

Creating and Strengthening Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) - K12 Education Partnerships



**Tuesday, October 19, 2021
2:00 to 3:15 p.m. ET**

Meet Your Presenters

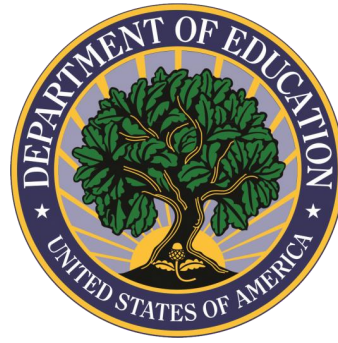


Vanessa Megaw
Senior Policy Advisory
Department of Treasury
Vanessa.Megaw@treasury.gov



Christina Dukes
Deputy Director, Partnerships and Policy
National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)
cdukes@serve.org

Agenda



- I. Emergency Rental Assistance (**ERA**) Overview and FAQs (15 minutes)
- II. Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (**ARP-ESSER**) and Homeless Children and Youth (**ARP-HCY**) Overview and Questions (15 minutes)
- III. **Community Spotlight Panel** and Questions (25 minutes)
 - Columbus, Ohio
 - State of Connecticut
- IV. Partnership **Next Steps** (10 minutes)



Emergency Rental Assistance

Disclaimer

- This presentation is designed to give an overview of the Emergency Rental Assistance program for educational purposes. It should not be construed as legal advice or a statement of binding policy guidance from the Treasury
- For official Treasury guidance, go to: www.treasury.gov/ERA



Overview

The Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program makes funding available to states, U.S. territories, local governments, and Indian tribes* to assist households that are unable to pay rent or utilities

Key objectives of this funding:

- Support urgent COVID-19 response efforts to continue to decrease spread of the virus and bring the pandemic under control
- Assist renters most in need to avoid evictions and secure housing stability
- Alleviate the deep financial distress of countless landlords who rely on rental income to support their families

**The ERA program is funded through two statutes with some variation in grantees eligibility and ERA implementation requirements. See [Treasury.gov/ERA](https://www.treasury.gov/ERA) for details.*



Supporting Housing Stability for Renters at Risk of Eviction

Prior to this year, few governments had robust programs for delivering this type of rental assistance and none were operating at the scale now made possible by ERA resources.

Recent Treasury Guidance Highlights

- Policy clarity and recommendations meant to accelerate assistance
- Drive toward equal access by removing language and cultural barriers in securing assistance
- Strongly encourages partnerships with courts to actively prevent evictions and develop eviction diversion programs
- Help families experiencing homelessness gain access to assistance



Eligible Households

Applicant eligibility may vary depending upon the grantee's program design

In *general terms*, applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- The applicant must be obligated to pay rent
- The applicant must demonstrate:
 - Financial hardship during the pandemic
 - Risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability; and
 - The household is a “low-income family” (incomes do not exceed 80% of the area median income)

Prioritization

- 50% of area median income or
- 1+ individuals unemployed for the 90-day period preceding the date of application.



Helping Households: Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses may vary depending upon the grantee's program design

In general terms, the federal program guidance allows:

Rental assistance

- Up to 18 months of rental assistance
- Assistance may cover back rent or prospective rent

Utilities and Home Energy Costs

- May include separately stated electricity, gas, water and sewer, trash removal, and energy costs, such as fuel oil; payments to public utilities are permitted



Helping Households: Eligible Expenses

Other Expenses (under certain constraints)

- Internet service
- Reasonable accrued late fees
- Relocation expenses

Re-location expenses – Applicants experiencing homelessness

In cases where a tenant *may not yet* have a rental obligation, Treasury encourages grantees to provide otherwise eligible households with an official document specifying the amount of financial assistance the grantee will pay a landlord on behalf of the household *if the landlord and the household enter into a qualifying lease of at least six months.*



Helping Households: Eligible Expenses

A limited amount of ERA funds may be used for housing stability services.

Housing Support/Counseling

- Housing counseling
- Fair housing counseling
- Housing navigators or *promotoras* (ERA assistance or finding housing)
- Housing stability case management
- Housing-related services for survivors of domestic abuse or human trafficking
- Specialized services for individuals with disabilities or seniors that support their ability to access or maintain housing

Eviction Prevention

- Eviction diversion programs
- Landlord/tenant mediation
- Legal services or attorney's fees related to eviction proceedings and maintaining housing stability



Promising Practices: Culturally and Linguistically Competent Outreach

Across the country, grantees are identifying strategies to reach communities where residents were disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic

- Translation of application into multiple languages
- Multiple application channels for residents to apply (phone, in-person, call center, 211 partnerships, engaging housing counselors, etc.)
- Partnership with trusted community organizations with high levels of cultural and linguistic competencies



Opportunities for Simplifying Income Documentation

Treasury's guidance allows grantees to establish policies and procedures for documenting eligibility requirements that will ease access for vulnerable populations.

