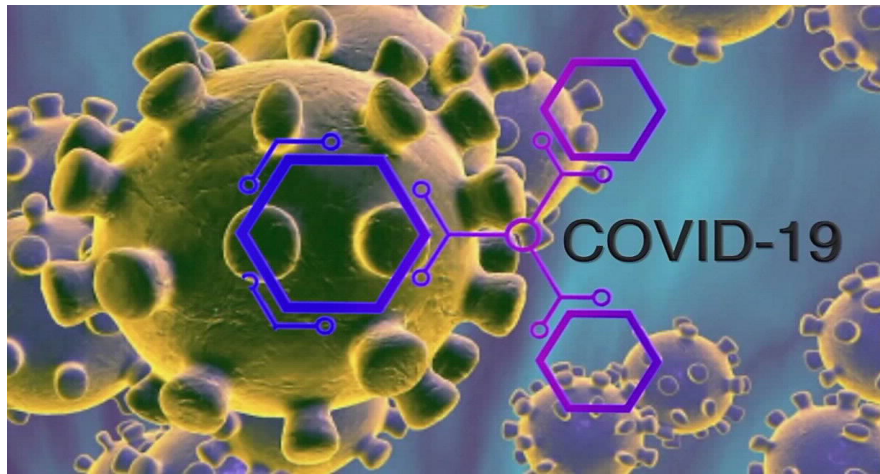


# **RULES AND GUIDANCE**

## **REGULATING THE CITY OF HIALEAH ECONOMIC STIMULUS “LANDLORD-TENANT RELIEF” FUND PROGRAM**



City of Hialeah Staff and Applicant Manual

Effective Date: May 01, 2020

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## I General Program Information

The City of Hialeah, by and through this rental assistance program to be paid directly to the landlord, seeks to create a temporary emergency program to address critical community needs during Coronavirus (COVID-19). The goal is to assist renters that have lost their job due to the pandemic and alleviate the financial burden of rent payments for their home.

This opportunity is presented in the form of a forgivable loan to 1,000 renting households. The amount of funds dedicated to this endeavor is one-million dollars (\$1,000,000.00).

Awarded households will be awarded up to \$1,000.00, disbursed over 3 months or until the maximum award has been reached.

### **Online Application Process**

Applications for this grant opportunity can be submitted online through the online application portal. The application portal will open and be available to receive applications, commencing May 4, 2020, 8:00 AM EST.

#### **You will need an email address in order to enter the portal.**

This email will be used by the Department of Grants and Human Services to communicate with applicants. It is imperative that you check the registered email regularly or risk losing your opportunity. You may access the portal at the following link:

<http://www.hialeahfl.gov/690/Funding-Opportunities>

### **In-Person Application Process**

Paper applications will be distributed in-person at the John F. Kennedy Library:

190 West 49<sup>th</sup> Street, Hialeah, FL 33012

The application pick-up shall commence on May 4, 2020, 8:00 AM EST.

**For the safety of everyone, the in-person application pick-up shall be through a drive-through process where applicants are not to exit their vehicle.**

You must submit the completed paper application to the Department of Grants and Human Services at:

501 Palm Avenue, First Floor, Hialeah, Florida 33010

The final, completed application drop-off location is indicated in the photos that follow. The door to the Department of Grants and Human Services is on the South-West side of the building.



Parking located in the front and side of City Hall is free of charge.

Two (2) City of Hialeah employee volunteers will be posted in front of the doors right outside of the Department of Grants and Human Services. They are tasked with accepting applications and timestamping them with every submission.

- The City of Hialeah will not be able to make copies of your provided application and documents.
- The employees accepting the applications will not be able to answer any of our questions regarding the application, nor assist you in completing the application.
- If no employees are present at the table, then you must drop your completed application along with the required documents in the mailbox indicated in the photo below. We will be accepting applications until we receive the maximum amount of applications.

Applicants with preliminary qualification questions are urged to contact the City of Hialeah's dedicated **COVID Helpline: (305) 883-2940**

This Helpline is monitored between the hours of 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. There is also a voicemail should representatives be on other calls during those times or afterhours. All voicemails are set to be returned by Friday evening for prospective applicants who need their questions answered, so they can be prepared for the portal opening on Monday.

Upon opening the grant portal, it is important to note that it will close upon reaching 2,000 submissions. This number was selected in order to account for incomplete and unqualified applicants and assure that we are able to award all of our earmarked funds for this program as quickly as efficiently as possible.

