

# United Lift 2022 Rental Assistance Fund

For landlords / property managers with tenants applying for rental assistance

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the United Lift Rental Assistance Program?

The United Lift Rental Assistance Program is a coordinated effort between Riverside County, Inland SoCal United Way and Lift To Rise to keep Riverside County families and residents financially impacted by COVID-19 housed by providing direct rental and utility assistance.

### Where does United Lift operate?

United Lift is administered by two non-profit organizations, Inland SoCal United Way and Lift To Rise, on behalf of Riverside County:

- **Inland SoCal United Way** will review applications from tenants who reside in **west Riverside County**, including the Hemet-San Jacinto region, northwest county region (Riverside, Moreno Valley, Perris, Eastvale, Norco, Corona), and southwest county region (Menifee, Lake Elsinore, Murrieta, Temecula, & Wildomar).
- **Lift To Rise** will review applications from tenants who reside in **east Riverside County**, which includes all Coachella Valley cities and unincorporated communities, Calimesa, Banning, Beaumont, and Blythe.

Landlord questions regarding the program and applications by their tenants should be directed to the appropriate organization:

Inland SoCal United Way	Lift to Rise
951-697-4700	760-249-2535
rentalassistance@iscuw.org	team@unitedlift.org

### How long will this program last?

The program will continue until funds are depleted.



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### How does the program work?

Both tenants and landlords can access the program's application portal at [www.unitedlift.org](http://www.unitedlift.org). Tenants or landlords may submit an application for funding, though every application requires tenant participation.

### How much rental assistance is provided on behalf of approved applicants?

This program provides up to 12 months of rent in arrears (i.e. unpaid rent) incurred after April 1, 2020. An additional 3 months worth of future rent may also be available.

### For tenant-initiated applications:

1. Tenant applies through the tenant section of the application portal at [www.unitedlift.org](http://www.unitedlift.org).
2. After the tenant submits the Tenant Application Form, the program coordinators review the application, which includes reaching out to the landlord to obtain an IRS Form W-9 and Landlord Certification Form.
3. United Lift will confer with the County to confirm property ownership.
4. After application review, the program coordinators either approve or deny the applicant for rental assistance based on the program's eligibility requirements.
5. If the application is approved, United Lift sends the rental assistance payment directly to the tenant applicant's landlord.

### For landlord-initiated applications:

1. Landlord applies through the landlord section of the application portal at [www.unitedlift.org](http://www.unitedlift.org). (NOTE - If you are the landlord for more than one rental household, you will need to submit an application form for EACH rental household).
2. United Lift will confer with the County to confirm property ownership.
3. On the Landlord Application Form, the landlord will provide contact information for themselves and their tenant(s) and will fill out an IRS Form W-9 and a Landlord Certification Form.
4. Once the landlord has completed the Landlord Application Form, their tenant will be notified by **text** and by email and will receive specific instructions on how to complete the tenant portion of the application.
5. If the tenant consents to participate in the program by completing the tenant portion of the application, their application will be reviewed by the program coordinators and either approved or denied for rental assistance based on the program's eligibility requirements.
6. If the application is approved, United Lift sends the rental assistance payment directly to the landlord.



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### How can I help my tenant(s) with this program?

If your tenant owes you unpaid rent from after April 1, 2020, you are encouraged to initiate an application on their behalf at [www.unitedlift.org](http://www.unitedlift.org). You can also notify your tenant(s) about the availability of rental assistance through this program so that they can apply on their own. In the case where they apply on their own, you are encouraged to provide your W-9 and work with program coordinators as quickly as possible to ensure an expedient application review and payment processing. If you are interested in hosting an in-person application event at your property or wish to train yourself or your staff to assist your tenant with their application, please fill out United Lift's Landlord Interest Form.

