

**Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County (HCCSC)
Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) COVID19-
Policies Governing Eligibility and Prioritization to Receive CoC Assistance and Standards for Administering Assistance**

Purpose. The Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) on March 18, 2020, approved financial assistance for emergency rental assistance. The Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County (HCCSC) has established access and prioritization policies for this one-time funding opportunity that expires on March 31, 2021.

Section - I. Eligibility and Prioritization for OHFA Emergency Housing Assistant Grant Program – Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA)

A. Emergency Rental Assistance Programs Receiving OHFA Funds.

1. Eligibility for ERA. To be eligible for Emergency Rental Assistance services operated by Participating Agencies, individuals and families must:
 - a) Be residents of Stark County;
 - b) Meet Homeless Navigation Pre-Screen eligibility;
 - c) Have an annual income at or below 50% AMI, with priority given to households with incomes at or below 30% AMI;
 - d) Be at Imminent Eviction (At-Risk). Imminent Eviction (At-Risk) eligible individuals will include those who are unable to pay their rent and are at imminent risk of eviction; an eviction order need not be received. Individuals must have experienced a decline in income, weekly wage reduction, job loss or other financial challenges related or unrelated to COVID-19.
2. Eligible Uses for Emergency Rental Assistance OHFA Costs¹
 - a. Rental assistance payments (no more than six months of rental assistance including the arrears)
 - b. Utility assistance including payments, deposits and arrears.
 - c. Move-in cost assistance including security deposits, etc.
 - d. Landlord verification services
 - e. Housing case management
 - f. Moving Cost Assistance
3. Prioritization for Emergency Rental Assistance. The following rules will be followed in prioritizing households for Emergency Rental Assistance services:
 - a. Prioritization for Households with Risk Factors for Contracting COVID-19. Households in which any member has two of the following risks factors (underlying medical condition(s), is 60 years of age or older and/or is a pregnant woman) will be prioritized before households with one risk factor. Household that have one risk factor (underlying medical condition(s), is 60 years of age or older or is a pregnant woman) will be prioritized before households with no risk factors.

¹Recommended Uses for Homeless Prevention Response OHFA Costs for Homelessness Prevention Programs based on guidance from the Ohio Housing Finance Agency – Emergency Housing Assistance Program Guidelines

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- b. Prioritization for Households with income loss due to COVID19. Households that have a household related COVID19 hardship claim due to a decline in wages or unemployment will be prioritized before households that do not have a COVID19 hardship claim.
 - c. Prioritization for Households with Extremely Low Income. Households that have an annual income at or below 30% AMI will be prioritized before households with income between 31% and 50% AMI.
4. Requirement to Exhaust Other Resources. Before providing Emergency Rental Assistance services to any household, Emergency Rental Assistance staff must determine whether they have exhausted other options available to them.