**Submission of an application does not guarantee award.**

Upon achieving the renter applicant goal:

- The application portal will be closed,
- A message will be posted on the Department of Grants and Human Services webpage,
- A message will appear on the City of Hialeah's main webpage in the spotlight section,
- The hotline will have a voicemail indicating closure.

## II Minimum Pre-Qualification Standards

- The applicant renter may complete the online application available at <http://www.hialeahfl.gov/690/Funding-Opportunities> or in-person per the submission instructions in Section I of these Guidelines
- The applicant must reside in the City of Hialeah
- The applicant must have lost their job due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- The applicant must be a renter (Homeowners are not eligible)
- The applicant must have a current and fully executed Lease Agreement for a term of at least twelve (12) months
- The applicant's total household income must be at or below 60% of the Average Median Income. See the following chart:

FY 2019 HOME Income Limits / FY 2019 Límites de ingresos de HOME								
Miami/Miami Beach/Kendall Area	Number of Persons in Household / Número de personas en el hogar							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
60%	\$35,580	\$40,680	\$45,780	\$50,820	\$54,900	\$58,980	\$63,060	\$67,140

- The applicant must not already be receiving assistance from federal, state, or local governmental entities for this purpose
- The applicant must have suffered job loss as a result of COVID-19

**The Preliminary Qualifications Stage only requires two (2) uploaded items:**

- The applicant must submit a copy of picture ID
- The applicant must submit a copy of their fully executed Lease Agreement

### III Compliance Requirements and COVID-19

The City of Hialeah funds for this program are federal U.S. Housing and Urban Development funds. Compliance with the rules and regulations is required. Items that may be required of preliminarily approved applicants include, but are not limited to:

- Proof of Loss of Job as a result of COVID-19
- List of Members of Household
- Copies of Social Security Card of Each Household Member
- Copy of Personal Income Taxes filed for the past year
- Signed Form of Compliance Certifications
- Conflict of Interest Form

The City reserves the right to request additional documents and audit the records.

### IV Process and Selection

Applications submitted are timestamped upon receipt and will be reviewed using a first submitted, first completed methodology. This assures an objective method that is both free of bias and fair for all applicants. Preliminarily selected applicants will be contacted by the registered email (or submitted email if submitted in-person) with a request for additional compliance documents. Applicants will only have **three (3) calendar days to upload (or submit in-person) additional requested documents**. In-person applicants will need to submit the documents in the mailbox indicated in Section I of these Guidelines.

**Applicants who fail to upload or provide the requested documents within the three (3) day window will be deemed to have forfeited their award, and the next applicant in line will then be preliminarily awarded. This process will continue until all award funds are earmarked for the selected applicants.**

The Grants and Human Services staff will then confirm documents submitted and will contact the applicant within 7-10 working days.

## V Appeals Process

The City reserves the right to alter, cancel, or discontinue this program. In the event that an applicant is denied funding, that determination will be final and there is no appeals process. It is important to note that the financial information required by this program may be subject to public inspection or disclosure as required by federal, state or local law, including the Florida Public Records Act.

## VI Certifications and Assurances

In order to be eligible to participate in this program, the Applicant will be required to certify as to the following:

- The information contained in their application is true, complete, and correct to the best of their knowledge;
- Confirm they have authority to apply for the grant as the head of household;
- Confirm they understand that information contained in their application is subject to public review and is subject to the terms of the Florida Public Records Act;
- Affirm that they understand that if their application is incomplete or missing the required documentation, the application shall be denied;
- In the event of grant approval, Applicant grants permissions to the City of Hialeah to release publicity articles regarding the financing of their participation in this program;
- Confirm they understand the City of Hialeah may check the personal credit history of the key individuals under their application and independently confirm all the information contained within their application.
- Affirm that applicant understands that (1) incomplete (2) incorrect, or (3) false information, will result in suspension of benefits, recapture of funds, fines and/or criminal penalties.

The City of Hialeah must abide by the Code of Federal Regulations and the rules and regulations promulgated by The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The Applicant must also certify as to the following:

- They understand that any and all financial information that they provide in this application will be deemed an income self-certification, as allowed by HUD's temporary waiver of income determination requirements for HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance;
- They understand that, if they qualify and wish to receive assistance, they must enter into a Written Agreement with the City of Hialeah, as required by the HOME Program Requirements and Code of Federal Requirements;
- They understand that HUD has temporarily waived the HOME Program requirement that households assisted with HOME tenant-based rental assistance prior to December 31, 2020 are subject to Housing Quality Standards (HQS) physical inspections.