



**City of Santa Ana CARES for Tenants Program
Frequently Asked Questions
Revised August 11, 2021**

These Frequently Asked Questions provide answers to the most common questions regarding the CARES for Tenants Program.

Q1) Who can apply?

- A. Low-income City of Santa Ana renters who have been impacted by COVID-19. The renter must be a resident of the City of Santa Ana with a current lease or sublease agreement with an address in the City. One or more individuals within the household has: 1) qualified for unemployment benefits or 2) experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced other financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak, to which the applicant shall attest in writing. The family must be able to demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability. The household must qualify as a low-income household according to the income limits below:

Family Size	Maximum Family Income (80% AMI)	Family Size	Maximum Family Income (80% AMI)
1	\$75,300	5	\$116,200
2	\$86,050	6	\$124,800
3	\$96,800	7	\$133,400
4	\$107,550	8	\$142,000

**In reviewing applications for financial assistance, the City has a preference for households with incomes less than 50% of the area median income. (HUD Income Limits effective 4/1/21)*

Q2) When can I apply?

- A. Applications are available online or can be requested directly from The Salvation Army, Catholic Charities of Orange County, Latino Health Access, Families Forward, Families Together of Orange County, South County Outreach, Community Action Partnership of Orange County, and/or Lutheran Social Services of Southern California. If you do not have internet access or need assistance submitting an application please contact the Santa Ana Work Center. Assistance is available by appointment only. Please contact the Work Center at (714) 565-2600 or by email at saworkcenter@santa-ana.org to schedule your appointment. No walk-ins will be permitted and anyone entering the Work Center will be subject to temperature checks and must wear a face covering. An application can also be mailed to you via USPS with return postage paid. There is no deadline to submit



the application. An application can also be mailed to you upon request via USPS with return postage paid.

Q3) What do I need to apply?

- A. You will need to submit several documents with your application. Make sure you have the following documents ready to go before you start filling it out:
1. A valid photo I.D for each adult family member.
 2. Landlord/Property Management's name and contact information including phone number, email, and/or fax number
 3. Complete copies of your lease or sublease agreement. (See Question # 4 below for additional guidance if you do not have a signed lease)
 4. Copy of the declaration to your landlord providing verification of your inability to pay rent. You can also send this declaration to the City if you do not want to send it to your landlord.
 5. Verification of Income Eligibility: paystubs, W-2s or other wage statements, tax filings, bank statements demonstrating regular income, or an attestation from an employer.

Q4) How can I apply?

- A. Please visit www.santa-ana.org/cares-for-tenants to complete an online application. There is no deadline to submit the application. A weekly application sorting procedure will be conducted to select and process applications until all of the funds are exhausted. The application is available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Q5) What if I do not have a signed lease?

- A. If a household does not have a signed lease, documentation of residence may include evidence of paying utilities for the residential unit, an attestation by a landlord who can be identified as the verified owner or management agent of the unit, or other reasonable documentation. In the absence of a signed lease, evidence of the amount of a rental payment may include: 1) a written statement signed by both tenant and landlord indicating the residential unit address, monthly rent amount, who the tenant is and who the landlord is; 2) bank statements, check stubs, or other documentation that reasonably establishes a pattern of paying rent; 3) a written attestation by a landlord who can be verified as the legitimate owner or management agent of the unit; or 4) proof of payments from the tenant & balance owed (provided by the landlord/owner – rent ledger). A hand-written or typed written statement signed by both tenant



and landlord indicating the residential unit address, monthly rent amount, who the tenant is and who the landlord is satisfies both requirements to identify where the applicant resides as well as their rental payment amount. A hand-written or typed written statement is preferred in the absence of a signed lease.

Q6) Do I have to be a U.S. Citizen to qualify for this program?

A. No, while we do require identification for all members of your household, we will not ask about your citizenship status.

Q7) When will I receive assistance?

A. Our application has been open since August 17, 2020 and we have hundreds of families waiting for assistance. Processing time depends on each applicant after the application is selected and assigned to one of our eight nonprofit organization partners. The average length of time for processing is expected to be four weeks from the date the application is assigned to one of the eight nonprofit organizations until payment has been processed and sent to the landlord. If there is unverifiable information or there are multiple applications submitted all at one time, the four-week turnaround time may turn into six to eight weeks. Applicants will be able to view the status of their application by going online and logging into their account at <https://portal.neighborlysoftware.com/santaanaca/participant/Login>.

Q8) How are applications selected?

A. Applications will be selected based on Policies and Procedures for Determining the Prioritization of Households that prioritizes eligible households where the income of the household does not exceed 50 percent of the area median income. Specifically, the City has a preference for households with incomes less than 50% of the area median income. A total of 100 applicants will be selected from the list of applicants based upon this written sorting methodology. This sorting process will take place once a week until all of the funds are expended. Applicants who have been randomly assigned numbers 1 - 100 will be divided into groups of 50 and assigned to either Latino Health Access or Families Forward. If you do not complete all the steps in the application and your Neighborly account does not have a status of “application submitted”, it will not be included in the sorting process. If you have not received funding previously, your application will be assigned to Families Forward or Latino Health Access:



Family Size	Maximum Family Income (50% AMI)	Family Size	Maximum Family Income (50% AMI)
1	\$47,100	5	\$72,650
2	\$53,800	6	\$78,050
3	\$60,550	7	\$83,400
4	\$67,250	8	\$88,800

(HUD Income Limits effective 4/1/21)

Q9) What are examples of COVID-19 impacts to show that I cannot pay my rent due to a reason related to COVID-19?

