



## Office of New Americans Advisory Board Meeting

---

**April 7, 2021**

**Pamela Kestner and Senta Gorrie**

**Department of Housing and Community Development**

# Virginia Rent Relief Program – The Basics

- The Virginia Rent Relief Program (RRP) is designed to support and ensure housing stability across the Commonwealth during the coronavirus pandemic
- This program has two doors of entry, one for landlords and one for tenants
- The same information is required of both parties, regardless of where the RRP application is initiated
- RRP is offered to tenants and landlords statewide, with two exceptions:
  - Chesterfield and Fairfax Counties have elected to administer rent relief programs at the local level as allowed by Treasury's Emergency Rental Assistance program
  - Applicants are referred to these local programs for assistance and contact information for those programs is provided on all RRP websites

# Current Funding for RRP

- Virginia Housing Trust Fund
  - Up to \$40.7 million
- Emergency Rental Assistance 1.0
  - Statewide - \$524.6 million
  - Chesterfield County - \$10.6 million
  - Fairfax County - \$34.5 million
- Emergency Rental Assistance 2.0
  - Approximately \$400 million

# Two Doors, One Program

---

- Tenants can apply for rent relief through the RRP Support Center online or by telephone
  - Online: [Tenant Applications](#)
  - Telephone: 703-962-1884
- Landlords can apply for rent relief through Virginia Housing's online portal:
  - [www.VirginiaHousing.com/RentRelief](http://www.VirginiaHousing.com/RentRelief)

# RRP Tenant Eligibility

Three core eligibility requirements of the program:

1. Household's current gross income must be at or below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI)
2. Household's rent cannot exceed 150% of Fair Market Rent (FMR)
3. Demonstrated inability (self-certification) to make rent payments due to COVID-19 or individuals who qualify for Unemployment Insurance benefits

# Important Items to Know

- The Virginia Rent Relief Program can pay for 100% of past due rent beginning April 1, 2020
- RRP can also pay for the current month's rent plus three future months rent if those months are included in the lease documentation
- Landlords and tenants can receive rent relief for no more than 15 months total, with reverification every three months
- Tenants do not need to be in arrears in order to receive assistance
- Trusted 3<sup>rd</sup> parties can now assist tenants and landlords with completing their applications and receive updates on the application status
- Tenants with a housing voucher are eligible for RRP assistance, but only for the current month and arrears beginning April 1, 2020
  - Tenants with housing vouchers must first have their income recertified by their housing provider

