

United Lift 2022 Rental Assistance Program

FAQ FOR RENTERS SEEKING RENT AND/OR UTILITY ASSISTANCE

Application Process

1. COMPLETE AN APPLICATION

Visit www.UnitedLift.org to complete an application form and upload your eligibility documentation online.

2. SUBMIT ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION

Applicants must submit all required eligibility documentation. The online application will prompt applicants to upload their eligibility documentation directly into the application form. An application is not complete, and will not be reviewed, until all eligibility documentation is provided. Staff may require additional documentation upon review. *For a list of required and acceptable documents, see page 3 of the FAQ.*

3. COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR LANDLORD (Recommended)

If possible, please give your landlord or property management company notice in order to expedite application processing.

4. APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

An application will only be reviewed once all eligibility documentation is submitted. You can check the status of your application at www.unitedlift.org under the "Check My Application Status" function.

If you are a resident in East Riverside County including all Coachella Valley cities, unincorporated communities, Calimesa, Banning, Beaumont, and Blythe, the Lift To Rise team will be review your application. If you are a resident 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), Inland SoCal United Way will be review your application.

5. PAYMENT

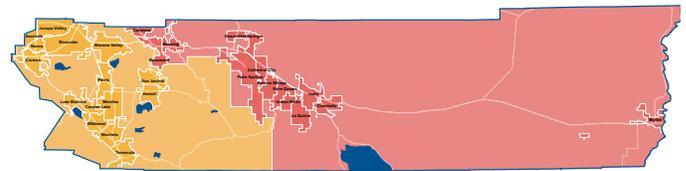
If the landlord agrees to participate in this program, payment will be made directly to the landlord once your application is completed and a W-9 has been submitted. Both you and your landlord will receive a confirmation of payment.

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.

County of Riverside



■ Areas Covered by Lift To Rise
■ Areas Covered by Inland SoCal United Way

How long will this program last?

The program will continue until funds are depleted.

How do I receive rental assistance?

To be considered for rental assistance, you must complete an application. An application **is not complete, and will not be reviewed, until all eligibility documentation is provided.**

How much am I eligible to receive?

This program provides eligible Riverside County households with assistance for up to 18 months of future of past-due rent and utilities.

Where can I apply and complete an application?

Interested residents can visit www.UnitedLift.org to apply.

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 household - rental assistance is reserved for renter households; homeowners or mortgage-paying households are not eligible for assistance. A lease agreement or other acceptable document proving renter status is required. 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 - One or more individuals within the household received for unemployment benefits or experienced a reduction in household income, incurred



LIFT TO RISE



Inland SoCal United Way

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significant costs, or experienced other financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the pandemic.

- Earning at or below 80% of area median income (AMI) - rental assistance is reserved for households that earn at or below 80% of AMI. Priority will be given to households earning at or below 50% of AMI. To see if your household's income-level is at or below 80% AMI, use the table below. Proof of ALL sources of income from ALL members of your household for 2021 (or 2022 if using 2022 income) is required. 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

What does it mean to earn at or below 80% of area median income?

Area median income (AMI) is mid-point of what households earn in a given region – half of households earn above the area median income and half of households earn below the area median income. Each year, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines and calculates different levels of AMI for geographic areas across the country by household size. Families that earn at or below 80% of AMI can be eligible for rental assistance.

Use the table below to see if your household's income is at or below the 80% AMI threshold. Find the number of persons in your household in the left column and compare your household's annual income with the number in the right column. If you made LESS than the number listed, you are eligible; if you made MORE than that number, you are not eligible:

Persons in Household	2022 Income Limits
1	\$49,300
2	\$56,350
3	\$63,400
4	\$70,400
5	\$76,050
6	\$81,700
7	\$87,300
8	\$92,950

Who is prioritized for assistance?

- 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 application
- 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 the United Lift Program. Households who are eligible but are not in these prioritization categories are still encouraged to apply.

What eligibility documentation do I need to provide?

- A valid form of identification
- A copy of the lease agreement
- A documented COVID-19 related financial impact
- Proof of 2021 or 2022 household income
- Utility bill(s) with past due amount(s), if applying for utilities assistance.

What is a lease agreement?

A formal written agreement between a landlord and tenant.

What form of identification is acceptable?

Any valid government issued identification, including a driver's license, passport, permanent resident card, etc.

What is a COVID-19 related financial impact?

If your household has experienced a loss or reduction in income or an increase in household expenses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, you may be able to demonstrate a COVID-19 financial related impact. This includes:

- One or more people who live in the household has qualified for unemployment benefits or experienced a loss or reduction in income.
- An inability to find employment during pandemic (unemployed before March 15)
- Significant increase in dependent costs resulting from COVID-19
- Significant medical costs resulting from COVID-19
- COVID-19 self-quarantine costs (ex. hotel stays)
- Experienced other financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the pandemic

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Can I apply if I 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.

How do I document a COVID-19 related financial impact?

