

New Legal Aid Program: Rapid Response Eviction Assistance Program (RREAP)

In anticipation of the end of the eviction moratorium, we will be hosting a webinar to educate the public about tenant rights and introduce our new program, Rapid Response Eviction Assistance Program (RREAP).

Registration Link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_oK43gMXRQmKYtRXAtKPC4g

Here is a little summary of our program from the County's press release:

The Palm Beach County Community Services Department (CSD) has contracted with the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County, Inc. and Florida Rural Legal Services, Inc. to provide county residents with free legal representation and assistance in handling landlord/tenant matters and past due payments through the Rapid Response Eviction Assistance Project (RREAP). The program is part of the CARES Act COVID-19.

Through the COVID-19 RREAP, the agencies will assist individuals who have received a three-day notice or demand for rent from their landlord, been served with an eviction lawsuit, or who need help understanding the eviction process. The services include:

- pre-suit mediation between landlords and tenants
- legal advice regarding the eviction process
- referrals for rental assistance
- preparation of responses to an eviction lawsuit
- assistance in negotiating repayment plans, and
- court representation.

The COVID-19 RREAP is designed to respond to the housing crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic by mediating disagreements between tenants and property owners. Through this program, parties will be able to construct payment plans, temporary rent reductions, deferred payments or other creative solutions to prevent evictions and ultimately homelessness.

The program term is from Aug. 1 through Dec. 30, 2020, and participants may be eligible for rental assistance. Eligibility requirements for the program include:

- rental unit must be located in Palm Beach County
- tenant's income is under 140% of Area Median Income

Applicants will need documentation to qualify for the program:

- proof of U.S. Citizenship or legal residents (per CARES Act regulations)
- documentation proving hardship is directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as evidence of loss of income, reduction in hours, or unemployment due to the COVID-19 pandemic that contributed to the missed rental payments, and
- an eviction notice (three-day notice or 30-day notice for CARES Act covered parties);

Individuals facing eviction may call the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County's Rapid Response Eviction Project at (561) 655-8944, ext. 328 or Florida Rural Legal Services at 1-888-582-3410.

For more information, visit www.legalaidpbc.org/eviction or www.frls.org.