

Residential Rent Relief Fund - FAQ

1. What is the Residential Rent Relief Fund?

The Residential Rent Relief Fund aims to help tenants in social housing who were financially affected because of the COVID-19 pandemic (these tenants or housing beneficiaries are defined in the Social Housing Act and Regulations).

2. Who can apply?

Only social housing delivery agents who have social housing units under their care [management] and are regulated by the SHRA. These agents can apply on behalf of their tenants. All social housing landlords including Municipal-owned Entities are eligible to apply on behalf of their tenants.

3. How does one apply?

The application form is broken into two parts which the landlord and tenant have to complete. Tenant complete Part 1B form and submit to landlord who compiles a batch for all applications from tenants under their institution, Furthermore the SHIs will complete Part 1A of the form and then submit the application to the SHRA. The application can be requested from rentrelief@shra.org.za or downloaded from the SHRA website under Residential Rent Relief Programme.

4. What is a Social Housing Landlord responsible for?

When a Social Housing Landlord applies for the first time, they will have to submit a residential relief policy, approved by their board, which is in line with the SHRA's Residential Relief Policy. Additional supporting documents are required and these are contained in the application form.

5. Can a tenant apply on their own?

No, their landlord will have to apply for them.

6. What is a tenant responsible for?

To provide proof of loss of income to their landlord, who will apply on their behalf. They also need to provide other documents to the landlord to submit with their application (see Question 21).

7. When can we start applying for rent relief?

From 1 June 2021. The residential rent relief fund will run for six months until all the funds are committed.

8. How will the grants be approved?

The grants will be approved on a sliding scale of up to 80% of what the tenant owns, depending on individual tenant circumstances.

9. Can a tenant be evicted?

Tenants that qualify for and are awarded grant relief under the Residential Rent Relief Fund should not be evicted for a period equivalent to the months covered by the awarded grant or lease agreement lapses. The shorter of the two will take precedence.

10. In which provinces will the funds be distributed?

The total funds are allocated in proportion of total social housing units under regulation in each province as a percentage of social housing units under regulation nationally.

11. Do I have to be a South African to apply?

Yes, only South Africans can apply. You must be a citizen or have a valid South African permanent residence permit.

12. What is a valid lease agreement that a tenant needs to have in order to apply?

The tenants must have been renting the property for his/her private and primary residential use since 31 March 2020 (or before).

13. What must be my income in order to apply?

The tenant's combined household income must be R15 000 per month or less.

14. Do I need a repayment agreement in place?

Yes

15. How old must a tenant be to apply?

A tenant must be over 18 years of age on the date of lodging an application for residential relief.

16. Can the tenant own a residential property in full ownership, leasehold or deed of grant in order to apply?

No

17. How will preferential treatment work?

It will be given in cases of tenants who are pensioners and or people living with disabilities, or who have pensioners and/or persons living with disability as part of their household in the rented accommodation. Those who got retrenched during the period or had their income cut by over 50% will also be prioritised.

18. How do I access an application form?

Applications must be submitted on the original application form which one can download from the SHRA website, or by sending an email to rentrelief@shra.org.za

19. Where does a landlord send a completed application form to?

The completed application forms must be emailed to rentrelief@shra.org.za

20. Is there a deadline to submit applications?

The application process will be phased out. We will open and close the window for receiving applications monthly. The closing date for submitting applications for this phase will be the 7th of July 2021. Payments for SHIs with approvals will then be within 30 days from submission of the invoice.

21. What if there is a mistake on an application?

Applications with insufficient information will be given an opportunity to correct and re-submitted within 5 working days from notification by the SHRA.

22. What documents have to be provided to SHRA?

- ID documents (tenant, spouse/ life partner, beneficiaries)
- Signed lease agreement
- Proof of tenants income
- Proof that the beneficiary tenant(s)/bread winner(s) have been retrenched.
- Evidence of reduced income, and by how much it is reduced (from employer).
- Latest (at least three months) bank statement(s).
- Evidence of rental arrears (tenant statements).
- Applying institution's rent roll.
- Agreements between the Institution and the tenants on payment of arrears.
- Undertaking that no evictions will be instituted on qualifying tenants for a period equivalent to the number of months covered by the awarded grant or the lapsing of the lease depending on which one is shorter.
- Rent relief/ debt collection policy

23. How will I be paid?

No cash payments will be made to beneficiaries. All funds will only be paid into South African bank account and will be paid out to your landlord to cover the part of the outstanding rent accumulated between April - September 2020.

24. Will a tenant who has previously benefited from other grants be disqualified?

The fact that a lessee may have previously benefitted from other government grants, shall not disqualify him/her from receiving rent relief.

25. Since the Audited Financial Statements for 2021 may not be available at the time of application, can applicants submit Management Accounts instead.

Yes. Management accounts 2021 will be acceptable, however Audited Financial Statements for 2020 are required.

26. Can the SHI apply on behalf of a tenant who was in arrears during the period under review, but no longer resides at the rented space?

The SHI together with the tenant have to both complete the application form, **Part 1A** to be completed by the SHI, and **Part 1B** to be completed by the SHI. The SHI cannot apply for a tenant without their knowledge and involvement.

27. Will SHRA also send communication to the tenants on the outcome of their applications? Whether approved or rejected?

Yes, SHRA will communicate to both the applicant and the tenants on the outcome of their application.

28. Can the tenants submit new payslip/ salary advice in application for rent relief?

The tenant needs to submit a payslip/ salary advice for the period under review (April 2020 – September 2020). This should reflect the income/ or combined income is / was R15,000 and below during the period for which the grant is applied for.

29. Who is the beneficiary of the RRRP? The tenant? And the ODA?

The beneficiaries of the rent relief are both the tenant and the ODA. The Tenants' benefit is the reduction or clearance of rent arrears because when the ODA or SHI receives the funds into their

bank account, they will knock it off against the tenant's balances. The SHI/ ODA on the other hand has to create a balance between providing rental relief support to affected tenants, while also maintaining income flows that permit them to continue to provide property management service.

30. If a tenant was in arrears in the Apr – Sept 2020 period, and arrangements for the arrears were made, and the arrears were since settled, if SHI/ ODA apply for the RRRP and it is granted, who will receive the funds? Is there a split?

Accounts where arrangements were made and settled the arrears do not qualify at face value but a call can only be made after the assessed has been done. Rent relief grant covers amounts owed between April 2020 to September 2020 to qualifying tenants after considering the qualifying criteria in totality.

31. Who do I contact for more queries about the residential relief fund?

Email rentrelief@shra.org.za or call Linda/ Caroline on 011 2746239