



HUD Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

The American Rescue Plan: Critical Resources for the American People

Updated March 11, 2021

On Thursday, March 11, President Biden signed the landmark “American Rescue Plan,” a \$1.9 trillion measure that provides relief to millions of Americans.

As President Biden [said](#), “This legislation is about giving the backbone of this nation – the essential workers, the working people who built this country, the people who keep this country going – a fighting chance.”

“Now we move forward with the resources needed to vaccinate the nation. To get \$1,400 in direct payments to 85% of American households. To expand coverage and help with lowering health care premiums. To give small businesses what they need to stay open. To expand unemployment insurance, provide food and nutrition assistance. To help keep a roof over people’s heads. To cut child poverty in half.”

This handout describes some of the benefits in the American Rescue Plan in the areas of:

- Emergency Rental Assistance
- Emergency Housing Vouchers (Section 8)
- Assistance to Homeowners
- Economic Impact Payments and Child Tax Credits
- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance
- Funding for the Affordable Care Act and Vaccination of Americans
- Education funding (K-12 and higher education)
- Paycheck Protection Program funding

The handout also includes information on how to take advantage of some of these programs, including:

- Applying for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program
- Understanding and Taking Advantage of the Eviction Moratorium
- Understanding and Using the FHA Foreclosure Moratorium
- More Information on the Paycheck Protection Program
- Other Helpful Information

This is a sample of the areas of focus of this \$1.9 trillion legislation. Beyond what is described below, it also helps those involved in farming, rural areas, and many other areas. For a full review, visit <https://www.whitehouse.gov>

Please note: Some programs described below are not administered by HUD and are provided for information only, with links to find out more details.

In the critical area of housing, the American Rescue Plan:

- Injects \$21.55 billion to the [Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#), which helps millions of Americans behind on their rent to stay in their homes.
 - Of this money, \$2.5 billion is reserved for payments to high-need grantees – very low-income families spending more than 50 percent of income on rent or living in sub-standard housing.
- Funds can be used to provide financial assistance to eligible households for up to 18 months for:
 - Rent;
 - Rental arrears (back rent)
 - Utilities/home energy costs and arrears; and other expenses
- Assistance to households under the ERA will not be considered income and will not be considered as a resource for purposes of determining the eligibility of the household for benefits/assistance. This means that households benefiting from this program will not lose access to other benefits based on income.

Emergency Housing Vouchers (Section 8)

The American Rescue Plan includes \$5 billion for incremental emergency vouchers, renewals of vouchers through September 30, 2021.

- Qualifying individuals:
 - Homeless;
 - At risk of homelessness;
 - Fleeing/attempting to flee domestic violence/dating violence/sexual assault/stalking/human trafficking; or
 - Recently homeless and for whom the voucher will prevent homelessness/housing instability.

For more information, check with your local public housing authority. You can find contact information at

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/pha/contacts

Homeowners Assistance

- The American Rescue Plan includes \$9.961 billion for the Homeowners Assistance Fund to states, territories and tribes to help homeowners at 100 percent of national AMI to pay mortgage, taxes, insurance, HOA/condo fees, and reimburse state and local governments that provided the same support in order to prevent homeowner displacement.
- The American Rescue Plan provides \$100 million in Rural Rental Assistance and \$39 million in rural mortgage assistance.
- Please note that these programs will need time to be set up after the bill is signed March 12, 2021.

Other Housing Funding

- **Homelessness:** The American Rescue Plan provides \$5 billion to help communities offer support services and safe, socially distant housing to protect the health of individuals and families experiencing homelessness and to help control transmission of coronavirus.
- **Fair Housing:** Provides \$20 million in Fair Housing assistance to organizations to help renters, homeowners, and housing providers identify and combat housing discrimination and help address the increase in housing challenges.

Tax Rebates

- Many tax filers will receive another “Economic Impact Payment” of \$1400 for single filers and \$2800 for joint filers. An extra \$1400 will be paid for each dependent.
- These amounts will decrease between \$75,000 and \$80,000 for single filers and \$112,500 and \$120,000 for joint filers, and fall to zero after \$80,000 and \$120,000 respectively.
- Please note that this is for informational purposes only; HUD does not administer tax policy. For more information on these tax provisions, check with the Internal Revenue Service at <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus-tax-relief-and-economic-impact-payments>

Child Tax Credit Enhancement

- The American Rescue Plan makes the child tax credit fully refundable for 2021. This means it can go beyond the taxes you owe to provide you a cash refund.
- Increases the credit amount to \$3,000 per child (\$3,600 for a child under age 6), from the current \$2,000 amount.
- 17-year-old children would qualify, where the current law provides the credit only for children under age 17
- Please note that this is for informational purposes only; HUD does not administer tax policy. For more information on these tax provisions, check with the Internal Revenue Service at <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus-tax-relief-and-economic-impact-payments>

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance

- The American Rescue Plan extends Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) through September 6, 2021 to individuals not otherwise eligible for unemployment benefits, such as the self-employed, who are unable to work as a result of COVID-19. The number of weeks PUA benefits are available increased from 50 to 74 weeks.
- Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC), previously the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program, provides an

additional \$300 weekly benefit after March 14 until September 6, 2021, which augments regular weekly unemployment and PUA benefits.

