs below.

Eligibility & Requirements:

To be considered eligible for ERAP 2.3, the tenants must be:

- A resident of Miami Dade County
- Unable to pay the full monthly rent due to COVID-19 financial hardship
- Household income does not exceed the 80% Area Median Family Income (AMI)
- Have an executed lease between you and the property owner
- Tenant must certify that their household does not receive any other rental subsidy.

If the tenant is eligible and the Landlord wishes to participate in the program the Landlord must provide the following:

- Federal W-9
- An agreement that the County will provide to landlords accepting rental assistance containing certain program conditions.

Should you wish to refer a tenant who is behind on their rent, please contact the program at LandlordsERAP@miamidade.gov or call 786-688-2440 between 9:00am and 5:00pm. Full program details may be found by visiting the program page <https://www.miamidade.gov/global/housing/emergency-rental-assistance-program.page>.

If tenants cannot gain access to the online application or do not have an email address, paper applications will be available at the following four locations:

1. Northern Miami-Dade County: Victory Homes 520 N.W. 75th Street Miami, Florida
2. Central Miami-Dade County: Donn Gardens 1861 N.W. 28th Street Miami, Florida
3. Southern Miami-Dade County: Homestead Gardens 1542 S.W. 4th Street Homestead, Florida
4. West Miami-Dade County: Lakeside Towers 7555 S.W. 152nd Avenue Miami, Florida

City of Miami Emergency Rental and Utility Assistance Program

Overview:

The City of Miami established their own Rental Assistance Program separate from the program being run by Miami-Dade County. This program used a lottery system to sort priority for eligible applicants. **There is currently a waitlist for rental assistance through this program and they are not currently accepting new applicants.** However, this may change soon as new funds

became available through the most recent ERA rollout. Please visit the program website for up to date information: <https://www.miamigov.com/Government/Departments-Organizations/Housing-Community-Development/Emergency-Rental-and-Utility-Assistance-Program>.

Eligibility & Requirements:

To qualify the resident must meet the following requirements:

- Must be a US citizen, permanent resident or granted legal status;
- Must be a resident of the city of Miami; (follow the link to verify <https://miamigis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=e44c932135584e77b4ad9866a0798568>);
- Must be unable to pay for rent due to loss of income related to COVID-19. Must be able to demonstrate loss of employment income after March 1, 2020;
- Current monthly income is less than:
 - \$3,200 for an individual household
 - \$3,660 for a two-person household
 - \$4,115 for a three-person household
 - \$4,570 for a four-person household
 - \$4,940 for a five or more-person household
- Applicant/Landlord must not be receiving household subsidies from any other federal, state, and/or local program for the unit the applicant is living in;
- Rent and utilities must have been current as of February 2020;
- No member of the applicant's household is self-employed; and
- Must not have liquid assets or other sources of capital from where rent and utilities can be paid from.

City of Hialeah Emergency Rental Assistance Program

Overview:

Eligible households may receive up to twelve (12) months of assistance, plus an additional three (3) months if the city determines the extra months are needed to ensure housing stability and funding is available. The payment of existing housing-related arrears that could result in eviction of an eligible household is prioritized. Assistance must be provided to reduce an eligible household's rental arrears before the household may receive assistance for future rent payments.

Eligibility & Requirements:

To qualify the resident must meet the following requirements:

- Household income less than or equal to 80% area median income;
- Written attestation of COVID-19 hardship and documented financial need due to COVID-19;
- Documented risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability;
- Residing in the city of Hialeah; and
- Not able to access other payment assistance for same costs (no duplication of benefit).

For additional information or program qualifications please visit the program website: <https://www.hialeahfl.gov/690/Funding-Opportunities> or contact the program directly at Hialeah.Assistance@civitassc.com for additional information.

We hope this has provided you with a helpful overview of the rental assistance programs in the Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade County areas. As stated above, please contact us should you wish to retain our firm to assist you in navigating these programs. As always, we hope you and your loved ones remain safe and healthy.

Warm Regards,

Your Friends at Barfield, McCain PA