



PALM BEACH COUNTY

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the Best of Everything*

CARES ACT- Coronavirus Relief Fund Rent and Utilities Assistance Program Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What type of assistance is being provided under the The CARES ACT- Coronavirus Relief Fund Rent and Utilities Assistance Program?

The CARES ACT- Coronavirus Relief Fund Rent and Utilities Assistance Program provides a one-time rental and utility assistance to eligible Palm Beach County residents who have experienced loss of income, reduction in hours, or unemployment as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic **only**. Assistance will only be provided for past due rent payment and/or utilities due from March 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020.

The program is not designed to assist those who were not financially impacted by COVID-19 pandemic.

Q. Who is providing the funding for this program?

The County will utilize funds provided The CARES ACT- Coronavirus Relief Fund to support this program. The rules and regulations associated under section 601(a) of the Social Security Act, as added by section 5001 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act") will govern the use of the funds.

WARNING: Section 1001 of Title 19 of the U.S. code makes it a criminal offense to make willful false statements or misrepresentation to any department or agency of the United States as to any matter within the jurisdiction. False information may result in civil liability, and/or in criminal penalties including, but not limited to, fine or imprisonment or both.

Q. Who is eligible to receive assistance?

Individuals or households residing in Palm Beach County who meet the program criteria. You must be able to document that you were unable to pay your rent or utilities strictly due to temporary loss of income, reduction in hours, or employment are a result of the COVID-19 pandemic **only**.

Q. What requirements do I need to meet in order to qualify for the program?

Program requirements are as follows:

- Applicant must reside within the corporate limits of Palm Beach County.
- Applicant(s) must meet gross annual incomes not exceeding 140% of Area Median Income (AMI) limits prior to COVID-19 established by HUD for the jurisdiction of Palm Beach County, FL.
- Assistance will only be provided for past due expenses due beginning on March 1, 2020 not to exceed three (3) months.
- Applicant(s) must have documentable information to evidence loss of income, reduction in hours, or unemployment because of the COVID-19 pandemic that contributed to the missed rental payments and/or utility payments.
- Applicant(s) must have a lease and other utilities in their or a household member's name. Household member must be listed on the application.
- Applicant(s) or household member must not have received any other financial assistance for rent and utilities for the timeframe payment is requested.
- Applicant(s) must apply for unemployment benefits and provide support documentation if applicable.

Q. What documents are required for assistance?

Below is a list of required documents. All documents **must** be submitted in order to process the application. Incomplete applications may result in delays or application denial.

▪ Proof of COVID-19 Crisis (Applicant Only)

Submit one or more:

- a. Letter from employer stating your job loss or reduced work schedule and hours
- b. Unemployment claim or unemployment submitted application
- c. Before crisis pay stubs and current pay stubs with reduced hours
- d. Evidence for loss of income if self-employed
- e. Case Manager may require you to certify self-income declaration document if deemed necessary during the review process.

▪ Valid Government Issued ID (Applicant Only)

▪ Social Security Number and Household member information.

▪ Proof of income for eligibility prior to COVID-19 (All adult household members 18 years old and older)

- f. Pay stubs prior to COVID-19 crisis or last filed Tax return
- g. Current pay stubs if reduced hours
- h. Bank statements prior to COVID-19 crisis or last filed tax return if self-employed
- i. Zero income attestation if no household income (available in the application)
- j. Any Community Services clients who received services in last 24 months will not be required to submit the income documentation unless Case Manager deems necessary.

▪ Service Requested Documents

k. Applying for Rent

- Rental lease agreement
- Late notice for past due rent/ Eviction Notice
- Balance statement of past due amount from landlord
- If new vendor for Palm Beach County, must provide landlord's e-mail address/phone number for landlord to register. Landlord will receive the link to create/update vendor information and certify balance statement if not provided by the applicant.
- Delay in Balance statement and vendor registration will delay in approving the application.

l. Applying for Electricity Payment

- Utility company electric bills for all months requesting assistance. If past due, final, or shutoff notice, copies of all bills detailing charges are required.

m. Applying for Water Payment

- Utility company water bills for all months requiring assistance. If past due, final, or shutoff notice, copies of all bills detailing charges are required.

n. Applying for Gas Payment

- Utility company gas bills for all months requesting assistance. If past due, final, or shutoff notice, copies of all bills detailing charges are required.

o. Applying for Food Assistance

- No additional documentation.
- Proof of Income and Proof of Covid-19 Crisis will be used.

Q. Are there income guidelines for this program?

Yes. Applicants must meet gross annual incomes not exceeding 140 % of Area Median Income (AMI) limits prior to COVID-19 established by HUD for the jurisdiction of Palm Beach County, FL as follows:

Household /Family Size	140%
1	86,100
2	98,420
3	110,740
4	122,920
5	132,860
6	142,660
7	152,460
8	162,260
9	172,088
10	181,922

Q. If I qualify, how much funding can I receive?

Assistance may be provided as follows:

- Rent up to \$5,800 or 3 months in arrears beginning in March 2020 (**based on demonstrated need and funding availability**)
- Electric, water and gas up to \$1,200 or 3 months in arrears beginning in March 2020 (**based on demonstrated need and funding availability**)

Q. If I qualify, how much funding will I receive for food assistance?

If you qualify, you will be notified at a later date if this service becomes available and how much funding you are eligible for.

Q. How many times can I receive assistance?

Only once, but may apply for multiple services. You may be able to apply for new service but we encourage you to apply for all services at same time. One benefit per service only.

