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# Housing Finance Authority Kicks Off Rental Assistance Program

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The V.I. Housing Finance Authority has announced the territory-wide rollout of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), a federal program made possible through the CARES Act of 2021.

“We are excited for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program to launch on March 29, 2021, on all three islands. We know that it will be a life-changer for many of our residents who have suffered a loss of either total or partial household income due to the COVID pandemic of 2020-21,” said VIHFA Executive Director Daryl Griffith, according to the release.

The program makes payments directly to landlords and utility companies on behalf of eligible residents and customers who have fallen behind in their ability to pay monthly rent or utility bills,

said the authority. VIHFA said its staff is working with community partners to roll out the program in accordance with its commitment to helping VI residents maintain secure and safe housing for themselves and their families.

ERAP, administered by the U.S. Department of Treasury, makes available \$25 billion nationally to assist households that are unable to pay rent and utilities due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The funds are provided directly to states, U.S. territories, local governments, and Indian tribes. Local program information can be found at [www.vihfa.gov/erap](http://www.vihfa.gov/erap)

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 provide fast and direct economic assistance for American workers, families, and small businesses, and preserve jobs for American industries.