

Media Contact: Chris Winston
Agency Spokesman
christopher.winston@SCHousing.com
803.896.9520

Applying for emergency rental assistance from SC Housing now easier

COLUMBIA, S.C. (Aug. 17, 2021) – In an effort to help thousands of South Carolina residents late on their rent payments avoid evictions, SC Housing updated its SC Stay Plus emergency rental and utility assistance program to make applications and approvals easier.

Launched in May, the SC Stay Plus program is a \$272 million federally funded program designed to help renters in 39 South Carolina counties stay safely in their homes during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing payments directly to landlords and utility companies. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently extended a federal moratorium on evictions until Oct. 3 for counties still battling COVID-19 spread – which includes every county in the state. Renters who live in seven counties – Anderson, Berkeley, Charleston, Greenville, Horry, Richland and Spartanburg – have their own programs to assist residents.

SC Housing recently made several changes to the program to help applicants complete their applications and get the help and support they need. The additional measures already have helped SC Housing distribute millions of dollars in assistance. As of Aug. 12, SC Housing has approved 2,205 of the completed 2,931 applications for a total of \$10.4 million in rental and utility assistance.

“We believe the updates we’ve made to our documentation requirements, call center support and in-person support will allow us to speed our application and review process and get more payments out the door to landlords and utility companies on behalf of tenants,” said Bonita Shropshire, executive director of SC Housing. “But we are not done. We will continue to look for additional ways to support our family, friends and neighbors to help them stay safely in their homes during this difficult time. And we hope this good news encourages anyone in South Carolina who needs assistance to apply for the SC Stay Plus program.”

Here are the updates that SC Housing leaders hope will help thousands of other residents complete their applications:

- **Relaxed documentation:** Documentation requirements have now been relaxed so that applicants can now “self-attest” to certain information instead of providing detailed documentation. This includes

documentation on housing instability, financial impact of the pandemic and, if you live in one of 196 distressed South Carolina ZIP codes, documentation on income.

- Additional call center support: SC Housing recently added staff to the SC Stay Plus call center, which will reduce wait times for applicants who need support over the telephone. The additional staff members also allow the call center (available at 800-476-0412) to remain open later – now from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern.
- Improved accessibility: The program continues to make efforts to improve accessibility. If residents require support with submitting an application, they can go to a partner resource center to get in-person assistance. Applicants will have access to technology and resources they need to submit a complete application with the required pieces of documentation. As of Monday, in-person support is available in Beaufort, Pickens and Lancaster counties, with more to be added soon. Here is where applicants can find that support:
 - **Beaufort Branch Library (311 Scott St., Beaufort)**
Monday through Thursday: 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Friday: 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Saturday: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
 - **Hampton Memorial Library (304 Biltmore Road, Easley)**
Monday through Thursday: 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Friday: 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Saturday: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
 - **Lancaster County Library (313 S. White St., Lancaster)**
Monday through Thursday: 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Friday: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Saturday: 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

About SC Housing

SC Housing is a self-sustaining housing finance agency committed to ensuring that South Carolinians have the opportunity to live in safe, decent and affordable housing. Agency operations are supported by a funding base that includes fees and other revenue earned through the administration of agency programs. For more information, visit SCHousing.com.