



Walker River Paiute Tribe Emergency Rental Assistance Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

March 25, 2021

1. What is the WRPT Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)?

ERAP is a rent and utility assistance program established by section 501 of Division N of the Consolidated Appropriation Act, 2021, otherwise known as the Bipartisan Relief Package or H.R. 133-888 Title V – Banking Subtitle A – Emergency Rental Assistance. Funding for the Emergency Rental Assistance program is to be used to provide rental and utility assistance for enrolled members of the Walker River Paiute Tribe and their household who meet the eligibility requirements set forth in the Bipartisan Relief Package.

2. Who is eligible to apply for the ERAP program?

- Enrolled members, 18 years or older, of the Walker River Paiute Tribe (WRPT) who are obligated to pay rent on a residential dwelling (only one application per household, regardless of the number of WRPT members residing in the household) and the Tribe determines that:
 - one or more individuals within the household has qualified for unemployment benefits or experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced other financial hardship due, directly, or indirectly, to the COVID-19 outbreak;
 - one or more individuals within the household can demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability; and
 - the household has a household income at or below 80% of area median income
- Landlords, property managers or utility providers (on behalf of WRPT clients). If a landlord or utility provider submits on behalf of a tenant, the landlord or utility provider must notify the tenant and obtain the tenant's written consent.

3. Does the ERAP program assist with my mortgage payment?

No, the ERAP program is only for rental assistance and/or utilities for renters.

3. How much rental assistance can I apply for?

- Eligible Tribal members may apply for a maximum of 12-months of rental assistance, which can include rents due in arrears if the past due rents can be shown to be due to COVID-19.
- Rent for future months is paid monthly and only certified for 3-months. Additional months can be applied for, if the maximum of 12 months has not been reached, upon submission of a new application and all required supporting documentation.
- If 12-months of arrears rent is requested, an additional 3 months may be approved for future rents if funding allows for rent stabilization.
- Rent in arrears cannot be requested prior to March 13, 2020.

5. *What kind of utilities can I get assistance with?*

- Eligible Tribal members can apply for assistance for normal household utilities (e.g., electric, gas, propane, trash, sewer).
- Utilities that are covered by the landlord within rent will be treated as rent.

Cable and Telephone are excluded from utility assistance.

6. *I live in subsidized housing or get federal housing assistance, am I still eligible for assistance?*

- An eligible household that occupies a federally subsidized residential or mixed-use property may receive ERAP assistance, provided that ERAP funds are not applied to costs that have been or will be reimbursed under any other federal assistance.
- If an eligible household receives a monthly federal subsidy (e.g., a Housing Choice Voucher, Public Housing, or Project-Based Rental Assistance) and the tenant rent is adjusted according to changes in income, the renter household may receive ERA assistance for the tenant-owed portion of rent or utilities that are not subsidized.
- Pursuant to section 501(k)(3)(B) of Subdivision N of the Act and 2 CFR 200.403, when providing ERAP assistance, the household's income and sources of assistance need to be reviewed to confirm that the ERAP assistance does not duplicate any other assistance, including federal, state, or local assistance provided for the same costs.

7. *Besides rental and utility assistance, is there any other assistance my household can receive from the ERAP program?*

- Yes, the program allows for other limited expenses which must be related to housing and incurred due directly or indirectly due to COVID-19. Such expenses include relocation expenses and rental fees (if a household has been temporarily or permanently displaced due to the COVID-19 outbreak); reasonable accrued late fees (if not included in rental or utility arrears and if incurred due to COVID-19); and Internet service provided to the rental unit.
 - The Walker River Paiute Tribe's ERAP program limits internet service to eligible homes with K-12 distance learners, households that can document telework requirements or households that can document telemedicine needs.
 - All payments for housing-related expenses must be supported by documentary evidence such as a bill, invoice, or evidence of payment to the provider of the service.

8. *How are the payments distributed?*

- Payments will be made directly to landlords, utility or other service providers as required in the ERAP guidelines.

9. *How will my information be stored? Is it secure?*

The Walker River Paiute Tribe takes the privacy of its Tribal members very seriously. Applications and supporting documentation are stored on a secure server that is protected by industry standard, HIPAA compliant network security. Access to the application is restricted to the few individuals directly supporting the ERA program who have the appropriate training and confidentiality agreements in place. The ERA program is funded entirely by funds the Tribe received through the Treasury Department. As a result, the Tribe must comply with federal law and retain all records associated with the program such as applications, supporting documentation, records of payment and other program requirements.

10. How can I apply for the ERA program and submit required verifications?

Members wishing to apply for assistance through the ERAP program will be required to complete all sections of the application and provide the required supporting documents before applications can be processed. In order to provide rental or utility assistance as quickly as possible it is **imperative** the member be prepared to submit a complete application.

