



**ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEES ON
HOUSING, SOCIAL SERVICES, and WAYS AND MEANS**

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

SUBJECT: Emergency Rental Assistance Program

PURPOSE: To examine the application process and implementation of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)

**New York City
Tuesday, August 10, 2021
10:00am
250 Broadway, Assembly Hearing Room 1923, 19th Floor
New York, New York**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the financial stability of millions of New Yorkers, many of whom were already struggling. During the height of the pandemic, New York saw unemployment rates skyrocket, with over 3.4 million people filing for unemployment insurance in just one week, according to the New York State Comptroller. Many New Yorkers struggled to pay their rent prior to the pandemic, and the COVID-caused financial crisis exacerbated the instability. To provide assistance for individuals and families struggling to stay in their homes, the federal government passed the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act (HEROES Act), providing states with billions of dollars to enact rental assistance programs. New York received approximately \$2.6 billion in federal funding to enact the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP.) The purpose of ERAP is to assist households that have been unable to pay residential rent and/or utilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On June 1, 2021, the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), via its vendor, Guidehouse, began accepting applications through an online applications portal. According to OTDA, as of July 27, 2021, less than \$1 million dollars have been dispersed.

The Assembly Committees on Housing, Social Services, and Ways and Means want to gather information from relevant stakeholders regarding the pace at which assistance has been distributed to individuals, and examine the accessibility and usability of the application for tenants, landlords and other stakeholders. Since the federal government is authorized to reclaim funds if at least 65 percent of the original allocation is not utilized by September 30, 2021, it is imperative to examine the program. According to a publicly funded nonprofit that deals directly with utility-related issues, data shows more than one million New York households owe utility arrears. In addition to utility arrears, there are potentially hundreds of thousands of households that owe rental arrears. It is critical to ensure the program is as effective and efficient as possible so New Yorkers can take full advantage of the federal resources that were provided.

Oral testimony will be limited to 5 minutes. In preparing the order of witnesses, the Committees will attempt to accommodate individual requests to speak at particular times in view of special circumstances. These requests should be made on the attached reply form or communicated to Committee staff no later than Friday, August 6th, 2021.

Attendees and participants at any legislative public hearing should be aware that these proceedings are video recorded. Their likenesses may be included in any video coverage shown on television or the internet.

In order to further publicize these hearings, please inform interested parties and organizations of the Committee's interest in hearing testimony from all sources.

In order to meet the needs of those who may have a disability, the Assembly, in accordance with its policy of non-discrimination on the basis of disability, as well as the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), has made its facilities and services available to all individuals with disabilities. For individuals with disabilities, accommodations will be provided, upon reasonable request, to afford such individuals access and admission to Assembly facilities and activities.

**Steven Cymbrowitz
Member of Assembly
Chair
Committee on Housing**

**Linda B. Rosenthal
Member of Assembly
Chair
Committee on Social Services**

**Helene Weinstein
Member of Assembly
Chair
Committee on Ways and Means**

PUBLIC HEARING REPLY FORM

Persons wishing to present testimony at the public hearing on Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) are requested to complete and return the reply form no later than Friday prior to the hearing:

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Assembly Committee on Social Services
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Phone: (518) 455-4371
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- I plan to attend the following public hearing on Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) to be conducted by the Assembly Committees on Housing, Social Services, and Ways and Means on Tuesday, August 10, 2021.
- I plan to make a public statement at the hearing. My statement will be limited to 5 minutes, and I will answer any questions which may arise. I will provide 10 copies of my prepared statement.
- I will address my remarks to the following subjects:

- I do not plan to attend the above hearing.
- I would like to be added to the Committee mailing list for notices and reports.
- I would like to be removed from the Committee mailing list.
- I will require assistance and/or handicapped accessibility information. **Please specify the type of assistance required:** _____

NAME: _____

TITLE: _____

ORGANIZATION: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

FAX TELEPHONE: _____