- A. I am currently unable to pay my rent or other financial obligations under the lease in full because of one or more of the following:
1. Loss of income caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
 2. Increased out-of-pocket expenses directly related to performing essential work during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 3. Increased expenses directly related to health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 4. Childcare responsibilities or responsibilities to care for an elderly, disabled, or sick family member directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic that limit my ability to earn income.
 5. Increased costs for childcare or attending to an elderly, disabled, or sick family member directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 6. Other circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic that have reduced my income or increased my expenses.

Q10) How much financial assistance is available?

- A. A household can receive assistance in the form of a payment to their landlord for rental arrears / past due rent owed since April 1, 2020, up to a maximum of 15 months of rental arrears. Payments shall be made directly to the landlord on behalf of the eligible household, except that, if the landlord does not agree to accept such payment from the City after outreach to the landlord by the City, the City may make such payments directly to the eligible household for the purpose of making payments to the landlord. Families who have already applied or been approved for up to \$5,500 or \$3,000 in emergency rental assistance since May 1, 2020 (previous participants), may be considered for additional assistance up to their total rental arrears / past due rent owed (up to a maximum of 15 months of rental arrears) since April 1, 2020 after re-certifying their eligibility that they are still having difficulty paying rent because of a COVID-19 impact and



submission of the additional verification of income and at risk of homelessness documentation.

Q11) How many people will receive assistance?

A. The number of families receiving assistance will vary based on the amount of rent owed by each household.

Q12) If I receive this assistance will I have to pay it back?

A. No, this assistance is a grant and does not have to be paid back.

Q13) Will the rent payment be paid to me or the landlord?

A. With respect to financial assistance for rent and rental arrears provided to an eligible household, payments shall be made directly to the landlord on behalf of the eligible household, except that, if the landlord does not agree to accept such payment from the City after outreach to the landlord by the City, the City may make such payments directly to the eligible household for the purpose of making payments to the landlord.

Q14) My rent is less than \$3,000 per month. How will that affect my award amount?

A. Financial assistance for prospective rent payments is limited to three months based on any application by or on behalf of the household. As of June 1, 2021, the City will pay only the rental arrears owed by the tenant since April 1, 2020, up to a maximum of 15 months.

Q15) Is the application available in languages besides English?

A. Yes, the application is available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Q16) I already submitted my application. What do I do now?

A. Gather the documentation listed under Question # 3 and review it to make sure it is correct and complete.

Q17) I DO NOT have internet access; how do I apply for rental assistance?

A. If you do not have internet access or need assistance submitting an application please contact the Santa Ana Work Center. Assistance is available by appointment only. Please contact the Work Center at (714) 565-2600 or by email at saworkcenter@santa-ana.org to schedule your appointment. No walk-ins will be permitted and anyone entering the Work Center will be subject to temperature checks and must wear a face covering. Family members, friends, or a case



manager from The Salvation Army, Catholic Charities of Orange County, Latino Health Access, Families Forward, Families Together of Orange County, South County Outreach, Community Action Partnership of Orange County, and/or Lutheran Social Services of Southern California can also assist you with completing the application by computer. If you do have someone to assist you, please ensure you have the required documents for the application. The documents will need to be uploaded to complete the application. If you do not have access to the internet, please call one of these eight nonprofit organizations to request an application:

- Catholic Charities of Orange County can provide assistance in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. Please contact Alba Ramiro at (714) 347-9623 or cares@ccoc.org.
- The Salvation Army can provide assistance in English and Spanish. Please contact Stephen Langlois at (714) 384-0481 or sna.cares@usw.salvationarmy.org.
- Latino Health Access can provide assistance in English and Spanish. Please contact Hilda Ortiz at (657) 229-5450 or LHARent@latinohealthaccess.org.
- Families Forward can provide assistance in English and Spanish. Please contact Andrea Burgos at (949) 552-2727 or santaana@families-forward.org.
- Families Together of Orange County can provide assistance in English, Spanish, Farsi and Mandarin. Please contact Nancy Cerda at (714) 665-9890 Ext: 413 or era@familiestogetheroc.org.
- South County Outreach can provide assistance in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. Please call (949) 380-8144 or ERA@sco-oc.org
- Community Action Partnership of Orange County can provide assistance in English and Spanish. Please contact Maria Rosas at (714) 404-7041 or mrosas@capoc.org
- Lutheran Social Services of Southern California can provide assistance in English and Spanish. Please contact Jim Pijloo, LCSW, at (714) 534-6450 or OCinfo@lsssc.org.

Q18) I already submitted an application. How can I check the status of my application?

