

Last Updated: October 13, 2021

SHERA Overview

Subsidized Housing Emergency Rental Assistance (SHERA)



SHERA Overview

- The Subsidized Housing Emergency Rental Assistance (SHERA) program is a federally funded emergency housing assistance program for **renters impacted by COVID-19**.
- SHERA provides qualified private owners of affordable rental housing and Housing Authorities with an **expedited path to apply for federal Emergency Rental Assistance on behalf of income-eligible tenants**.
- SHERA can provide assistance to cover up to 18 months of tenant-paid rent due during the eligible SHERA period starting on April 1, 2020.

KEY POLICY GUIDELINES (1/2)

1. HOUSEHOLD ELIGIBILITY



- The household has a household income at or below 80% [Area Median Income \(AMI\)](#).
- The household has experienced a financial hardship due to COVID-19.
- The household has unpaid rent that was due during the eligible SHERA period starting on April 1, 2020.

2. OWNER ELIGIBILITY



- Owner has an existing borrower relationship with MassHousing or Massachusetts Housing Partnership, OR
- Owner is a Public/Local Housing Authority, OR
- Sponsor has at least one property in their portfolio, subject to use restrictions due to participation in a state or federal program, that has 20 or more units.

3. PROPERTY ELIGIBILITY



Eligible properties are income-restricted affordable rental housing properties, owned by eligible owners that:

- a) received state or federal subsidies for construction and/or rehab of income-restricted housing, and subject to a use restriction;

- OR -

- b) currently receive project-based rental assistance under contracts administered by the Commonwealth or other state public or quasi-public agencies.

Eligible properties include state and federal public housing, Chapter 40B and Chapter 40R properties, and LIHTC and other privately-owned affordable housing properties.

SHERA Overview (Cont.)

KEY POLICY GUIDELINES (2/2)

4. STEPS FOR TENANTS



Tenants must submit the SHERA Tenant Certification of Rental Assistance Eligibility form to:

1. Certify that tenant household financial hardship was directly or indirectly caused by COVID-19.
2. Notify the property owner if other rental assistance is received for the same rent paid by SHERA and make best efforts to return any over-payment.
3. Give property owner permission to apply for back rent on tenant household behalf.
4. Provide the property owner with the last four digits of the head of household's SSN. You do not have to have an SSN to be eligible for assistance.

5. OWNER REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS



- In good standing.
- Subject to regular financial audit.
- Evident management capacity
- Signed Owner Agreement which includes an eviction diversion pledge and additional program requirements.

6. APPLICATION PROCESS



- Owners obtain the documentation required for household eligibility.
- Owners submit applications through a secure, online portal. Owners can submit multiple [tenant] applications in a single upload.
- Owners retain documentation, such as rent roll data evidencing rent arrearage, the tenant certification, and income documentation.
- Applications will be reviewed, and, if approved, DHCD will provide payment directly to the property owner for payment to the tenant's account within 30 days of receipt.
- Owners notify tenants of application submission and approval/payment. Application denial will be provided by DHCD.

7. PRIORITIZATION



- Funding will be prioritized for those who have been unemployed for 90 days or more and for those with a household AMI of 50% or lower at the time of application.