



Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services

311 Laurel Avenue
Laurel, Maryland 20707
(301) 776-0442

Rental Assistance Program Guidelines

The LARS Rental Assistance Program is available to qualifying clients facing a housing emergency who need financial assistance to prevent an eviction or to move into newly secured housing. Please apply as soon as you are aware of your need. Processing time for assistance is typically 1-2 weeks.

Do I Qualify for Help?

Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Reside or stay in LARS' geographical service area (Zip codes: 20707, 20708, 20723, 20724).
- Be at risk of homelessness, currently homeless, or transitioning into new housing.
- Have documentable income sufficient enough to cover monthly expenses moving forward. Applicants must continue receiving income for at least 60 days after assistance.
- Have not received LARS financial assistance within the last 12 months.
- Commit to 6 months of follow-up by LARS Emergency Services staff.

What Can LARS Rental Assistance Program Pay?

- LARS rental assistance covers a portion of rent costs for the **current month only**. Applicants are responsible for paying any outstanding utility/late/legal/other fees.
- Rental assistance amount will vary based on funding source and availability. Applicants should expect to financially contribute to their outstanding balance.
- Applicants already receiving a housing voucher or subsidy from the State of Maryland (i.e. Section 8) may be ineligible for the rental assistance program.

What Documents Do I Need to Submit?

- Current Lease, Mortgage Statement, or Property Deed
- Proof of Need: Late letter/Eviction Notice/ Move-in Letter with current amount due
- Photo ID for all adult household members
- Social Security card for all household members
- Birth certificates for all children in the home
- Proof of all household income from the last 30 days to include: employment income, unemployment income, disability, retirement, VA benefits, child support, etc.
- All monthly household utility bills from the last 30 days including: electric, gas, and water
- Any additional bills: cable, cellphone, car insurance, car note, credit cards, loans, etc.
- Updated account ledger from leasing office
- Bank Statements from the last 3 months

Note: LARS reserves the right to request any additional documentation at any point in the application process to assist in determining eligibility.

What's the Process for Getting Help?

The following is a general outline of the Rental Assistance process. Processing time may vary and is dependent upon the submission of all documents and the applicant's payment of his or her portion of the rent.

1. Applicants must meet with a Case Manager in-person to determine program eligibility.
2. A household budget will be completed by Applicants with a Case Manager.
3. Applicants must submit all required documents as requested by the Case Manager.
4. The Case Manager will submit application to supervisory staff for final decision.
5. Applicants will be informed of their application decision and the amount of assistance.
6. The Participant must submit his/her portion of debt obligation (*total rent and fees due minus LARS' contribution*) in the form of 1) a money order made out to leasing office or 2) a payment receipt **before the last day of the current month**.
7. The Participant must complete any additional supporting documents as requested by LARS on the day the funds are disbursed.
8. Checks issued on the Participant's behalf will be made payable to the leasing office or landlord.

How Can I Expedite my Application?

Submit all requested documents in a timely manner. Your application will ONLY be processed for rental assistance once ALL requested documents have been provided.

Apply as early in the month as possible. LARS cannot guarantee that request made after the 25th of the month will be processed before the end of the month. Applications submitted after the 25th of the month may be assessed for the balance due from both the current month and upcoming month.