- A. You can check the status of your application on-line by logging into the Neighborly application system that you used to submit your original application. You should have a username and password that you used to complete your application. Please write these down as well as the application number that is



assigned to you once you start an application.

Q19) I already submitted an application for rental assistance or I already received a payment for rental assistance (up to \$5,500). Will I automatically be considered for payment of the rent I still owe (since April 1, 2020)?

A. No. You will need to contact organization that previously provided you with assistance to recertify for additional assistance. Alternatively, they will reach out to you to invite you to recertify for additional assistance if you qualify.

Q20) My landlord submitted an application for the State of California Emergency Rental Assistance Program. Am I still eligible?

A. The State of California is also administering an Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program in the City of Santa Ana. If your landlord's application for the State's ERA Program was submitted with your required approval, and your rental unit was included in that application, you are not eligible for the Coronavirus Rental Relief Fund for Tenants Program. Please notify the City of Santa Ana by calling Maricela Marquez at (714) 667-6962 or by e-mail at mmarquez@santa-ana.org to remove your application.

Q21) Why are you asking about my race and ethnicity?

A. We ask about your race and ethnicity on the application as part of the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) and Department of Treasury data collection purposes. It may even help Santa Ana get more federal and/or state funds to help our residents. Your race or ethnicity does not impact your eligibility for rental assistance.

Q22) Should I tell my landlord that I am applying for this program?

A. Yes. Communication between renters and landlords is important. Most landlords do not want to lose good tenants and communication can go a long way to help maintain a good relationship.

Q23) What if my landlord refuses to participate in the program?

A. If the landlord does not agree to accept such payment from the United Way of Orange County after outreach to the landlord, the United Way of Orange County may make such payments directly to the eligible household for the purpose of making payments to the landlord. Specifically, the United Way of Orange County will make reasonable efforts to obtain the cooperation of landlords to accept payments. Outreach will be considered complete by the United Way of Orange



County if (i) a request for participation is sent in writing, by mail, to the landlord, and the landlord does not respond to the request within 7 calendar days after mailing; (ii) the United Way of Orange County has made at least three attempts by phone, text, or e-mail over a 5 calendar-day period to request the landlord's participation; or (iii) a landlord confirms in writing that the landlord does not wish to participate. The final outreach attempt or notice to the landlord must be documented.

Q24) How will I be notified if I am approved to receive rental assistance?

- A. You will receive an email notification that your application has been selected and you will receive a second notification when the rental assistance payment is paid directly to your landlord.

Q25) I have multiple adults living in my household. Who should submit the application?

- A. Any adult that is listed on the lease or sublease can submit the application for rental assistance on behalf of the household. Your household should only submit one application. Duplicate applications will be removed.

Q26) I had to leave my job/reduce my hours because I could not find childcare. Am I eligible?

- A. Yes. If your childcare provider or school closed due to coronavirus and you had to leave your job or reduce hours to care for them, you are eligible for this program.

Q27) If I have questions, who do I contact at the City?

- A. The City of Santa has partnered with eight local nonprofit organizations to review applications and make payments directly to landlords. Please contact one of the eight organizations listed below if you have any questions. It is most helpful if you have your application number available when you call:

**Catholic Charities of Orange County
(Languages Spoken: English, Spanish, Vietnamese)**

Alba Ramiro
1820 E. 16th Street
Santa Ana, CA 92701
(714) 347-9623
cares@ccoc.org



The Salvation Army
(Languages Spoken: English, Spanish)

Stephen Langlois
Hospitality House, 818 E. 3rd St.
Santa Ana, CA 92701
(714) 384-0481

sna.cares@usw.salvationarmy.org

Latino Health Access
(Languages Spoken: English, Spanish)

Hilda Ortiz
450 W. 4th Street
Santa Ana, CA 92701
(657)229-5450

LHARent@latinohealthaccess.org

Families Forward
(Languages Spoken: English, Spanish)

Andrea Burgos
8 Thomas
Irvine, CA 92618
(949) 552-2727

santaana@families-forward.org

Families Together of Orange County
(Languages Spoken: English, Spanish, Farsi & Mandarin)

Nancy Cerda
621 W. 1st Street
Tustin, CA 92780
(714) 665-9890 Ext: 413

era@famieliestogetheroc.org

South County Outreach
(Languages Spoken: English, Spanish, Vietnamese)

SCO Main Office
7 Whatney, Suite B
Irvine, CA 92618
(949) 380-8144

ERA@sco-oc.org



**Community Action Partnership of Orange County
(Languages Spoken: English, Spanish)**

Maria Rosas
1601 W 2nd St.
Santa Ana, CA 92703
(714) 404-7041
mrosas@capoc.org

**Lutheran Social Services of Southern California
(Languages Spoken: English, Spanish)**

Jim Pijloo, LCSW
12432 Ninth Street
Garden Grove, CA 92840
(714) 534-6450
OCinfo@lsssc.org

If you have any additional questions or you are unable to reach one of the eight nonprofit organizations listed above, please contact:

Maricela Marquez
City of Santa Ana
(714) 647-6962
mmarquez@santa-ana.org