

AN ACT

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IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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To amend, on an emergency basis, section 8f of the Homeless Services Reform Act of 2005 to reform the Emergency Rental Assistance Program to require specific documentation from tenants establishing eligibility for emergency rental assistance funds and to clarify the definition of a qualifying emergency situation; and to amend section 501 of the Rental Housing Act of 1985 to permit a court to enter a stay, rather than require a court to enter a stay, when a tenant submits documentation to the court demonstrating that he or she has a pending Emergency Rental Assistance Program application.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Emergency Rental Assistance Reform Emergency Amendment Act of 2024”.

Sec. 2. Section 8f of the Homeless Services Reform Act of 2005, effective March 10, 2023 (D.C. Law 24-287; D.C. Official Code § 4-753.08), is amended as follows:

(a) Subsection (a) is amended as follows:

(1) Paragraph (2)(A) is amended as follows:

(A) The lead-in language is amended to read as follows:

“(2)(A) To qualify for emergency rental assistance funds, an applicant unit shall be required to document:”.

(B) Sub-subparagraph (v) is amended by striking the phrase “for payment.” and inserting the phrase “for payment; and” in its place.

(C) A new sub-subparagraph (vi) is added to read as follows:

“(vi) The nature of the emergency situation; provided, that if the nature of the emergency situation precludes documentation, an unsworn declaration made under penalty of perjury explaining both the emergency situation and the reason why the applicant unit does not possess documentation regarding the nature of the emergency situation may be considered sufficient documentation of proof for this element of an application.”.

(2) Paragraph (3) is repealed.

(b) Subsection (d)(3) is amended to read as follows:

“(3) “Emergency situation” means a situation in which immediate action is necessary to avoid homelessness or eviction, to re-establish a rental home, or otherwise to prevent displacement from a rental home, which is the result of an unforeseen or unusual event, such as the loss of a job or high medical costs, that impacts the applicant unit’s ability to pay rent and that cannot be resolved without financial assistance.”.

Sec. 3. Section 501(r) of the Rental Housing Act of 1985, effective July 17, 1985 (D.C. Law 6-10; D.C. Official Code § 42-3505.01(r)), is amended to read as follows:

“(r)(1) The court may stay any proceedings for a claim brought by a housing provider to recover possession of a rental unit for non-payment of rent if a tenant submits documentation to the court demonstrating that he or she has a pending Emergency Rental Assistance Program application; provided, that the court may stay proceedings pursuant to this subsection only once during the pendency of the case.

“(2) The proviso in paragraph (1) of this subsection shall not be construed to limit a court’s discretion to extend or continue a stay.

“(3) When an eviction that involves non-payment of rent has been authorized by the court and a tenant notifies the housing provider that he or she has an approved Emergency Rental Assistance Program application that would pay the full amount of unpaid rent owed by the tenant no later than 48 hours prior to the scheduled date and time of the eviction, the housing provider shall reschedule the eviction for a date no earlier than 3 weeks from the current scheduled eviction date to allow for the application to be processed, a determination of funding to be made, and, if the application is approved, funding to be distributed to the housing provider.”.

Sec. 4. Fiscal impact statement.

The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement of the Budget Director as the fiscal impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975, approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

Sec. 5. Effective date.

This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), and shall remain in effect for no longer than 90 days, as provided for emergency acts of the Council of the District of Columbia in section

**ENROLLED ORIGINAL**

412(a) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 788;  
D.C. Official Code § 1-204.12(a)).

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Chairman  
Council of the District of Columbia

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Mayor  
District of Columbia