

As Introduced

133rd General Assembly

Regular Session

2019-2020

H. B. No. 744

Representatives Leland, Brent

**Cosponsors: Representatives Smith, K., Boyd, Howse, Skindell, Sweeney,
Crossman, Boggs, Liston, Russo, Crawley, Kelly, Galonski, Weinstein, Sobecki,
Sheehy, West, Lepore-Hagan, Patterson**

A BILL

To enact the Eviction Crisis Response Act to create 1
the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance 2
Program, to make an appropriation, and to 3
declare an emergency. 4

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. (A) As used in this section: 5

(1) "Assistance group" means an individual or group of 6
individuals who reside together and are treated as a unit for 7
purposes of determining eligibility for and the amount of 8
assistance provided under the COVID-19 Emergency Rental 9
Assistance Program. 10

(2) "Qualified alien" has the same meaning as in 8 U.S.C. 11
1641. 12

(B) There is hereby established the COVID-19 Emergency 13
Rental Assistance Program. The Development Services Agency shall 14
administer the program for sixty days after the effective date 15
of this section, or as long as state funds are provided for the 16

program, whichever is shorter. 17

(C) Under the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance 18
Program, the Development Services Agency shall provide rental 19
assistance benefits as specified in division (E) of this section 20
to assistance groups that meet the requirements of division (D) 21
of this section. Rental assistance benefits under this section 22
are available for months beginning April 2020 through the last 23
month that the program is administered. 24

(D) An assistance group seeking to participate in the 25
COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program shall submit an 26
application in the form and manner specified by the Development 27
Services Agency. The application shall include all of the 28
following: 29

(1) The social security number of each adult member of the 30
assistance group, or proof of an application for a social 31
security number for each adult member of the assistance group; 32

(2) Proof that at least one member of the assistance group 33
is a United States citizen or national, or a qualified alien; 34

(3) Certification that no member of the assistance group 35
has fraudulently received assistance under Ohio Works First or 36
the Prevention, Retention, and Contingency program without 37
having repaid any such fraudulent assistance; 38

(4) Documentation regarding the amount of the assistance 39
group's monthly rent; 40

(5) Documentation regarding earned and unearned income for 41
each member of the assistance group for the thirty-day period 42
immediately prior to the application date; 43

(6) If the assistance group is applying for an accumulated 44

assistance amount, as set forth in division (E) (2) of this 45
section, documentation regarding liquid assets of the assistance 46
group, including the total amount of funds in every bank account 47
of every member of the assistance group as well as disclosure of 48
any cash available to any member of the assistance group. 49

(E) An assistance group determined to meet the eligibility 50
requirements of this section may elect to receive either of the 51
following under the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance 52
Program: 53

(1) A standard assistance amount equal to twice the 54
assistance group's monthly rent, less the assistance group's 55
total earned and unearned income, up to a maximum of one month 56
of rent or one thousand five hundred dollars, whichever is less; 57

(2) For assistance groups that owe more than one month of 58
rent, an accumulated assistance amount of the assistance group's 59
standard assistance amount multiplied by the number of full 60
months of rent owed, less the assistance group's total liquid 61
assets. 62

(F) Rental assistance awarded to an assistance group under 63
this section shall be paid directly to the assistance group's 64
landlord. No landlord shall manipulate rents owed in order to 65
receive greater amounts of benefits from the COVID-19 Emergency 66
Rental Assistance Program. A landlord who violates this division 67
shall be guilty of fraud, a misdemeanor of the first degree, 68
except that if the value of benefits obtained in violation of 69
this section is one thousand dollars or more, it is a felony of 70
the fifth degree. 71

(G) The Development Services Agency shall establish fair 72
and equitable procedures for the delivery of the benefits under 73

C	GRF	1955XX	COVID-19 Rental Assistance	\$	0	\$	269,155,419
D	GRF	TOTAL GRF	General Revenue Fund	\$	0	\$	269,155,419
E		TOTAL ALL BUDGET FUND GROUPS		\$	0	\$	269,155,419

COVID-19 EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM 98

The foregoing appropriation item 1955XX, COVID-19 Rental Assistance, shall be used to support the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program. 99
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The Director of Development Services shall cease making payments for the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program sixty days after the effective date of this section. 102
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Section 4. Within the limits set forth in this act, the Director of Budget and Management shall establish accounts indicating the source and amount of funds for each appropriation made in this act, and shall determine the form and manner in which appropriation accounts shall be maintained. Expenditures from appropriations contained in this act shall be accounted for as though made in the main operating appropriations act of the 133rd General Assembly. 105
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The appropriations made in this act are subject to all provisions of H.B. 166 of the 133rd General Assembly that are generally applicable to such appropriations. 113
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Section 5. This act shall be known as the Eviction Crisis Response Act. 116
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Section 6. This act is hereby declared to be an emergency 118

measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public	119
peace, health, and safety. The reason for such necessity is to	120
address urgent needs for rental assistance arising from the	121
COVID-19 state of emergency. Therefore, this act shall go into	122
immediate effect.	123