- Extends Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) through September 6, 2021 and authorizes additional unemployment benefits to those who exhaust their regular unemployment benefits. The number of weeks PEUC benefits are available increased from 24 to 48 weeks.

For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Labor at <https://www.dol.gov/coronavirus/unemployment-insurance>

Funding for the Affordable Care Act and Vaccination of Americans

The American Rescue Plan includes

- Increased funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to test, track, and vaccinate individuals.
- Increased Affordable Care Act premium subsidies so individuals do not pay more than 8.5 percent of their income for coverage.
- Increased support for Medicaid, community health centers, and tribal health programs.
- Increased support for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) programs and training for mental and behavioral health professionals, paraprofessionals, and public safety officers.
- Payments of 100 percent of COBRA premiums through September 2021 to prevent individuals who have lost their jobs from losing health insurance.
- A two-year increase in [Affordable Care Act \(ACA\)](#) subsidies to help individuals afford health insurance plans in the ACA marketplace.
- Individuals with incomes above 400 percent of the federal poverty level (\$51,520 for an individual) would qualify for subsidies so they would not have to pay more than 8.5 percent of their annual income for health care premiums.
- For more information, please visit <https://www.hhs.gov> and the HHS Partnership Center at <https://www.hhs.gov/about/agencies/iea/partnerships/index.html>

Funding for Education (K-12 and Higher Education)

- The American Rescue Plan provides more than \$170.3 billion for K-12 schools, higher education and related programs under the U.S. Department of Education (DoE), including \$122.8 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Education Relief Fund (ESSER), for elementary and secondary education expenses, including related to COVID-19
- Provides nearly \$40 billion in grants to institutions of higher education.
 - 7.5 percent is specifically dedicated for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Minority-Serving Institutions, and other under-resourced institutions.
- For more information, visit <https://www.ed.gov/>

Paycheck Protection Program

- The American Rescue Plan includes \$7.5 billion in funding for the Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program, but does not extend the deadline for applying—it is still March 31, 2021.

How to Take Advantage of Rental Assistance and Mortgage Assistance Programs

Eligibility for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program

Eligibility

An "eligible household" is defined as a renter household in which at least one or more individuals meets the following criteria:

- i. Qualifies for unemployment or has experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced a financial hardship due to COVID-19;
- ii. Demonstrates a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability; and
- iii. Has a household income at or below 80 percent of the area median.

Eligible households that include an individual who has been unemployed for the 90 days prior to application for assistance and households with income at or below 50 percent of the area median are to be prioritized for assistance.

Application Process

An application for rental assistance may be submitted by either an eligible household or by a landlord on behalf of that eligible household. Households and landlords must apply through programs established by grantees. In general, funds will be paid directly to landlords and utility service providers. If a landlord does not wish to participate, funds may be paid directly to the eligible household.

To apply, contact your landlord or check your state on this list to find out if your city or county is eligible: <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/ERA-List-of-Eligible-Local-Governments-Final.pdf>

Visit <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/cares/emergency-rental-assistance-program> for more information.

a. The Biden Administration Extended the nationwide eviction moratorium to March 31:

Summary: On January 29, 2021, the CDC extended and modified an Order that temporarily halts evictions for nonpayment of rent through March 31, 2021. To be eligible for eviction protections under the Order, residents must sign a declaration form and meet the requirements outlined in the Order, which are also described in the declaration form.

