

## **SALISH AND KOOTENAI HOUSING AUTHORITY**

### **COVID-19 Assistance Program Policy**

**SALISH AND KOOTENAI HOUSING AUTHORITY POLICIES** – The Salish and Kootenai Housing Authority, hereinafter referred to as the “Housing Authority”, has adopted a series of administrative and management policies. These policies are formally adopted by the Housing Authority and until revised or changed by formal action of the Board, the staff is required to follow them. Some of the provisions of these policies, but not all, reflect requirements of federal or tribal law. The Housing Authority may have also elected by formal resolution to establish alternative policies for programs that are operated without Native American Housing and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) Assistance.

**THE PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY** – To set forth the rules that will be used to administer the COVID-19 Assistance Program.

**FAIRNESS AND NON-DISCRIMINATION** – Eligibility and selection for programs operated by the Housing Authority shall always be fair in all respects. The Housing Authority is prohibited from making determinations based in whole or in part on political views or personal bias. Selections made by the staff may be reviewed by the Board of Commissioners for compliance with this policy and other Housing Authority requirements.

Pursuant to the NAHASDA law and regulations, the Housing Authority will comply with the following nondiscrimination requirements, as applicable:

1. The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42U.S.C. 6101-6107) and HUD’s Implementing regulations in 24 CFR Part 146.
2. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) and HUD’s Implementing regulations at 24 CFR Part 8.
3. The Indian Civil Rights Act (Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1968; 25 U.S.C.1301-1303).

## **Section 1: Application**

Applications may be either printed from the Housing Authority's website (skha.org) or mailed upon request. A completed application includes, but is not limited to:

1. the date the application is completed
2. name and contact information for the applicant
3. family composition
4. proof of income
5. letter or email from employer confirming loss of income due to COVID-19
6. recent paycheck stubs documenting pay decrease
7. self-employment certification (if necessary)
8. letter from childcare provider (if necessary)
9. copy of current lease agreement (if necessary)
10. copies of rent/mortgage and/or utility bills that have not been paid due to COVID-19

Incomplete applications cannot be processed. The Housing Authority will contact the applicant if further information is needed. The date used to determine program eligibility is the date the Housing Authority receives all required documents. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide the necessary information to Housing Authority staff in a quick and efficient manner.

## **Section 2: Eligibility**

To be eligible, the applicant must meet all the following requirements:

1. Enrolled member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
2. Suffered a substantial loss of income due to COVID-19
3. Income eligible (based on NAHASDA income limits)
4. Live within the exterior boundaries of the Flathead Indian Reservation

**Verification of Eligibility** – Information provided on the application will be verified. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Application data and supporting documents
2. Proof of income
  - Note: Regular payments of unemployment insurance issued by the state of Montana are treated as income. However, the temporary \$600 per week federal enhancement to unemployment insurance provided by the CARES ACT will not be included in calculations of income.
3. Any other documentation the Housing Authority deems necessary

4. Copy of rent/mortgage and/or utility bills needing to be paid and all pertinent information to pay the vendor

### **Section 3: Selection**

**Order of Assistance** – Assistance will be given on a first come, first served basis. Acceptance into the program is based on the date the application is fully completed. This program will end when funding has been fully expensed.

### **Section 4: Notification**

The Housing Authority will strive to review applications within four (4) business days.

**Approved Applications** – Applicants determined eligible will be notified by phone, email, and/or written letter. This program will require the applicant to communicate with Housing Authority staff in order to get bills paid promptly and to the correct vendor.

**Denied Applications** – All applicants determined ineligible for the program shall be promptly notified in writing. The notice shall contain a brief description of the reason(s) they were determined ineligible. Applicants have a right to grieve this decision in accordance with the Grievance Policy.

### **Section 5: Assistance**

**Payment Assistance** – The Housing Authority will issue payments for rent/mortgage and/or utilities directly to the vendor(s).

**Maximum Assistance** – Eligible applicants may receive up to \$1,500 each month in rent/mortgage and/or utilities assistance.

**Subsequent Month(s) of Assistance** – This will be contingent on completion of a monthly recertification form with all documents required in the original application. This is subject to available funding.