- **Categorical Eligibility:** Grantees are permitted to rely on a determination letter from the government agency that verified the applicant's household income or status as a low-income family
- **Fact-specific proxy:** A grantee may rely on a written attestation from the applicant as to household income if the grantee also uses any reasonable fact-specific proxy for household income, such as reliance on data regarding average incomes in the household's geographic area



Online Resources

- For ERA stakeholders
www.treasury.gov/ERA
- Promising practices
[www.treasury.gov/ERAPromising Practices](http://www.treasury.gov/ERAPromisingPractices)
- For renters/landlords
- www.consumerfinance.gov/housing
- consumerfinance.gov/renthelp



Call to Action

We encourage you to promote either these national materials or your local ERA program to encourage tenants and landlords to take advantage of these programs and keep people in their homes.



Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) How much flexibility do ERA grantees have to partner with local education agencies?
- 2) People have had trouble with the ERA application process in the past. Should we still encourage people to apply?
- 3) How can ERA programs make it easier for households to apply?

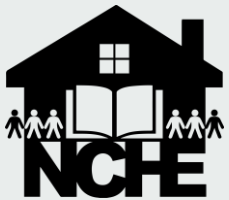


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The American Rescue Plan: Education Funding



About NCHE

NCHE is the U.S. Department of Education's technical assistance center for the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program.

- Website: <http://nche.ed.gov>
- Helpline: 800-308-2145 or homeless@serve.org
- Products: <https://nche.ed.gov/resources/>
- Webinars: <https://nche.ed.gov/group-training/>
- Listserv: <https://nche.ed.gov/resources/> (click *Listserv* tab)
- Twitter: [@NCHEducation](https://twitter.com/NCHEducation) | Facebook: facebook.com/NCHEducation



Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ARP-ESSER)

- \$122.8 billion ([ARP-ESSER](#))

“The cake”

- \$122 billion allocated to State educational agencies (SEAs) in proportion to their Title I, Part A allocation for the most recent fiscal year

“The icing”

- \$800 million reserved for homeless children and youth ([ARP-HCY](#))
- Allowable usages of ARP-ESSER funds at the local level include activities to address the unique needs of particular student subgroups, including those experiencing homelessness

About the EHCY Program

- The Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program is authorized by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by Title IX, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
- The Act
 - Establishes the definition of *homeless* used by U.S. public schools and many (but not all) other federal statutes and programs
 - Establishes the educational rights of and supports available to children and youth experiencing homelessness
 - Requires the designation of a State Coordinator for Homeless Education in SEA and a local homeless education liaison in every local educational agency (LEA)

These are
your partners



Eligible Children and Youth (McKinney-Vento Definition of Homeless)

- Individuals who **lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence**, including
 - Sharing the housing of other persons *due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason*
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds *due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations*
 - Living in emergency or transitional shelters
 - Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
 - Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
 - Migratory children and unaccompanied youth living in the circumstances described above

ARP Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) Funds



- Areas of focus
- Identification
- School engagement
- Wrap-around services

TITLE II—COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Subtitle A—Education Matters

PART 1—DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SEC. 2001. ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In addition to amounts otherwise available through the Education Stabilization Fund, there is appropriated to the Department of Education for fiscal year 2021, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$122,774,800,000, to remain available through September 30, 2023, to carry out this section.

(b) GRANTS.—From funds provided under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) use \$800,000,000 for the purposes of identifying homeless children and youth and providing homeless children and youth with—

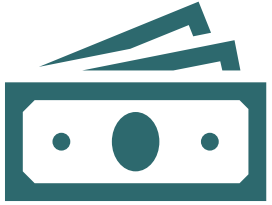
(A) wrap-around services in light of the challenges of COVID-19; and

(B) assistance needed to enable homeless children and youth to attend school and participate fully in school activities; and

(2) from the remaining amounts, make grants to each State educational agency in accordance with this section.

