

**Maui Economic Opportunity Inc.**  
**Housing Assistance**  
**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

**Program Eligibility**

Q: What types of rental properties are eligible for assistance?

A: Properties with proof of valid and current tenancy are eligible.

Q: Do I qualify if I currently reside in government-funded housing?

A: Households that receive federal or state rent subsidies (where a percentage of the rent is paid by the household and the balance is subsidized by government) may only be assisted with move-in costs (Security and Utility Deposit).

Q: How do I establish my household's eligibility for this program?

A: Eligibility includes being a full-time Maui County resident occupying a primary residence with a current and valid tenancy in the County of Maui, being 18 years of age or older, providing tax returns; and having a total household income that does not exceed 80% of the federal Housing and Urban Development Area Median Income limits for 2020.

\*For the CDBG program, applicants need to demonstrate a loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q: What income is included when determining my household income?

A: All income from all household members is included.

Q: If I received unemployment benefits, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, or Pandemic Unemployment Compensation, do they count toward my income for this program?

A: Yes. However, SNAP (food stamps) is not counted as income.

Q: Do I need to claim eligible immigration status to apply for this program?

A: No.

Q: My household is a mixed-immigration status household. I do not claim eligible immigration status, but my child does. Can we still apply?

A: Yes.

Q: Can I apply if I live with roommates?

A: A household is considered everyone that is sharing a lease. If you are living with roommates and are sharing a lease, you and your roommates may apply for assistance as a household. The household would then be the total of all members listed on the lease, meaning that the income for the entire household would be calculated.

Q: What if I'm ineligible but am at risk of losing my tenancy for other reasons?

A: Please call us at (808) 249-2970 to determine if MEO has any additional resources.

## **Program Details**

Q: If I'm eligible, what assistance will I receive?

A: Assistance amounts depend on programs and funds available (case-by-case basis).

Q: Is there a maximum amount of assistance I can receive?

A: Assistance amounts depend on what the applicant can qualify for and available funds.

Q: How will I receive the assistance?

A: Applicants will not receive payments. The assistance will be paid directly to your landlord, who will receive a check, or mortgage lenders.

Q: How soon can I expect to receive assistance?

A: Once a complete interview is conducted with a housing specialist and you have been approved, please allow 5 to 7 business days for a check to be issued.

Q: Do I need to continue to pay my rent?

A: You will be responsible for any portion of your rent that is not covered by MEO. Your housing specialist will inform you of what your assistance is.

Q: Will the rent relief be counted as income on my landlord's income tax?

A: Yes.

Q: Does my landlord need to know I am requesting assistance?

A: Yes, your landlord needs to provide a couple of forms.

Q: Will I need to report any funds received from this program as income?

A: No.

Q: Can a landlord apply on behalf of their tenant(s)?

A: No.

Q: Am I required to pay back the assistance?

A: No.

Q: When I move out and MEO paid for my Security Deposit, does the landlord give it back?

A: By law, the security deposit will be returned to MEO. If there are any damages to the property, the landlord may keep it as long as receipts are submitted.

\*Keep in mind that if MEO does not receive your deposit back you will not be considered for assistance again.

## **Application Process**

Q: What documents do I need to provide in order to apply?

A: The required documents are listed on the application page.

Q: In what languages is the application available?

A: Interpretation services will be provided for households needing assistance upon request.

Q: When is the deadline?

A: The application will be available until the funds have been exhausted.

Q: How are you prioritizing applicants?

A: Applications will be reviewed and approved on a first-come, first-served basis.

Q: Will I be notified if I am deemed ineligible for assistance?

A: Yes, you will be notified if you are ineligible and the reason will be provided.

Q: What file types can we upload?

A: PDF or JPEG files can be submitted. If a document is unclear, the agency will contact you to resubmit the information.

Q: What can I do to accelerate my application?

A: Please make sure to upload the proper documents, constantly check your email and have your voicemail cleared for easy identification when contacted.

### **Distribution of Funds**

Q: I have been approved to receive assistance. How will I know whether my landlord has received the payment on my behalf?

A: Both you and your landlord should have been informed of when the payment will be sent out. This information is reviewed at your interview with a housing specialist once you are approved.

Q: I was notified that the assistance was paid to my landlord. My landlord now claims that they never received assistance and is seeking to have me evicted. What should I do?

A: Please contact Maui Economic Opportunity to verify that the check was directed to the correct address or account.