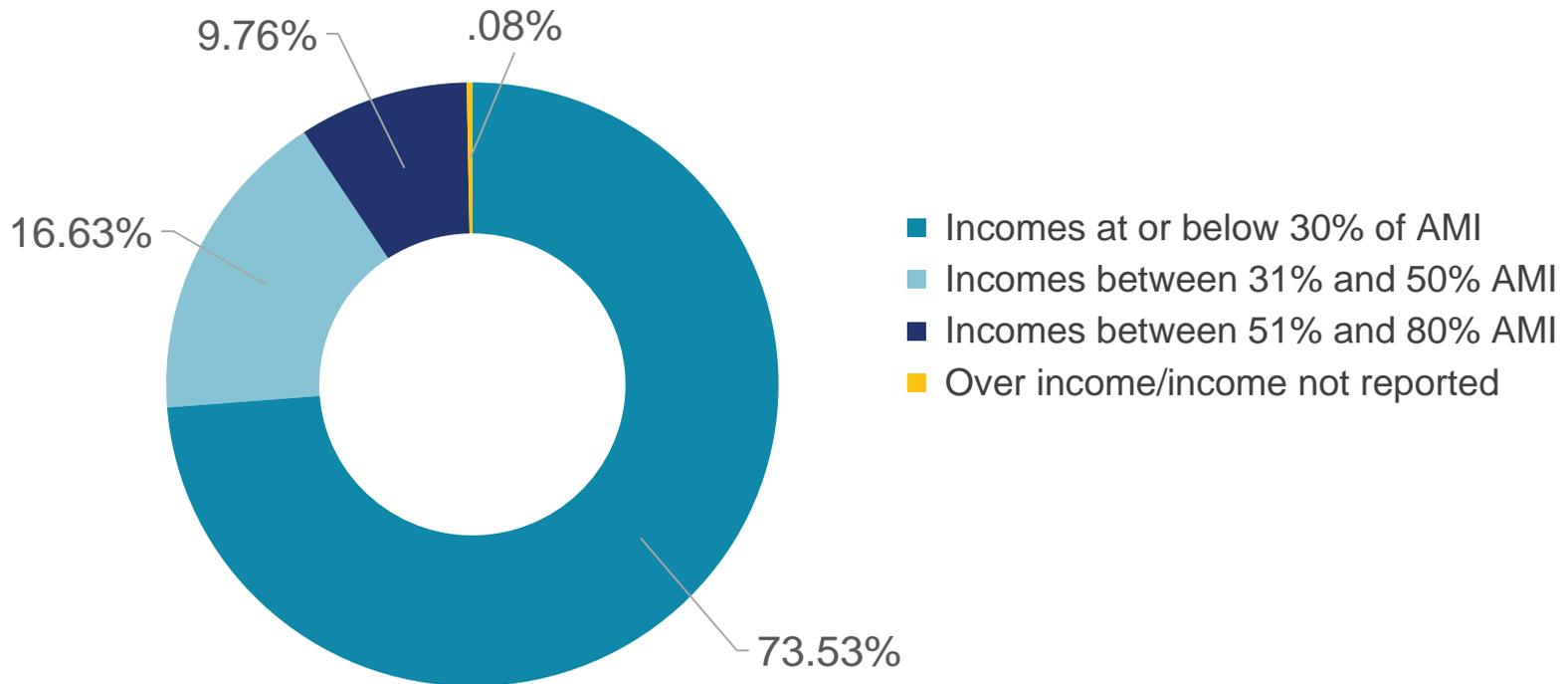
# RRP Results as of March 10, 2021

## PROGRAM SUMMARY

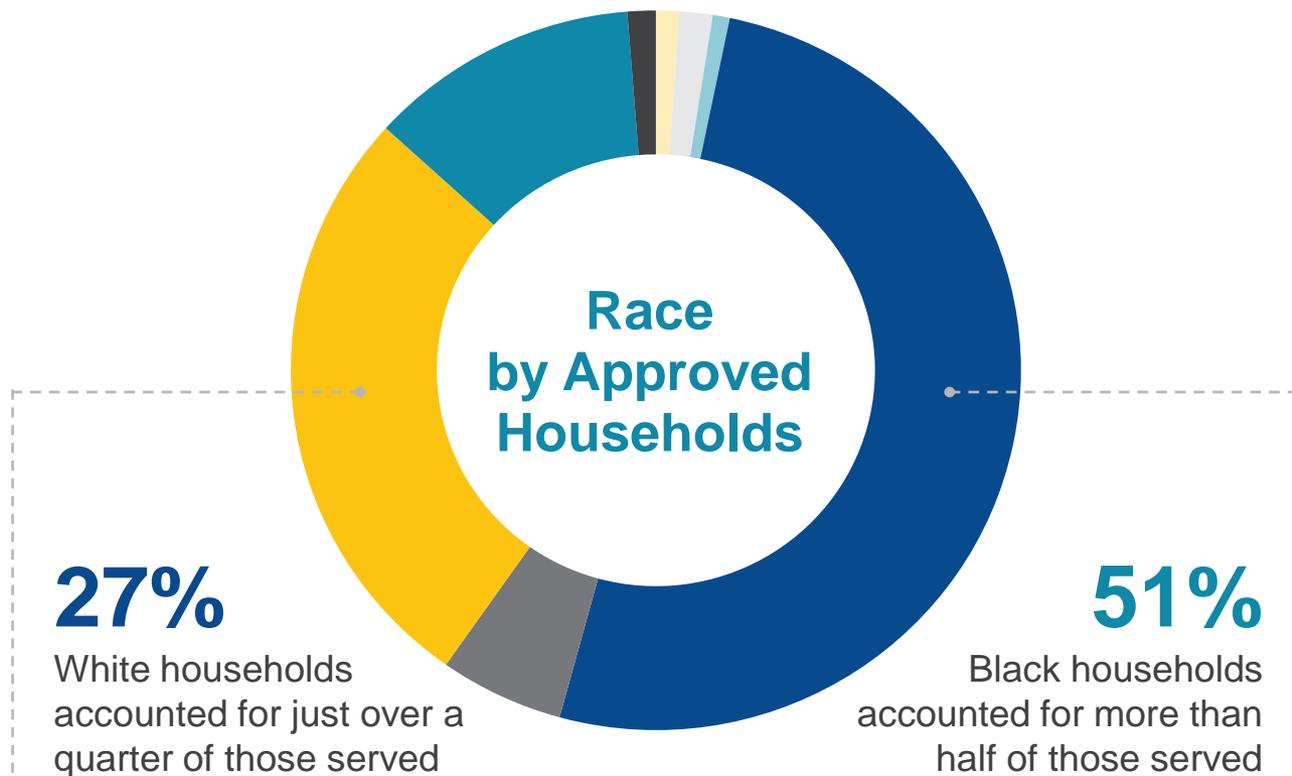
|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Total Unique Households Approved Since July 2020 | 25,297    |
| Total Amount Disbursed Since July 2020           | \$ 143.4M |
| Total ERA Amount Disbursed Since February        | \$62.8M   |
| Average Rent Relief Payment                      | \$4,380   |

# RRP Households by Income

- Since July 2020, RRP has prevented more than 25,000 evictions – making landlords whole and keeping low to moderate income Virginians housed
- The household's total gross income must be equal to or less than 80% of area mean income to qualify. 73% of those approved had average median incomes below 30%



# Households by Race



- American-Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Multi-Racial
- Don't know/refused
- Asian
- Black or African-American
- White
- Missing Data

# Other Important RRP Updates & Highlights

- Average payment amount is increasing
  - This is due to the length of time tenants have been in arrears and the fact that three prospective months are now automatically included for all eligible tenants
- Tenants can now email Virginia Housing and receive an update on the status of landlord initiated applications
- Households of three or less who access TANF, WIC, SNAP or LIHEAP do not need to provide additional income documentation
- Households receiving a housing subsidy are eligible for RRP assistance
  - However RRP can only pay for the tenant's portion of their arrears and the current month – not the prospective three months
  - These households are also required to complete an income recertification with their housing provider before assistance can be provided
- The RRP Support Center is hiring additional staff dedicated to making outbound phone calls to applicants.
  - This has contributed to the increased rate of spending – most recent week cleared \$10M/week

# Contact Information

---

- Pamela Kestner

Chief Deputy and Acting Deputy Director of Housing  
Department of Housing and Community Development

[pamela.kestner@dhcd.Virginia.gov](mailto:pamela.kestner@dhcd.Virginia.gov)

- Senta Gorrie

Associate Director of Eviction Prevention

Department of Housing and Community Development

[senta.gorrie@dhcd.Virginia.gov](mailto:senta.gorrie@dhcd.Virginia.gov)



# Questions & Answers

---