



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

701 OCEAN STREET, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2000 WWW.SANTACRUZCOUNTY.US

CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER



PRESS RELEASE

Date: July 7, 2021

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RENTERS, LANDLORDS ENCOURAGED TO APPLY FOR RENT RELIEF

Following the California Legislature's extension of statewide eviction protections until September 30, 2021, the County of Santa Cruz encourages tenants and landlords who have unpaid rent to immediately begin the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief application process at [HousingKey.com](https://www.housingkey.com).

Locally, \$16 million is available to support tenants and landlords with unpaid rent due to COVID-19 pandemic-related reasons. Under AB 832, the state increased available compensation to 100 percent of rental arrears and past-due utility payments, as well as prospective rent and utilities for qualifying tenants. Tenants can receive up to 18 months of assistance including arrears and rental assistance. It also authorizes payment of arrears to landlords for units where tenants have already vacated the premises.

AB 832 also continues a stay on court actions to recover rental debt until November 1, 2021. Until then, landlords seeking to recover COVID-19-related rental debt in court must show good faith cooperation with tenants who have applied through the state COVID-19 Rent Relief program.

State, federal and local eviction moratoriums pause pandemic-related evictions but do not absolve tenants of any accumulated rent still owed. Unless they apply for the Rent Relief program or otherwise pay their arrears, tenants are liable for past due rents and could be subject to court action.

Additionally, the state has simplified the application process and is requiring fewer documents. The application is now estimated to take 30 minutes to complete. Assistance is available at [HousingKey.com](https://www.housingkey.com) or by calling 1-833-430-2122 between 7 a.m.-7 p.m. daily. Applications available in multiple languages.



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Residents who need help with the application process may also contact the Rent Relief program's local partner organizations:

South County

Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County: 831-778-4535

Families in Transition: 831-740-2947

Mid- and North County

Community Bridges (Live Oak): 831-476-7284

Community Bridges (Beach Flats): 831-423-5747, ext. 13

San Lorenzo Valley

Community Bridges (SLV): 831-335-6600

Renters with household income at or below 80 percent of area median income are eligible, with priority for households at or below 50 percent of area median income. Landlords with eligible tenants and utility providers with eligible clients may also apply directly for assistance.

Overall, \$5.2 billion is available in federal rental assistance throughout California. Locally, more than 700 residents have applied for nearly \$6.7 million in rent relief and nearly \$700,000 in utility assistance.