Q. Does the applicant have to repay the funds?

No, but they may not receive assistance from other funding sources for the same time period.

Q. I am behind on my rental payments for the month of February, am I eligible for assistance?

No. Assistance will only be provided for rents beginning on March 1, 2020 for no more than 3 months. Assistance is only available to those who can provide evidence that they experienced loss of income, reduction in hours, or unemployment is a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q. I have just received a stimulus check and/or income tax return. Should I pay for my rent?

Yes. Do not miss paying your rent if you can make the payment. During this time of delay, if you are currently behind, you should attempt to communicate with landlord about getting caught up. But, do not wait to receive notice in order to take action. You should always open your mail and/or read correspondence received from your landlord.

Q. What kinds of housing units can be assisted?

Units such as apartments, houses, townhouses, and mobile homes are allowable.

Q. How do I apply for the Program?

Applications are available online at <http://www.pbcgov.org/OSCARSS> and accessed through any internet connection.

Applicants may make an appointment to submit documents at CSD's drive-thru intake, located at 810 Datura Street, West Palm Beach, and 1440 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Riviera Beach, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 4 p.m. Please call (561) 355-4792 to make/confirm appointments and find out the drive-thru hours. A staff person can help make sure required documents are compiled correctly beforehand. Keep in mind that it is necessary to put the application number on all documents that are submitted.

In addition, it is mandatory for clients to wear a mask and follow all social distancing guidelines when they arrive.

Applicants with pending documentation may also submit their documents at PBC Libraries. Some locations may have limited in-person services. For more information or to locate your nearest library, visit <http://www.pbclibrary.org/locations>.

Eight community agencies can also assist clients by providing navigation services. Visit the websites or call for more information and to make an appointment.

- Adopt-a-Family
 - Family Division of the Lewis Center
1000 45th Street, West Palm Beach
P. 561-444-0398
www.aafpbc.org
**Clients will be scheduled for in person assistance.*

- Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Palm Beach
 - 9995 N. Military Trail, West Palm Beach
P. (561) 775-9560 or (561) 360-3327
www.catholiccharitiesdpb.org

- Farmworker Coordinating Council of Palm Beach County, Inc.
 - Lake Worth Office:
1123 Crestwood Blvd.
Lake Worth, FL 33460
P. (561) 533-7227

 - Belle Glade Office:
233 W. Ave. A Suite D
Belle Glade, FL 33430
P. (561) 992-0603
www.farmworkercouncil.com

- Community Partners
 - P. (561) 386-2704 or (561) 841-3500 ext. 1002
www.cp-cto.org/housing-services
- Pathways to Prosperity,
 - 970 N. Seacrest Blvd., Boynton Beach
P. (561) 523-0179
www.pathwaysboynton.org
- Palm Beach County Housing Authority
 - 3432 W. 45th Street
West Palm Beach, FL 33407
P. (561) 684-2160
www.pbchaf1.org
- The Lord's Place
 - 2808 N Australian Ave, West Palm Beach, FL 33407
P. (561) 537-4652 or (561) 494-0125 ext. 1115
www.thelordsplace.org
**In-person appointments*
- The Urban League of Palm Beach County
 - 1700 N. Australian Ave, West Palm Beach
P. (561) 833-1461 ext. 3000
<http://www.ulpbc.org>
**In-person assistance is available by appointment only.*

Q. How do I get assistance after I submitted my application?

Check your application status without speaking with an agent on our "Client Services Search" .The button is under the "Apply Online" and "[OSCARSS](http://www.pbcgov.com/OSCARSS)" buttons on the CSD website or clients can follow this link: www.pbcgov.com/clientsservicessearch.

Application status can be checked online through <http://www.pbcgov.com/OSCARSS> . Once an application is reviewed, you will receive an email for any pending documentation. You will also see the pending documents listed in your application when you log in. Please check your emails regularly as reviewers are contacting thru emails and sending important updates regarding your application. Please list your day phone number on the application for reviewers to contact you.

You may also make an appointment to submit documents at our drive-thru intake, located at 810 Datura Street, West Palm Beach and 1440 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Riviera Beach, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Call (561) 355-4792 to make/confirm appointments and drive-thru hours, and to ensure you have compiled the correct documents prior arriving to the drive-thru.

In addition, it is mandatory for clients to wear a mask and follow all social distancing guidelines when they arrive.

Applicants with pending documentation may also submit their documents at PBC Libraries. Some locations may have limited in-person services. For more information or to locate your nearest library, visit <http://www.pbclibrary.org/locations>.

This service is only available for clients who have submitted their application and need assistance with uploading pending documentation to verify eligibility and/or process the application.

Please write your application number on all the documents.

It is encouraged for clients to check their emails regularly as reviewers are contacting thru emails and sending important updates regarding the application. Visit the CARES Act [Frequently Asked Questions](#) and the [OSCARSS online tutorial videos](#) prior to completing an application. This information is available in English, Spanish and Creole.

Q. How do I submit my application?

Applications are accepted through <http://www.pbcgov.org/OSCARSS> . All applications must be submitted through the online application portal utilizing Covid 19 tab. Paper applications are not available for this application process.

Q. How do I submit my application for non-covid crisis?

Applications are accepted through <http://www.pbcgov.org/OSCARSS> . All applications must be submitted through the online application portal. Paper applications may be requested for non-COVID-19 related services.

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