### Who is eligible to receive rental assistance?

Federal guidelines require that households must meet **ALL** of the following eligibility criteria in order to be eligible for assistance:

- Renter households - rental assistance is reserved for renter households; homeowners or mortgage-paying households are not eligible for assistance. County guidelines also require that households applying for assistance live within the County of Riverside. United Lift will confirm residency through various means.
- COVID-19 related financial impact - rental assistance is reserved for households who cannot pay for rent and/or utilities because they have been financially impacted directly or indirectly by the COVID-19 pandemic. This program does not cover unpaid rent from prior to April 1, 2020, nor does it cover unpaid rent after April 1, 2020 if there is no COVID-19 impact to explain the unpaid rent.
- Earning at or below 80% of area median income (AMI) - rental assistance is reserved for households that earned at or below 80% of AMI in 2021. This program does not cover unpaid or future rent for households that earn more than 80% of AMI. United Lift will confirm income eligibility through various means.
- One or more individuals within the household can demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

### Who is prioritized for assistance?

The federal guidelines informing the United Lift program require that assistance be prioritized for:

- Households with incomes less than 50% of area median income
- Households with one or more adults that have not been employed during the 90 days prior to submitting their applications
- Households with unpaid rent are prioritized in review. Applications requesting only future assistance are not prioritized in review.

Additionally, United Lift is prioritizing applicants who have not previously received funding from United Lift. Households who are eligible but are not in these prioritization categories are still encouraged to apply.

### What does the program need from me as the landlord?

In order to make a payment to a landlord on behalf of a tenant who has been approved, United Lift must first obtain:

1. A signed and completed IRS Form W-9, which allows for payment processing. **The form must be completed accurately otherwise payment after approval will be delayed.**
2. Certification from the landlord agreeing to participate in the United Lift Rental Assistance Program and confirmation of the details of the rental agreement with the tenant applicant and the amount of unpaid rent (if any) that the tenant applicant has accrued since April 1, 2020. If a tenant initiates the application process, United Lift will reach out to the landlord to obtain these items using the landlord's email and phone number that the tenant applicant provides in the application form. If the landlord initiates the application process, they will fill out the W-9 and complete their portion of the application first in the Landlord Application Form online.



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### How does payment work?

Once an applicant is approved for rental assistance – which means property ownership and tenant’s eligibility documents have been verified and the landlord has provided the W-9 and Landlord Certification Form – United Lift will pay to the landlord by:

- Direct deposit via ACH transfer; or
- Physical check mailed to the address provided on the submitted Form W-9

Both the tenant and the landlord will be notified that the payment has been processed.

### If my tenant meets all the eligibility requirements, does this guarantee that I will receive a rental assistance payment?

No. If your tenant meets all the general eligibility requirements, this guarantees that their application will be considered for funding.

### If I initiate an application on behalf of my tenant(s) through the landlord section of the application portal, does this guarantee that I will receive a rental assistance payment?

No. Even if you initiate an application on behalf of your tenant(s), federal guidelines require that your tenant(s) participate in the program. Without participation from the tenant, United Lift cannot issue a rental assistance payment to the landlord. United Lift encourages landlords to notify their tenant(s) before initiating an application on their behalf and to confirm the best phone number and email address to use for them on the Landlord Application Intake Form.

**Because program eligibility is based on the tenant’s income and COVID-19 financial impact, the tenant will need to provide eligibility documentation through the tenant portion of the application.**

### Can my tenant apply more than once?

If your tenant applied after March 8, 2021 and RECEIVED 15 months of assistance, they cannot reapply.



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### How long does this process take after my tenant submits their application?

Applications will be processed on a rolling basis and waiting times currently vary.

We are currently reviewing hundreds of applications and are moving as quickly as possible to ensure that all applications are processed in a timely manner.

### Can my tenant apply if they have already received funding from City of Riverside/Housing Authority?

Applications within the City of Riverside limits will be delayed up to two additional weeks to begin processing due to a need to verify potential duplication with other rental assistance programs.

### Can my tenants receive assistance if there is an undocumented member in their household? Can my tenants receive assistance if they are undocumented?

Assistance is being given without regard to immigration status.

#### MORE INFORMATION

##### FAIR MARKET RENT POLICY

Please note that the Treasury Department Guidelines do limit the payment of rent to 100% of the FMR in certain situations.

##### NON-RELATED PARTIES POLICY

Funding under the Riverside County Rental Relief program cannot be used to pay rent on behalf of a tenant to a member of the tenant's immediate family including: spouse, parents, grandparents, children (adopted, half and step children), grandchildren, siblings, and in-laws (mother, father, brother, sister, daughter and son).



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