



On behalf of the Austin Apartment Association (AAA), thank you for your leadership and tireless work to protect the residents of Williamson County during the pandemic. Owners and operators of rental housing join you in your efforts and continue to do their part to keep their residents safe and healthy at home.

The AAA represents nearly 1000 members and more than 275,000 apartment units in the Austin area. Like renters, housing providers continue to struggle with the financial impacts of COVID-19 and were relieved to see that dedicated rental assistance funding was included in the latest federal COVID-19 relief package. **I am writing to urge you to immediately apply for federal rental assistance in order to protect renters, housing providers and our state's economy. An upcoming deadline must be met by January 12.**

The new federal law allows state and local governments to request significant funding for rental assistance. The text of the law requires funds to be distributed no later than 30 days after date of enactment, on January 27. The Department of Treasury (USDT) has begun the certification process for states, territories, tribes & local governments to receive direct allocation of \$25B in emergency rental assistance. The deadline for completed payment information and a signed acceptance of award terms form must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. EDT on January 12, 2021, to ensure payments are made within the 30-day period specified by the statute. Eligible grantees that do not provide complete information by 11:59 p.m. EDT on January 12, 2021, may not receive an emergency rental assistance payment.

An authorized representative of the eligible grantee with legal authority to bind the eligible grantee must sign the first page of the award terms form. In the case of a local government, the chief executive officer of the local government must sign the award terms form. To complete the awards terms form, please have your staff visit the [Department of Treasure website](#). With the deadline rapidly approaching, we strongly urge you to apply for funding before the impending deadline, to ensure maximum funding is secured. If you are unsure if your local government meets the requirements to receive funding, you can access the complete list [here](#).

According to Moody's Analytics, there will be a \$70-75 billion backlog in rent owed by the end of this month. Property owners have been bearing the brunt of the costs associated with federal, state and local eviction restrictions and keeping families in their homes throughout the pandemic, even as reserves become depleted and limited rental income comes in. This is not sustainable and will ultimately hurt our communities.

Please help apartment residents impacted by COVID by seeking the rental assistance that has been made available. Doing so will help protect our critical housing stock and ensure that the health care crisis does not become a housing crisis.

