

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL**No. 109** Session of
2021

INTRODUCED BY PITTMAN, JANUARY 23, 2021

REFERRED TO URBAN AFFAIRS AND HOUSING, JANUARY 23, 2021

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.343, No.176), entitled
2 "An act relating to the finances of the State government;
3 providing for cancer control, prevention and research, for
4 ambulatory surgical center data collection, for the Joint
5 Underwriting Association, for entertainment business
6 financial management firms, for private dam financial
7 assurance and for reinstatement of item vetoes; providing for
8 the settlement, assessment, collection, and lien of taxes,
9 bonus, and all other accounts due the Commonwealth, the
10 collection and recovery of fees and other money or property
11 due or belonging to the Commonwealth, or any agency thereof,
12 including escheated property and the proceeds of its sale,
13 the custody and disbursement or other disposition of funds
14 and securities belonging to or in the possession of the
15 Commonwealth, and the settlement of claims against the
16 Commonwealth, the resettlement of accounts and appeals to the
17 courts, refunds of moneys erroneously paid to the
18 Commonwealth, auditing the accounts of the Commonwealth and
19 all agencies thereof, of all public officers collecting
20 moneys payable to the Commonwealth, or any agency thereof,
21 and all receipts of appropriations from the Commonwealth,
22 authorizing the Commonwealth to issue tax anticipation notes
23 to defray current expenses, implementing the provisions of
24 section 7(a) of Article VIII of the Constitution of
25 Pennsylvania authorizing and restricting the incurring of
26 certain debt and imposing penalties; affecting every
27 department, board, commission, and officer of the State
28 government, every political subdivision of the State, and
29 certain officers of such subdivisions, every person,
30 association, and corporation required to pay, assess, or
31 collect taxes, or to make returns or reports under the laws
32 imposing taxes for State purposes, or to pay license fees or
33 other moneys to the Commonwealth, or any agency thereof,
34 every State depository and every debtor or creditor of the
35 Commonwealth," in emergency COVID-19 response, repealing

1 provisions relating to Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency.

2 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

3 hereby enacts as follows:

4 Section 1. Subarticle J of Article I-C of the act of April
5 9, 1929 (P.L.343, No.176), known as The Fiscal Code is repealed:

6 [SUBARTICLE J

7 PENNSYLVANIA HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY

8 Section 190-C. Definitions.

9 The following words and phrases when used in this subarticle
10 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
11 context clearly indicates otherwise:

12 "Agency." The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency.

13 "Eligible landlord." An individual or entity owning a place
14 of residence that leases the residence to an individual and that
15 experienced a loss of rental income because the lessee became
16 unemployed after March 1, 2020, or the lessee had their annual
17 household income reduced by 30% or more due to reduced work
18 hours and wages related to COVID-19. The loss of rental income
19 must be at least 30 days past due.

20 "Lessee." An individual who leases a place of residence in
21 which the individual will permanently reside.

22 Section 191-C. Mortgage and Rental Assistance Program.

23 (a) Establishment of program.--The agency shall establish
24 the COVID Relief - Mortgage and Rental Assistance Grant Program.

25 (b) Purpose of the program.--The program shall receive
26 applications from lessees, landlords, mortgagees and mortgagors
27 and award grants to eligible landlords and mortgagees in
28 accordance with this act.

29 (c) Use of funds.--Money appropriated to the Pennsylvania
30 Housing Finance Agency for COVID Relief - Mortgage and Rental

1 Assistance shall be used to make grants under this subarticle.

2 (d) Allocation.--The agency shall allocate a minimum of
3 \$150,000,000 of the funds received for use under this subarticle
4 for rental assistance grants.

5 (e) Guidelines.--The agency shall establish guidelines that
6 are consistent with the provisions of this subarticle within 30
7 days of the effective date of this section. The guidelines shall
8 be:

9 (1) submitted to the Legislative Reference Bureau for
10 publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin; and

11 (2) posted on the agency's publicly accessible Internet
12 website.

13 (f) (Reserved).

14 (g) Program requirements.--The following shall apply:

15 (1) An eligible lessee, mortgagor, landlord or mortgagee
16 shall submit to the agency the name of the lessee or
17 mortgagor from whom rental or mortgage payments are sought,
18 along with any additional information deemed necessary by the
19 agency to carry out the agency's responsibilities under this
20 section.

21 (2) Assistance may be awarded to lessors or mortgagees
22 on behalf of lessees or mortgagors who became unemployed
23 after March 1, 2020, or had their annual household income
24 reduced by 30% or more due to reduced work hours and wages
25 related to COVID-19.

26 (3) The agency shall develop an application for eligible
27 lessees, mortgagors, landlords or mortgagees to apply for
28 assistance under this section within 30 days of the effective
29 date of this section. The application shall include an
30 attestation by the landlord or mortgagee releasing the lessee

1 or mortgagor of any remaining obligation for any past due or
2 future rent or mortgage payment for which the agency pays the
3 landlord or mortgagee. The application shall be made
4 available and posted on the agency's publicly accessible
5 Internet website and be in a form that can be completed and
6 returned by the lessee, mortgagor, landlord or mortgagee
7 electronically or through the United States mail. The
8 deadline for submitting applications to the agency shall be
9 September 30, 2020.

10 (4) The agency shall verify the name of the lessee or
11 mortgagor with the Department of Labor and Industry's Bureau
12 of Unemployment Compensation to ensure the lessee or
13 mortgagor became unemployed after March 1, 2020.

14 (5) The agency shall require any applicant seeking
15 assistance based on reduced work hours or wages related to
16 the coronavirus pandemic to submit information verifying such
17 information.

18 (6) The agency shall make payments only to lessors or
19 mortgagees.

20 (7) The agency shall make payments only on behalf of
21 households with an annualized current income of no more than
22 the upper limit of "median income" as defined in guidelines
23 published annually by the United States Department of Housing
24 and Urban Development.

25 (8) The agency shall notify each lessee or mortgagor of
26 the amount of payment made to the landlord or mortgagee on
27 the lessee's or mortgagor's behalf.

28 (9) The agency shall make payments as follows:

29 (i) For rental assistance, an amount equal to 100%
30 of the lessee's monthly rent, not to exceed \$750 per

1 month, for each month for which assistance is sought for
2 a maximum of six months. Payments shall be made no later
3 than November 30, 2020.

4 (ii) For mortgage assistance, an amount equal to
5 100% of the mortgagor's monthly mortgage, not to exceed
6 \$1,000 per month, for each month for which assistance is
7 sought for a maximum of six months. Payments shall be
8 made no later than November 30, 2020.

9 (h) Report.--By December 31, 2020, the agency shall issue a
10 report to the chairperson and minority chairperson of the
11 Appropriations Committee of the Senate and the chairperson and
12 minority chairperson of the Appropriations Committee of the
13 House of Representatives and post the report on the agency's
14 publicly accessible Internet website. The report shall include
15 the following information:

16 (1) The total number of landlords who applied for
17 assistance under this section.

18 (2) The total number of mortgagees who applied for
19 assistance under this section.

20 (3) The total amount of assistance that was sought.

21 (4) The average amount of assistance that was applied
22 for under this section.

23 (5) The average amount of assistance that was provided
24 under this section.

25 (6) The total number of landlords and mortgagees who
26 received assistance under this section by county.

27 (7) The value of payments made by the agency under this
28 section by county.]

29 Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.