



## Emergency Rental Assistance Programs

### CHECKLIST

- Identify a funding source
  - Does the source have income or other use restrictions?
  - Are there specific reporting requirements with this funding source?
- Reach out to possible partner organizations for implementing the program
- Determine program income limits
- Develop clear program guidelines
  - Is there a monthly or total dollar limit to the assistance per household?
  - What is the length of assistance?
  - Clarification that the funding is a grant
- Create an online or electronic application, with a paper option
  - Applications should include language that gives the municipality standing if it is determined, at a later date, that the applicant falsified information to take unfair advantage of the program, especially if the program is allowing self-certification of certain information.
  - Require landlord contact information on the application.
- Identify documents necessary for a complete application
  - Documentation indicating change in income due to the spread of COVID-19
  - Documentation of household income
  - Evidence of rental cost (e.g., lease, letter from landlord)
- Include your selection process in your guidelines and application – Will you have a monthly deadline for applications or a “rolling” deadline?
- How will you market the program to reach everyone in need? Do you need to have the materials translated into another language? Do neighbors with disabilities need assistance in applying?
- Create written and specific internal processes to track funds and ensure periodic reporting to the appropriate oversight board or entity. Developing a well-thought out program now will save time and frustration later.
- Clarify this is a temporary rental assistance program – This should include how long you expect to run the program and how regularly you will revisit the local need for the resource.

- Set up a process to communicate with landlords. Rental assistance payments need to be made directly to the landlord. Determine if you need completed Form W-9s from landlords.
  
- Develop a grant agreement, contract or lease addendum to be signed by the tenant, landlord and program administrator outlining the purpose of the funds, how much assistance is being provided and for how long.
  - With an emergency rental assistance program you may allow applicants to self-certify their total household income. If so, it may be prudent to include language about having funds returned if applicants are found to misrepresent their situation.
  
- Identify a municipal department, non-profit housing organization, housing authority or housing consultant to implement the program and provide regular reporting.
  - Administration fees to cover the cost of program implementation are typical. These fees are subject to M.G.L. Chapter 30B procurement guidance.