Documentation **must** prove a COVID-19 related financial impact under the definition above. Documentation can include:

- Documentation showing that one or more people who live in your household has received unemployment benefits
- A letter from an employer or other source of income citing COVID-19 as a reason for reduced work hours, termination, or other substantial reduction in pay.
- Employer payroll checks or payroll stubs showing a reduction in pay following the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Bank statements showing a reduction of income following the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Documentation showing payment of substantial out-of-pocket medical expenses caused by COVID-19.
- Documentation showing the closure of a school or childcare facility where a child in the tenant's care would otherwise be present during the tenant's normally working hours which, as a result, has caused the tenant to work reduced hours. **You must still demonstrate the financial impact of a school closure and/or childcare facility closure. A generic letter from a school district is not sufficient.**
- Any other objectively verifiable documentation to demonstrate a substantial hardship or inability to make timely rent payments caused by COVID-19.
- If the applicant is unable to provide any of the above documentation, they may self-attest to being impacted by COVID-19, under penalty of perjury.

How do I submit all eligibility documentation?

Preferred Method

Please upload your documentation at the point of applying. The application form will guide you in uploading all required documents. An application is not complete, and will not be reviewed, until all eligibility documentation is provided. Staff may require additional documentation upon review and verification of eligibility.

Alternative Methods

Visit unitedlift.org/applyinperson to find out how to apply in person or connect with our team to submit documentation.

If you are unable to complete an application online and require additional support, please contact Inland SoCal United Way (western Riverside County applications) or Lift To Rise (eastern Riverside County) for alternative options.

Inland SoCal United Way	Lift to Rise
211 ext. 5	760-249-2535
rentalassistance@iscuw.org	team@unitedlift.org

How do I provide documentation of my 2021 household income?

Applicants will be requested to provide a 1040 Form that shows their household's adjusted gross income for 2021. If it is not possible to provide documentation of adjusted gross income for 2021, households can provide proof of monthly income for at least the two months prior to applying.

The below table describes acceptable forms of income documentation based on the type of income:

Income Source	Acceptable forms of documentation (Monthly)	Acceptable forms of documentation (Annually)
Employment/ Wages	-60 consecutive days of the most recent pay stubs -If working multiple jobs the same applies as above for all jobs -3 months of the most recent bank statements if pay stubs are not available	-1040 Tax Returns -1099-NEC -1099-MISC -W-2 -1040 Schedule C (self-employed)
Unemployment	-Claims Summary or full payment history	-Form 1099G
Public Assistance	The most recent award letter stating how often and how much you receive	
Social Security/ Pension	The most recent award letter stating how often and how much you receive	-Form SSA-1099 -1042S Benefit Statement
Other	-Valid documentation showing how often and how much you receive from this source of income	-Valid documentation showing how often and how much you receive from this source of income

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How do I check on the status of my application?

You may check your application status via the Application Portal at www.UnitedLift.org. Applicants will be able to access their application using the email address provided on their application.

If I meet all the eligibility requirements does this guarantee that I will receive rental assistance?

No. If you meet all the general eligibility requirements, this guarantees that your application will be considered for funding. However, funding is contingent on the availability of funds.

Does the landlord receive one payment or monthly payments?

The landlord will receive one payment credited to your account.

Can I apply more than once?

If you applied after April 1, 2020 and RECEIVED 18 months of assistance, you cannot reapply.

Can my landlord apply on my behalf?

Your landlord can initiate an application on your behalf using the Landlord Application Form in the Application Portal on www.unitedlift.org. If this happens, United Lift will reach out to you via text and email with specific instructions on how to complete the tenant portion of the application. By following those instructions and completing the tenant portion of the application, you consent to participating in the program.

You are not obligated to participate in the program if your landlord initiates an application on your behalf. However, if you are behind on your rent due to COVID-19, you are encouraged to participate.

How long does this process take after submitting my application?

Applications will be processed on a rolling basis and wait 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.

UTILITY ASSISTANCE RELATED QUESTIONS

Does United Lift also offer utility assistance?

Yes. In addition to rental assistance, eligible households can receive assistance with past due utility bills. United Lift is funding eligible applicants for the following types of utilities: Gas, Electricity, Water/Sewer, and Trash/Recycling. At this time, United Lift is unable to fund internet or cable bills.

Am I eligible for utility assistance?

If you are eligible for rental assistance and you have unpaid utilities from after April 1, 2020, you are eligible for utility assistance.

How do I apply for utility assistance?

Visit UnitedLift.org and click on "Application Portal." Once you select your city/community from the dropdown menu, you will be redirected to the application site. The first question will ask you if you are applying for rent and utilities, just for rent, or just for utilities. Select the option that applies to you to apply.

What documentation do I need to receive utility assistance?

Documentation requirements for rental assistance and utility assistance are the same; applicants seeking either or both must provide all of the eligibility documentation listed in this FAQ, including past due utility bill(s).

How much utility assistance can I receive?

Federal guidelines allow United Lift to fund up to 18 months' utility assistance after April 1, 2020.

I already applied for rental assistance but didn't realize that I could also apply for utility assistance - can I still receive utility assistance?

Yes. You can reapply using the same email address that you used for your rental assistance application to receive utility assistance if you have past due balance(s). Be sure to select "I am current on rent but behind on utilities, and am seeking assistance for PAST DUE UTILITIES only" at the start of the application.

How does payment of utility assistance work?

United Lift will disburse funding to your utility provider directly if you are approved for utility assistance.

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IMMIGRATION RELATED QUESTIONS

Can I receive assistance if there is an undocumented member in my household? Can I receive assistance if I am undocumented?

Assistance is being given without regard to immigration status.

Will receiving housing assistance from Lift to Rise affect me if I am applying for a green card (lawful permanent residence)? I heard there is a “public charge” rule, which makes it harder to get a green card if you use certain benefits.

No. Housing assistance from Lift to Rise is not considered in a public charge test.

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).