

W628 Samuel Street
P.O. Box 467
Stephenson, MI 49887



Phone (906)753-6228
Fax (906)753-4726
www.stephenson-mi.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 25, 2021

PRESS RELEASE

Emergency Rental/Utility Assistance Program Launches in Michigan

March 25, 2021 – The COVID Emergency Rental Assistance (CERA) is a new program providing rent and utility assistance to households experiencing financial hardships due to COVID-19. The Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), who is administering this program, began accepting applications on March 15, 2021.

CERA provides up to 12 months of past-due rental assistance, three months of which may be used for future rent. Included in the program is assistance for past-due residential utility services when they are tenant supplied, including electricity, home heating (with any type of fuel), water, sewer, and also garbage services if garbage services are billed along with another utility. CERA funds may be used towards future utility bills. Applicants may also have access to a \$300 internet stipend if qualified.

The CERA program is available through the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021, which provided the state of Michigan nearly \$285 million in funding.

Those eligible to apply include tenants whose 2020 household income did not exceed 80% of [the area's median income](#) and meet the following conditions:

- Households where at least one individual has qualified for unemployment benefits or has experienced a reduction in household income;
- Households where at least one individual has incurred significant costs or has experienced financial hardship due directly or indirectly to the coronavirus outbreak; and
- Households with at least one member who can demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability evidenced by a past due utility or rent notice.

To learn more about the COVID Emergency Rental Assistance program, the qualifications, and the application process, visit the CERA program's website at www.michigan.gov/cera.

Customers are encouraged to take advantage of this program to stay current with their utility bills and avoid getting too far behind on payments. Customers struggling with their bills can also log onto mi211.org or call 2-1-1 for additional funding resources.

###