

Kansas Legal Services

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



www.kansaslegalservices.org

Kansas Emergency Rental Assistance NOW

You should apply whether or not your landlord applies with you.

- KHRC will now make **direct payments** to tenants in situations where the landlord will not cooperate/complete a KERA application. KHRC has to offer this to the tenant.
- If an applicant began a KERA application and was then evicted, KHRC will now allow payment of their back rent (due pursuant to a court judgement) PLUS a new rental deposit AND three months of prospective rent!
- *Previously*, if an applicant was evicted prior to KERA funding being awarded, then KERA would not pay back rent.

Watch this video about the KERA program. Apply here
<https://kera.kshousingcorp.org/kera12#/>

Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC), the state's housing finance agency, has provided \$21,670,326.79 in emergency rental and utility assistance to 4,054 Kansas households experiencing financial hardship as a result of the COVID pandemic.

The funds, made available through the Kansas Emergency Rental Assistance (KERA) program, were allocated to the state through the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a temporary nationwide halt in residential evictions to prevent the further spread of COVID-19.

The eviction ban was struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court on August 26.

Kansans who are facing eviction due to financial hardship incurred as a result of the COVID pandemic are encouraged to apply for KERA assistance.

"It's so gratifying to know our team is getting these funds out the door and into our communities where they are so desperately needed," said Ryan Vincent, KHRC's Executive Director. "We

recognize that the need is vast, and we look forward to providing this crucial assistance to Kansas tenants, landlords, and service providers as the program continues.”

KERA funds helped Gary Evert and his wife Sheryl, a couple in their 70s, remain in their Olathe home. “To anyone else out there who has applied for KERA I would say, ‘Don’t get discouraged. We’re all nervous, but when a customer service representative can calm you down and give you a sense of hope, it’s quite comforting,’” Evert said.

The KERA program previously served Kansans across the state except Wichita residents, who were served by the city’s rental assistance program. Recognizing the importance of serving tenants and landlords in our state’s most populous city, Wichita residents are now eligible to apply for the KERA program, though duplication of benefits is prohibited.

To be eligible to receive KERA assistance, tenants must rent their homes and must have experienced a documented financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Examples of hardship may include

- qualifying for unemployment benefits,
- experiencing a reduction of household income, or
- incurring significant costs due to the pandemic.

Additionally, the tenant’s household’s income may not exceed 80 percent of the area median income.

Nyrica Hall of Topeka was facing eviction when she applied for KERA assistance. Her request resulted in funding for rental and utility assistance, as well as a \$600 lump sum payment to cover internet service. “When the customer service manager called me back to say my application had been approved, I cried,” Hall said.

KERA applicants must provide the following documentation:

- Past-due utility bill or overdue rent or eviction notice from April 2020 to the present
- Signed lease identifying the residential unit and the rental payment amount
- 2020 Federal Income Tax Return as filed with the IRS (if tenant hasn’t filed 2020 federal income taxes, their W-2 wage statement and all IRS 1099 forms are acceptable)
- Proof of identification, including a current state-issued photo ID, court filing notice, or mail from a federal, state, county, or city agency displaying the rental unit address

Approved KERA applicants are eligible to receive a maximum of 12 months of rental and utility assistance, in addition to reasonable fees and security deposits. Qualified applicants are also eligible to receive a lump sum of \$600 in credit to their internet providers to cover past-due or future internet costs, at a rate of \$50 per month for 12 months. Tenants may apply for three months of prospective assistance at a time. Program guidelines require tenants and landlords to

apply jointly, with payments made directly to the landlord or service provider.

The KERA program builds on KHRC's success administering the Kansas Eviction Prevention Program, a statewide rental assistance initiative funded by the federal CARES Act in 2020. In the roughly 60 days that program was in statewide operation, KHRC processed 10,138 applications for more than \$25.8 million in requested funding, ultimately serving 27,200 Kansans with \$17,007,614 in rental assistance.

To learn more, to locate a community partner to assist with the application process, and

To apply, visit <https://kera.kshousingcorp.org/kera12#/>

Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC) is a self-supporting, nonprofit, public corporation committed to helping Kansans access the safe, affordable housing they need and the dignity they deserve. KHRC serves as the state's housing finance agency (HFA), administering essential housing and community programs to serve Kansans.

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