

**Alachua County, Florida**  
**Board of County Commissioners**  
**Emergency Rental Assistance Program 1 and 2 (ERAP) Policies**

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**Alachua County, Florida Board of County Commissioners' (the "County") Policy to Ensure Compliance and Prevent Fraud**

Applicants for the ERAP will be required to provide documentation whenever administratively feasible. When not feasible, applicants may self-attest for the following with the requirements for each as shown:

- 1) Self-attestation allowed as primary option:
  - a) Attesting that delinquent internet charges are vital for telework, teleschool, telehealth, or receiving government assistance and programs.
- 2) Self-attestation allowed if documentation is not administratively feasible to obtain:
  - a) No written lease
    - i) Requires completion of documentation waiver request, which will be subject to review and approval by County Fiscal and County Community Support Services (CSS) staff
    - ii) Requires landlord verification form
    - iii) Requires demonstration of history of past pattern of rent payment
    - iv) Requires alternate residency documentation (official mail)
  - b) No (or insufficient) income and/or income loss documentation
    - i) Requires completion of documentation waiver request, which will be subject to review and approval by County Fiscal and County Community Support Services (CSS) staff
    - ii) Requires provision of contact information for employers and/or prior employers and a detailed listing of income sources and amounts
    - iii) County will document attempts to contact current and/or prior employers to verify information provided
  - c) No unemployment eligibility documentation
    - i) Requires completion of documentation waiver request, which will be subject to review and approval by County Fiscal and County Community Support Services (CSS) staff
    - ii) County will provide instructions to applicant on alternative methods to obtain documentation
    - iii) Requires provision of dates of eligibility determination and amounts paid

Waivers of any documentation requirements, or of any eligibility requirements imposed by the County that are not otherwise required by Section 501 of Division N of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L. No. 116-260 (Dec. 27, 2020) as may be explained by any applicable guidance published by the U.S. Treasury, may be made by the County Manager or her designee.

In addition, payments will be made to landlords, property owners, utility companies, internet providers, and/or property managers (with appropriate property management agreements). Payments will not be made to applicants unless the landlord/property manager refuses to participate despite County outreach as outlined in the ERAP guidelines and frequently asked questions (FAQ).

For applicants receiving payments directly due to landlord refusal to participate and/or landlord non-responsiveness, applicants will be required to attest that they will use the funding received for allowable rental and housing costs. Upon every direct payment disbursement, a communication will be sent to both the landlord as listed on the lease and the applicant listing the payment amount and the allowed use of the funding. The landlord letter will include a request to contact the help desk with any concerns that the

payments were not passed on to the landlord by the applicant. If the County receives notification that the applicant has not used the payments received from the program to pay rent costs, the applicant may not be eligible for future payments from ERAP until they provide documentation such as updated rent ledgers or receipts showing appropriate use of funding provided. The County Fiscal and Community Support Services (CSS) staff performing the review and approval of waiver of documentation requests will not be the same individuals as those serving on the appeals panel. The appeals panel will consist of one County Fiscal staff, one CSS staff, and one County consultant staff who were not involved in the original review and approval/denial process.

The County's third-party consultants reviewing the applications may identify applications where statements and/or documentation submitted are inconsistent or appear to be fabricated or altered. In those cases, the consultant will notify the County and the Clerk's office (acting as the County's auditor) and will provide the full case file for further review. If both the County and the Clerk's representatives deny the application based on inconsistent, fabricated, altered, or untrue statements and/or documentation, the applicant's case will be denied and the applicant will be determined to be ineligible for this grant, including the second round of funding, referred to as ERAP 2.

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**Alachua County, Florida Board of County Commissioners' (the "County") Policy on Determining Presence of Unsafe or Unhealthy Living Conditions**

Applicants for the ERAP will be required to provide documentation of unsafe or unhealthy living conditions through a combination of narrative explanation and photographs if applicable.

Upon receipt of such documentation, the County will evaluate the description and documentation based upon current building codes, living standards adopted by the County, or similar guidelines. If the County determines there is sufficient evidence of possible code (or similar standard or guideline) violations that could create an unsafe or unhealthy living environment for the occupant, the County will attempt to contact the landlord or property manager to request a statement as to their response and/or plan to remediate. Where possible, the County will work to incentivize the landlord/property manager to remediate the unsafe or unhealthy living conditions through an agreement that back rent may be paid (if otherwise eligible) upon evidence of correction of the conditions within a set time period.

If the landlord is not responsive within seven calendar days or responds with a refusal to participate, the County will proceed in determining other eligibility of the applicant for the payment of eligible relocation costs to new rental residential housing in Alachua County, including deposits and required first and last month rent payment along with utility activation/turnoff/turnon costs and prospective rent as deemed eligible.

If the unsafe or unhealthy living condition can be verified to be unrelated to the landlord/property manager, such as homelessness, congregate living conditions, lack of utilities due to nonpayment, the County will work with the applicant to determine what assistance is available from the ERAP as described in the paragraph above and may refer the applicant to other partners and/or programs if appropriate.

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**Alachua County, Florida Board of County Commissioners' (the "County") Policy on Determining What Evidence of Risk of Housing Instability and/or Homelessness is Acceptable for Determination of Eligibility in Absence of Late/Delinquent Rent and/or Utilities**

Applicants for the ERAP will be required to submit one of the following forms of documentation when claiming risk of housing instability and/or homelessness in the absence of late/delinquent rent and or utilities:

- 1) Late notices on internet, childcare, health insurance, vehicle loans, vehicle insurance, other loans, and/or credit cards
- 2) Documentation of new (after March 13, 2020) loans from individuals, banks, pawn shops, and/or payday lenders
- 3) Signed statement on letterhead from government or not-for-profit community agency attesting to the household's risk of housing instability and/or homelessness

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**Alachua County, Florida Board of County Commissioners' (the "County") Policy on Determining when Payment of Delinquent Internet Bills is Appropriate and Necessary**

Applicants for the ERAP may request payment of delinquent internet bills when deemed to be a necessary and vital household expense. Alachua County will pay for the delinquent portion of the bills (without late fees) in the following circumstances:

- 1) The applicant otherwise meets all applicable eligibility requirements.
- 2) A delinquent bill is provided for residential internet service at the address listed on the applicant's lease in the name of one or more members of the household as listed on the lease.
- 3) The applicant completes a self-attestation that the purpose of the internet service is to allow one or more members of the household (including minors) to do tele-work, tele-school, tele-health, or to obtain government services.

Other limitations include:

- 1) Payment will only be made for the internet portion of the arrears in a combined bill (such as one that also includes cable or phone service), provided that the internet provider agrees that internet service will not be terminated or discontinued by failure to pay the non-internet portion of the combined bill or the applicant documents or, in the discretion of the County Manager, attests that the applicant will pay the non-internet portion of the combined bill so that the internet service will not be terminated or discontinued.
- 2) Payment is not to be made for cell phones or data plans for cell phones, tablets, other mobile devices.

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**Alachua County, Florida Board of County Commissioners' (the "County") Policy on Preference System for High Priority Households**

Applicants meeting all eligibility requirements as defined by the Treasury's ERAP guidelines and guidance may be deemed "High Priority Households" if they document they meet one of the following:

- 1) Household income is below 50% of Area Median Income (AMI) for Alachua County; or
- 2) At least one household member (as listed on the lease) is currently unemployed and has been unemployed for at least the ninety days prior to the date of application completion.

The County will provide preference to High Priority Households by restricting the application review process to only High Priority households for the first three weeks of the application program. Subsequent to that date, new applications will be evaluated and High Priority Household applications will be processed prior to non-High Priority Household applications as administratively feasible.