

North Dakota COVID-19 Emergency Rent Bridge

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1 Who is eligible for the COVID-19 Emergency Rent Bridge?

Any North Dakota renter household who has suffered a substantial loss of income after March 15 and, as a result, does not have financial resources to make their rent payment, may be eligible to receive assistance.

Loss of income may be due to:

- Job loss, layoff or a furlough due to mandated business closure or decrease in demand due to social distancing requirements
- Reduction in compensated hours of work (employed and self-employed)
- Other loss of income

Eligibility is restricted to households with income at or below 60% of the [area median income](#) adjusted for household size and county of residence. Income determination includes earned and unearned income, including unemployment benefits received. (See HUD [income calculator](#) to determine if you might be eligible.)

Q2 If I qualify, how much will the rent assistance be?

Applicants will be responsible for paying 30% of their total monthly income towards their housing costs. The rent bridge will pay the difference between total rent due and the tenant portion of rent, up to the maximum [rent limits](#) for each community.

Households with rent payments that are at or below 30% of their monthly income will not be eligible for assistance.

Q3 How will my household income be calculated?

All income received by household members who are 18 years of age or older will be annualized (e.g., \$1,000 in gross income would be annualized to \$12,000). This includes any earned income (wages) and unearned income (i.e. state unemployment benefits, social security). The calculation of annualized income will be based on household income from the previous month.

Q4 If I currently have no income, can I still apply for assistance if I am unable to contribute 30 percent?

Yes. You can apply for assistance if your income is zero and you are unable to contribute 30%.

Q5 How do I apply for assistance?

Complete the [online application](#). You will need to submit a few pieces of documentation with your application:

- Evidence of sources of income reported
- Evidence of recent job / income loss
- Official identification (driver license or state ID)
- Apartment or lot lease (must be signed by housing provider)

Q6 I do not have a computer on which to apply, can I apply by telephone?
If you are unable to apply online, contact the North Dakota Department of Human Services at 701-328-1907 or dhserb@nd.gov. Some local [Community Action Agencies](#) may also offer assistance in completing your application.

Q7 What if I don't have access to a scanner to submit the required documents?
We would encourage you to utilize one of the free PDF scanner apps available for smart phones. This will allow you to use your mobile phone to scan your document and submit it as required. You can also take a picture of the document with your smart phone and submit the picture.

Q8 How do I know if my application is being processed?
State staff are working diligently to review each application as soon as possible, generally in the order they were submitted. Someone from DHS will contact you by email within 3 business days after they review the information submitted to seek clarifications and request any missing information. *(Please check your Junk email box.)*

It is extremely important for an applicant who receives communication about their application to respond as soon as possible. Staff will generally provide a 72-hour window for applicants to provide information missing from their applications before moving on to another applicant.

While we recognize it is very hard to wait in a matter as urgent as this, calling to find out the status of your application BEFORE you get a call that it is under review may actually delay the process. Please wait for nd.gov staff to contact you directly. HOWEVER, if you do not hear from an individual with an nd.gov email address within 72 hours (3 days) of applying, please call us.

Q9 How do I know if my application was submitted and is in line for review?
You will receive an email message with a link that will allow you to upload needed documents. Once your document upload is complete, you will receive another confirmation email.

Q10 Am I guaranteed assistance once I apply?
Complete applications will be reviewed on a first come, first served basis.

Applicants who receive a notice that their application is incomplete will be given instructions on how to submit missing information. All necessary information to move their application forward. Incomplete applications will be on hold until all information is received.

Applicants who fail to provide all required information or are found ineligible based on the program's requirements will not receive assistance.

Applications that could be considered eligible may not receive assistance if funding is no longer available, based on demand.

Q11 My rent is due by the first of the month. Can assistance be provided to my landlord that fast?

Once an application is determined eligible, rental assistance will be provided directly to the housing provider to whom it is due. The state will be issuing payments weekly for any applications approved during that time period.

Housing providers should generally expect to receive the rent payment from the program sometime during the month it is due. The exact payment date will vary depending on the date the application was received and after a housing provider has completed the vendor registration process.

If the renter household will be required to pay a portion of the rent based on 30% of their gross income (see above), the renter household should make every effort to provide their portion of the rent by the due date or as soon as possible.

Q12 If I am eligible for assistance in one month, will the program automatically pay my next month's rent if I am still unemployed?

No. You will receive an email no later than the 23rd of the month to submit information about any household income changes during the month. This will allow staff to re-validate your eligibility and issue the rent payment to the housing provider in a timely manner.

The Emergency Rent Bridge offers temporary rent assistance during these uncertain times. Funding is subject to change and Rent Bridge assistance will be made available as long as resources exist to help people sustain their housing.

Q13 Do I have to tell my housing provider I am applying for assistance?

Renters are strongly encouraged to communicate their inability to pay any or all of their rent to their housing provider as soon as they know that to be the case.

It is in a renter's best interest to let their property manager know as soon as possible their situation and that they are applying for assistance. Applicants are encouraged to print out their confirmation screen and to share it with their housing provider to verify that an application has been submitted. If unable to print this, renters can also forward their confirmation email to their housing provider.

The housing provider will then need to [register as a vendor](#) with the ND Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Information is online at www.nd.gov/dhs/info/covid-19/rent-bridge.html. This will help ensure that we can issue timely payment to the property manager on the renter's behalf.

Q14 I live in a manufactured home but pay lot rent. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes. Anyone who is renting their place of residence is eligible to apply. This can apply to apartments, a house, or a manufactured/mobile home that requires payment of lot rent.

The Emergency Rent Bridge is not available to homeowners.

NOTE: If you are concerned about paying your rent or facing eviction, you should contact your property manager to let them know if you may need rental assistance or a payment plan for your next monthly rental payment. Early communication with renters and housing providers allows for more time to respond and explore all options.