



North Carolina Department of Public Safety

Office of Recovery and Resiliency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New HOPE Program income limit to increase delivery of emergency rent and utility assistance **Application period now open in 88 North Carolina counties**

RALEIGH—The N.C. Housing Opportunities and Prevention of Evictions ([HOPE Program](#)) has announced a change to income requirements that will increase the number of applicants eligible for emergency rent and utility assistance. When the second application period opened on May 17, the program prioritized applicants with an income of 50 percent of the area median income, and is now expanding the income limit to 80 percent of the [area median income](#) for the county where the applicant lives. The program initially set a lower income limit to ensure that North Carolina households that are most at risk of eviction had the opportunity to apply first.

"We established the HOPE Program last fall to help North Carolinians stay in their homes with the lights on," said Governor Roy Cooper. "There are still thousands of families who need this assistance and we are expanding eligibility so we can help even more people recover from this pandemic."

The HOPE Program promotes housing stability by providing rent and utility bill assistance to prevent evictions and the disconnection of utilities. During the first phase of the HOPE Program, \$133 million in assistance was awarded to help more than 34,000 families statewide. More than \$30 million has already been awarded in the second phase of the program that opened last month.

The HOPE Program currently serves 88 North Carolina counties, with 12 counties and five Native American tribes receiving direct federal funding to operate their own emergency rent and utility programs. A complete list of the counties served by the HOPE Program, county programs and tribal government programs can be found using the online [NC HOPE Interactive Map](#). Information on area median income for North Carolina counties can be found using the HUD 2021 [online calculation tool](#).

Applicants who received rent and/or utility assistance during the first phase of the HOPE Program are eligible to reapply for additional help. Utility assistance is available to applicants that apply and qualify for rent assistance. Utility-only applications are not being accepted during this phase of the HOPE Program.

Complete information about the HOPE Program, including eligibility requirements, program benefits and an online application, are available at www.nc.hope.gov. Applicants who cannot access the website should call 888-9ASK-HOPE (888-927-5467) for help with the application process. The HOPE Call Center is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Funding for the HOPE Program is provided to the state through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant—Coronavirus Relief and the Emergency Rental Assistance Program established by the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2021 and further funded by the American Rescue Plan Act 2021. The HOPE Program is managed by the [N.C. Office of Recovery and Resiliency](#), a division of the Department of Public Safety. To learn more about the HOPE Program, visit www.nc.hope.gov.

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