

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE May 13, 2022

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Rental Assistance Program Application Period End and Portal Closure – May 22, 2022**

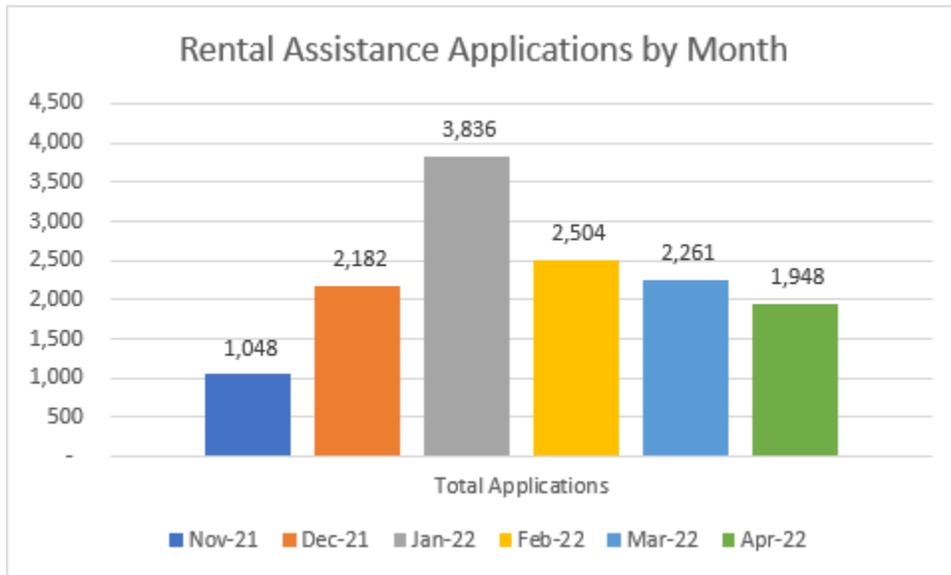
The City of Dallas Rent Relief Program will be closing its application portal to new applications on May 22, 2022. The Rent Relief Program will continue to process applications that have been submitted prior to this date in accordance with Emergency Rental Assistance program (ERA) prioritization requirements.

The City of Dallas Rent Relief Program represents the local administration of the federal Emergency Rental Program (ERA) program, which includes ERA 1 and ERA 2, and requires the prioritization of assistance for households that earn below 50% of the Area Median Income, \$43,850 for a family of three, or in which one or more members of the household are unemployed and have been for 90 or more days. Additionally, the City considers eviction status when assigning cases for processing. Applications submitted prior to May 22, 2022 will be prioritized according to these criteria and then in order of receipt. ERA provides assistance to households that have been impacted due to or during the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible program participants can receive up to 12 months in rental and/or utility assistance through ERA 2 program and cannot exceed 18 months of combined assistance between the ERA 1 and ERA 2 program. The City is primarily administering ERA 2 program funds at this time, though we received a small reallocation of ERA 1 program funds.

The City continues to see a high demand for rental assistance. January 2022 saw our highest number of application submissions. The below chart details the number of applications submitted within our application portal, though this data does factor in ineligible submissions, duplicate submissions or completeness. Since launching in mid-2021, the Dallas Rent Relief Program has provided assistance to more than 8,000 unique households. The end of the current application period and closure of the portal means that the City will no longer accept and process new applications after May 22, 2022 so that the City and partners may focus on applications previously received. Almost 5,000 applications have been processed since the beginning of 2022, but there are more than 8,000 currently awaiting assignment and processing. Among the applications that have been processed within the system, more than 3,000 have been rejected, with the most common reason for rejection being an unresponsive client, which is a client that does not respond to multiple contact and follow up attempts from program staff.

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The City has been working in partnership with the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas and the Dallas Rental Assistance Collaborative to process applications as quickly as possible. In the meantime, the City and United Way are working methodically to conduct outreach to all pending applicants to determine if their needs may have changed since submitting their application and to identify urgent cases. Program help lines in English and Spanish languages will remain open beyond the closure of the portal and will focus on providing updates on application status and information and referrals to clients. Additionally, the City is working to establish new partnerships to expedite processing of submitted applications and ultimately intends to offer another application window for rental assistance applications. Staff will provide an update on partnership development and program timeline in a future memorandum.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: I have submitted an application through the City portal, but I have not yet been assisted. Will my application be processed if you have not been assisted once the portal closes?

Answer: The City and its partners will continue to process applications that have already been submitted even after the application submission portal closes.

Question: Why is the City closing the application portal?

Answer: The City has received a very high volume of applications, especially during the early months of 2022. Staff and partners are working diligently to review and process applications as quickly as possible, but are struggling to keep up with the volume of submissions. Closing the portal will enable us to focus on applications that have been submitted and to better manage prioritization of application processing based on need and urgency.

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Question: I have submitted an application, but have not been contacted yet. How can I check on the status of my application?

Answer: Applicants can visit <https://dallas.govtech.kinetechcloud.com/> and click “Check App Status” at the bottom of the page. Applicants will need their ERAP # in order to check the application status. Applicants received their ERAP # via email when successfully submitting their application.

Question: I have submitted an application and have not yet been assisted. Should I submit another application to expedite processing?

Answer: The submission of duplicate applications clogs up the application system and delays processing. All applications require time for review and processing, even those that are ultimately rejected. Duplicate applications take staff time, which could otherwise be used reviewing and approving individual applications. Additionally, the submission of a duplicate application does not ensure the client will be served more quickly as application review and processing order is based on prioritization categories and order of submission.

Question: I submitted an application for assistance, but I have now received a Notice of Possible Eviction, Notice to Vacate or Writ of Possession. Can I update my application to reflect this?

Answer: Clients with pending applications who have receive a Notice of Possible Eviction or Notice to Vacate can contact our help line at 214-670-8416 to update their application to reflect this. Callers should be prepared for long wait times due to very high volumes of calls.

Question: Does submission of an application for rental assistance prior to the May 22, 2022 portal closure guarantee that I will receive assistance?

Answer: Submission of an application does not guarantee assistance will be received. Availability of assistance is limited to funding availability and client eligibility and responsiveness.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Office of Community Care Director, Jessica Galleshaw, at Jessica.Galleshaw@dallascityhall.com.



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