- Applications and supporting documents should be submitted through the online application portal for immediate processing.
- Applications may be submitted by U.S. Mail but will be processed after all applications submitted online have been processed which could result in a delay in receiving assistance.
- Assistance is available to members who do not have internet access or are unable to mail in the application by calling 775.773.2306 ext. 2304. Applications will not be processed until all required supporting documentation is received.
- Applications and supporting documentation may be delivered to the drop box located on the east side of the parking lot of the Administration Building. Applications hand delivered to the drop box will be processed after all applications submitted online have been processed which could result in a delay in receiving assistance.
- Requests for incomplete information on an application must be received within five (5) business day. If the requested information/verifications are not received timely, your application will be denied and you will need to reapply.

11. What is required to complete an application?

- Completed and signed application.
- Identification for all household members 18 and older
 - Government Issued Driver's License or identification; AND
 - Proof of Tribal Enrollment
- Household Income Verification
 - If household is receiving current income, at least 30-day documentation is required or
 - 2020 1040 Tax Statement
- Proof of COVID-19 financial impact:
 - Proof of Unemployment Benefits
 - Experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experience financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the COVID-19 outbreak.
 - Unemployment Award Letter
 - Bank Statements
 - Receipts
 - Correspondence with employers
 - Written Attestations from employers, case workers, landlords, or others with knowledge of the household's circumstances
 - Written attestations from applicant or any household member
- Signed Application for all adult household members
- Copy of lease or rental agreement signed by applicant and landlord
- Eviction notice or late notice (if received).
- Current Utility bills (if requesting utility assistance applying)
- Documentation of all costs for which assistance is requested

12. My name or address has changes what should I do?

The Tribe will use official enrollment information including enrollment number, member name and address on file with the Enrollment Office for verification of enrollment. If your name or address has changed you must contact the Enrollment Office to formally request a name or address change to your enrollment record.

13. Why do I need to list all Household members?

Per the ERAP grant regulations, income cannot exceed 80% of the area median income for the **entire** household.

14. What are the income limits?

Per the ERAP grant regulations, the household income cannot be greater than 80% of your area median income, using HUD guidelines. Area Median limits for your County/Area can be found at <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html>. Eligibility will be determined using the area median income for the where the member resides.

15. Are applications prioritized?

Completed applications submitted with all required documentation are reviewed in the order received, with the exception of ERAP regulations prioritizing the following households:

- Households that include an individual who has been unemployed for the 90 days prior to application for assistance.
- Households with income at or below 50 percent of the area median income.

16. If any of the following apply to your household application, you will not be eligible for ERAP assistance through the program and your application will be denied:

- Household income is greater than 80% of your area median income, as defined by HUD for your area
- Inability to pay rent and/or utilities is not related to COVID -19
- Incomplete application
- A household member has received ERAP assistance in or for another household
- The household is already receiving federally funded rental and/or utility assistance and ERA assistance provided through the Walker River Paiute Tribe would duplicate other federally funded assistance.

17. Are there application deadlines and can I apply more than once?

- Applications can be submitted beginning April 1, 2021.
- The ERAP program runs from April 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021. Applications must be submitted prior to December 10, 2021 for assistance requests.
- For applicants who are requesting ongoing rental assistance and are using current income verifications, recertification of the application is required every 3- months.

18. How will I know my application is complete?

- It is your responsibility to submit a complete application (all sections complete) and all required supporting documents. If your application is incomplete, you will be notified in writing as to what is needed to complete the application. Once all required documents are received, the ERA team will begin the process of confirming verifications and determining eligibility.
- Once the completed application requirements are met, an eligibility determination will be made within ten (10) business days.
 - If the household has been determined eligible, payments will be **issued directly to vendors** and you will receive a “Receipt of Awarded Assistance” letter, OR
 - If your application has been denied, you will receive written notice of denial.
 - no person may be denied assistance based on race, color, sex, age, religion, national

origin, or political belief.

19. If my application is denied or I do not agree with the decision, can I appeal?

Yes, WRPT has established a fair process for application appeals. The applicant has 10-days from date of decision to submit an appeal, in writing, to WRPT office by using the portal, US mail, or walk-in to the main office. The applicant will have five (5) business days to provide any requested documentation or information. If you file an appeal, the second review and eligibility decision will be the final determination. Regulatory criteria will be used:

- Member information and income
- Supporting documentation and narratives
- Collateral contacts as needed
- Member contact as needed
- Consider member statement of appeal as relevant to regulatory requirements

20. If I have further questions, where can I get answers?

Please email wrptcares@wrpt.org or call 775.773.2306 ext. 2304 for program questions

21. What is the process for reviewing and approving applications for the ERAP program?

The Tribe has contracted with an independent third party to assist with the development, implementation, and management of the ERAP program. The use of an independent third party ensures that applications are evaluated using the established criteria outlined in the ERAP regulations for each application received. The independent third party is required to strictly adhere to the Tribe's confidentiality policy. The Tribe selected an independent third party with extensive experience in the development, implementation and monitoring of both entitlement and grant funded public benefit assistance programs, such as the ERAP program. The contractor's familiarity and experience with developing and implementing programs that are in full compliance with federal funding guidelines is an added benefit to ensure the Tribe is using its ERAP monies appropriately and will not risk having to repay funds in the future.