

Kansas Legal Services

A non-profit law firm and community education organization helping low and moderate income people in Kansas



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\$200 million for renters in Kansas to pay rent and utilities

Kansans struggling to cover rent and utility payments due to the COVID-19 pandemic could qualify for up to 12 months of emergency assistance, thanks to federal relief.

In a news release, the **Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC)** and the **City of Wichita** announced that the initiative, funded through the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 provides Kansas with \$200 million to support housing stability and prevent evictions and homelessness.

Locally, the KHRC and the City of Wichita will administer the funds, KHRC explained.

“Home has never been more important,” said Ryan Vincent, KHRC Executive Director. “Home has always been a place of shelter, but in the midst of the pandemic it’s also become our virtual workplace, classroom, and gathering space. Rental assistance protects Kansans’ access to home when they need it most.”

In what she called “unprecedented times of hardship,” City of Wichita Director of Housing and Community Services Sally Stang said “it’s imperative that we step up to provide security to those in need.”

“Everyone needs a little help now and then, and we want to ensure that families and individuals who need help to stay in their homes receive it,” she said.

Tenants may qualify for the federal assistance if they earn no more than 80 percent of their area’s median income, are experiencing documented financial hardship as a result of the pandemic and could be at risk of housing instability or homelessness without assistance.

Wichita residents can apply for assistance through the **Wichita Emergency Rental Assistance Program (WERAP)** administered by the city’s Housing and Community Services division, the city explained. The city’s online application opens next **Monday February 22**.

Kansans living outside the Wichita city limits can apply through the Kansas Emergency Rental Assistance (KERA) program administered by

KHRC. The online KERA application will open on Monday, March 15.

The programs follow the 2020 **Kansas Eviction Prevention Program (KEPP)**, a \$20 million assistance initiative KHRC administered with federal CARES Act funding.

“In the roughly 60 days that the program was in statewide operation, KHRC received 10,138 applications for more than \$25 million requested in assistance, representing 27,200 Kansans financially impacted by COVID,” the public corporation said.

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