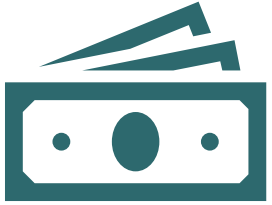
(c) ALLOCATIONS TO STATES.—The amount of each grant under

ARP-HCY Funding Purposes



- Addressing the urgent needs of homeless children and youth (HCY), including academic, social, emotional, and mental health
- Increasing capacity at the SEA and LEA levels by hiring staff, dedicating resources, providing technical assistance, and planning partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs)
- Connecting students and their families to extended day and extended year learning and enrichment programming, and preparing them for back-to-school in the Fall 2021

ARP-HCY Funding Usage



- Reminder: ARP-HCY funding is supplemental to ESSER funding
- Allowable usages
 - Existing [16 authorized activities](#) for McKinney-Vento (M-V) subgrant funding
 - Wraparound services (academic, trauma-informed, social-emotional, mental health)
 - Needed supplies (PPE, eyeglasses, school supplies, personal care items)
 - Transportation to support school engagement
 - Communication devices and technology needed for school engagement
 - Short-term housing as a last resort when needed for school engagement (a few days in a motel)
 - Prepaid store or debit cards needed to purchase materials needed for school engagement
- Allows SEAs and LEAs to award subgrants or contracts to CBOs

Thank You!

Questions?



Christina Dukes
Deputy Director, Partnerships and Policy
National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)
cdukes@serve.org





Community Spotlight Panel: Columbus, OH and Connecticut

Meet Your Community Panelists



Felisha Lyons

Executive Director of Student Services
Columbus City Schools
(Columbus, OH)

flyons@columbus.k12.oh.us



Steve Skovensky

Programs and Planning Director
Community Shelter Board
(Columbus, OH)

sskovensky@csb.org



Dawn Parker

Director
UniteCT
(Connecticut)

Dawn.Parker@ct.gov

Questions for Our Panelists

1. Tell us a little bit about your program.
2. Tell us a little bit about the partnership in your community between emergency rental assistance and K12 schools.
3. Why did your community develop ERA/school partnerships? What local need(s) were you hoping to address?
4. Share a success story of a household served through your ERA/school partnership.
5. What partnership “do’s and don’ts” would you share with webinar attendees who may want to start a similar partnership in their area?

Tier 3

ACCESS POINTS

Any entity encountering households who may be at risk of housing instability or homelessness



Tier 2

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Social service agencies & others providing prevention-related assistance for at-risk families and/or expectant mothers



Giving a Hand Up while
Changing the Face of Poverty



Physicians
CareConnection

An affiliate of the Columbus Medical Association



SELF HELP
RESOURCE CENTER



Serving Columbus and Franklin County



St. Stephen's
Community House

Brightening Lives in Columbus since 1919

Tier 1

INTENSIVE SERVICE PROVIDERS

Programs funded & designed to provide targeted prevention for families and/or expectant mothers who will become literally homeless within 30 days but for assistance



Home
for Families

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION NETWORK

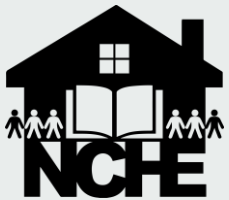
communityshelterboard
Until everyone has a place to call home



Questions?



Partnership Next Steps



Partnership Next Steps



- 1. Reach out:** Connect with your “partner across the aisle” and learn about each other’s work.
 - Contact your [State Coordinator for Homeless Education](#) or [local homeless education liaison](#) (click on your state in the U.S. map)
 - Contact your [state or local emergency rental assistance provider](#)
- 2. Focus on concrete efforts with mutual benefit:** Build a give-and-take relationship that adds value to each partner’s work. Move from abstract discussion to concrete action steps to ensure progress towards shared goals.

Partnership Next Steps



- **Start somewhere and build:** Focus first on “low-hanging fruit” (goals that may be achieved with relatively limited effort). Over time, take on more complex issues that require more effort but yield greater impact.
**And yet*, we are in a moment where innovation is welcomed and needed, so let’s not miss the opportunity to think and move boldly!*
- **Continue to invest:** Establish ongoing communication with your “partner across the aisle” to assess the effectiveness of joint efforts, consider additional needed action, and discuss emerging issues.



American Rescue Plan Tools

- **10 Strategies to Reduce Homelessness With the American Rescue Plan**
- **Making the Most of the American Rescue Plan: A Guide to the Funding That Impacts People Experiencing Homelessness**



Ways to Stay Informed – and Help

- Subscribe to the USICH [newsletter](#)
- Follow USICH on   
- Bookmark the [USICH calendar](#)
- Comment on the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness at [usich.gov/fsp](https://www.usich.gov/fsp)