Resources and Further Information:

- Residents seeking a moratorium on evictions must fill out a **declaration form** from the CDC for their landlord.
- **You can find the declaration form and more information here:**
https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/covid_19_resources/resident
- You can view a factsheet from HUD’s Office of Public and Indian Housing to help renters facing eviction here, including state-based assistance, housing-counseling, and tips on communicating with your landlord, here: <https://www.hud.gov/coronavirus/renters>
 - This toolkit also provides tips to landlords to help tenants.
- For questions on your FHA loan, you can call (800) CALL-FHA or email answers@hud.gov for help with your specific situation.
- Find a HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agency near you to help understand your options. Visit: <https://www.hud.gov/findacounselor>

b. The Biden Administration Extended the FHA Foreclosure Moratorium Through June 30, 2021

- i. Extend foreclosure moratorium for homeowners through June 30, 2021
 1. Extend mortgage payment forbearance enrollment window until June 30, 2021 for borrowers wishing to request forbearance (“forbearance” means a pause in payments; it is not loan forgiveness).
 2. Provide up to six months additional mortgage payment forbearance for borrowers who entered forbearance on or before June 30, 2020. This provides additional flexibility to those already in forbearance. If you request forbearance before June 30, 2021, you will receive up to six months total
 3. Note: Loan forbearance is a pause in payments; it is not loan forgiveness. As part of the loan forbearance process, you can work with your lender to create a repayment plan.
 4. Find a HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agency near you to help understand your options. Visit: <https://www.hud.gov/findacounselor>
 5. **Reach out to your lender right away if you cannot pay your mortgage.**

c. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac Mortgages

- i. Summary: The Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Veterans Affairs, and Department of Agriculture worked in lockstep to make sure that the above actions will reach the greatest number of Americans. Last week, the Federal Housing Finance Agency, the independent agency that oversees Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, extended forbearance by three months for borrowers coming to the end of their forbearance period. These coordinated actions will cover 70 percent of existing single-family home mortgages.
- ii. Specifically, FHFA also announced that borrowers with a mortgage backed by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac may be eligible for an additional forbearance extension of up to three months. Eligibility for the extension is limited to

borrowers who are on a COVID-19 forbearance plan as of February 28, 2021, and other limits may apply. Further, COVID-19 Payment Deferral for borrowers with an Enterprise-backed mortgage can now cover up to 15 months of missed payments. COVID-19 Payment Deferral allows those borrowers to repay their missed payments at the time the home is sold, refinanced, or at mortgage maturity.

- iii. For more information, contact your lender or visit a HUD-Approved Housing Counseling Agency to find out about your options. Find one near you at <https://www.hud.gov/findacounselor>

- d. **Veterans Affairs (VA) Mortgages:** For mortgages backed by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), foreclosure moratoriums and forbearance measures have been extended to June 30, 2021. For more information visit <https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/84744/va-extends-existing-moratoriums-evictions-foreclosures-extends-loan-forbearance-opportunities/>

4. The Small Business Administration’s Paycheck Protection Program:

This SBA-backed loan helps businesses keep their workforce employed during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis. The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) provides loans to help businesses keep their workforce employed during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis. Borrowers may be eligible for [PPP loan forgiveness](#).

1. Find a lender: <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program>
 - a. Be sure to use the Small Business Administration’s link so that you do not fall prey to scams.
2. Identify a loan
 - a. [First Draw PPP Loans](#) – if you have never received a PPP loan, this loan is available to you
 - b. [Second Draw PPP Loans](#) – If you have received a PPP loan, this loan maybe available to you

Frequently Asked Question: Can a faith-based organization get a PPP loan?

Answer: Faith-based organizations, including houses of worship, are eligible to participate in the PPP as well as in the Economic Injury Disaster Relief Program (EIDL). The same general rules and restrictions on the use of PPP and EIDL loan funds that apply to other borrowers apply to religious organizations.

For more information, visit <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program>

The Small Business Administration also offers additional COVID relief. See <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options>

5. Other Important Resources:

Resources for Financial Management: If you need information on managing finances, including issues related to COVID-19, visit the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to learn about their COVID-19 resources, including issues with housing. <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/coronavirus/>

Homelessness: If you provide services to people experiencing homelessness, HUD's Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS) provides weekly COVID-19 webinars and "office hours" for homeless service providers to ask questions about serving those experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic. You can review past office hours and sign up for future ones here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/trainings/snaps-covid-19-webinars/>

Community Development Block Grant Funding: Learn about resources for CDBG funding (not for individuals) for COVID-19 here: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/covid-19

Public Housing Agencies: HUD has put together information to help public housing agencies issues related to COVID-19. See more information here: https://www.hud.gov/coronavirus/public_housing_agencies

Native Americans: For resources for Native Americans, visit https://www.hud.gov/coronavirus/native_americans

Supporting Communities

Following the lead of the White House and newly confirmed Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Marcia L. Fudge, HUD is continuing to monitor and evaluate the health and economic impacts of COVID-19 and will respond to help Americans in need. Please do not hesitate to reach out to HUD's Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships if you or your stakeholders have any questions—we are here to serve you.

Please email partnerships@hud.gov or visit https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/faith_based

To stay up to date, you can also visit <https://www.whitehouse.gov> or <https://www.hud.gov> for the latest information. Thank you for your service in and for our communities nationwide.