

New Mexico announces rent, utility assistance

Written by gallupsun
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SANTA FE – The state of New Mexico will grant approximately \$170M of federal aid to New Mexicans for rental and utility assistance to households experiencing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The Department of Finance and Administration will administer the Emergency Rental Assistance Program in partnership with the City of Albuquerque. New Mexicans can apply for assistance at [RentHelpNM.org](https://renthelpnm.org) beginning April 5, 2021.

"Identifying New Mexicans in need of rental and utility assistance will take a collaborative effort, so in addition to our efforts, we hope to collaborate with nonprofits and other entities for community outreach, Donnie Quintana, Local



Government Division Director, and ERAP lead said.

Renters across the state are eligible for the program — except for residents of Bernalillo County, Doña Ana County, and those who live in a pueblo or tribal area. Those two counties, as well as tribal governments, will administer their own Rental Assistance Programs.

The state of New Mexico will either pay the landlord and/or the utility provider directly depending on the financial assistance request by the applicant. Landlords and utility providers are encouraged to download a W9 and submit it to DFA via ERAVendor.Relations@state.nm.us as soon as possible to ensure a streamlined process for receiving payment.

This assistance is available for those in a lease agreement with a landlord or those who have entered into a lease-purchase agreement.

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Funding is also available for utility assistance and other expenses related to housing costs (i.e. hotel/motel costs) incurred directly or indirectly, due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

To be eligible, a household must be obligated to pay rent on a residential dwelling.

Rental Assistance may be dispersed in three-month increments and depending on the individual's situation, there will be an opportunity to receive additional assistance after submission of updated documents and further review. Priority will be placed on paying past-due or rent-in-arrears before any other assistance.

Payments will be made directly to the landlord.

UTILITY ASSISTANCE

Utility Assistance is capped at 15 months which is dependent on the individual's situation and rental past-due amounts. Utility Assistance is only available to renters, not homeowners. Payments will be made directly to the utility provider.

Upon submission of the application and supporting documentation, DFA will conduct a review within 24 to 48 hours. After a review of the application, applicants will be notified of the decision via email or mail. If the application is approved, payment will be made within 10 business working days.