

2021-2022 New York State Rental Supplement Program Plan

District: TIOGA COUNTY

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RSP Implementation Date: XX/XX/XXXX

Indicate whether the program will be administered using district mechanisms (e.g., direct administration or transfer of funds to county agencies) or by another public agency, contractor or non-profit organization. Administration of the RSP may be delegated in full or in part. Also indicate whether districts will coordinate with the local HUD-funded Continuum of Care, if applicable.

Tioga County will administer RSP directly. We also participate with the CoC regularly.

Indicate the anticipated RSP supplement amount and the number of households expected to be served in the initial 12-month period. RSP supplement amounts are set at 85% of the local Fair Market Rent (FMR) values with a district option to pay up to 100% of FMR using local funds.

RSP Supplement Amount: The amount the household's rent exceeds 30% of their income, up to 85% of the local Fair Market Rent values.

BEDROOMS	EFFICIENCY	ONE-BR	TWO-BR	THREE-BR	FOUR-BR
<u>MAX HH SIZE</u>	<u>1-2</u>	<u>1-2</u>	<u>2-4</u>	<u>3-6</u>	<u>4-8</u>
<u>100% FMR</u>	<u>\$634.00</u>	<u>\$668.00</u>	<u>\$855.00</u>	<u>\$1,136</u>	<u>\$1,255</u>
<u>85% FMR</u>	<u>\$538.90</u>	<u>\$567.80</u>	<u>\$726.75</u>	<u>\$965.60</u>	<u>\$1066.75</u>

Anticipated Number of Households to be Served:

50 families annually

Describe the outreach mechanisms that will be used. Receipt of TA is not a requirement for determining eligibility for the RSP, but at least 50% of the supplements shall be allocated for households who are currently in shelter or experiencing homelessness (unless sufficient demand does not exist for such households within a district).

Tioga County does not have sufficient demand to focus on the currently homeless population. We will share information about our program with the Tioga County Non-Profit network, as well as include it on the Agency's website, utilize signage/posters, press release, etc. We anticipate the primary source of referrals will be TA screenings, referrals from the SNAP and Medicaid Unit, Workforce staff on site, as well as the CoC

Describe the application and determination process, including the length of time within which applications will be approved or denied. OTDA encourages districts/contractors to make decisions regarding applications within 30 days of the application date.

Applicants will complete the Agency's request form and provide documentation of income and identity. Agency will contact landlord and make eligibility determination within 30 days of the date the written request is received.

Describe the forms and/or notices that will be used to facilitate the application and determination process. When households requesting a supplement do not meet the criteria established by the district, the denial/discontinuance letter must support the decision by explaining the criteria and the district's decision that the household does not meet such criteria. When a supplement is approved, an award letter must be provided to both the tenant and landlord and must detail the amount approved to be paid on a monthly basis and the months/term included.

Please see the following attachments:
Request Form
Denial notice
Approval notice
Discontinue/Change notice Request
for Documents

Indicate the anticipated target population, including prioritization of certain households (e.g., those with children under the age of six, single individuals, veterans, individuals and families experiencing domestic violence (DV) and non-DV victims of violence). Eligible participants include individuals and/or families, regardless of immigration status, who are experiencing homelessness or facing an imminent loss of housing, including individuals and families with or without children.

We define "imminent loss of housing" as having a rental expense higher than 30% of the household's income. We will give priority to Tioga County resident households that have experienced a loss of income within the last six months, so their rent is now greater than 30% of their newly reduced income. Once we meet 75% of our annual allocation, we will give priority to households with children under age 18.

Indicate how the following eligibility standards will be met:

- **Households must earn no more than 50% of area median income (AMI) at the time of application (using current monthly income for the household and excluding earned income of a minor child; adoption/foster care payments; one-time loans, gifts, lump sum payments or other non-recurring income; and childcare subsidy payments) based on location and household size, with initial priority given to households who earn no more than 30% of AMI;**
- **A household's financial contribution will be limited to 30% of their households' total earned and/or unearned income; and**
- **Supplements are to be provided until the household's income reaches 30% or more of their monthly rent, at which point the housing will be considered affordable for the individual/family and the supplement will end.**

Our request form is also a worksheet for the Agency to determine eligibility (see attached). This includes space to indicate the household's income, as well as a chart of the 50% AMI and 30% AMI. The applicant must provide verification of all household income. The worksheet also has a spot to calculate 30% of the household's income to show their contribution, including language reminding the worker that the household is not eligible if their rent is less than 30% of their income. At recertification, we re-evaluate their income eligibility.

The Approval Notice also informs the household what they need to report.

List any other established eligibility criteria and indicate how each criterion will be determined and documented. Include the following:

- **Will leases be required of all tenants?**
- **How will the district/contractor ensure that the rental costs are legitimate and the responsibility of the recipient if a lease is not required?**
- **Will there be any health and safety standards regarding the housing that must be met prior to paying the supplement at a specific location?**
- **How will the district handle modifications (e.g., moves, rent increases, changes in household composition, etc.)?**
- **What standards will be followed in determining whether supplementation will continue following a move?**
- **Will the district/contractor require the recipient household to report changes related to the supplement within a set timeframe as a condition of continued eligibility for the supplement?**
- **How will contributions towards rental costs from individuals outside the household be verified and what standards will be applied in determining whether such contributions can be sustained in the future?**

We are requiring a lease or rental agreement.

We intend to allow applicants to attest to much of the eligibility information (not income), and to rely heavily on contact with the landlords (we have added a lease/rental agreement requirement) to establish/confirm the information provided about rental amount, number of bedrooms, household size, and condition of unit. In addition, the Agency is notified by code enforcement of any residence that is in violation of local codes.

Our approval letter advises households to report if they move. If they move, we will reevaluate all aspects of eligibility (income, shelter expense, household size). We will continue the supplement while redetermining eligibility, then properly notify the household of any changes.

Our Approval Notice will provide applicants with written information about what to report and to report changes within 10 days of the change. Eligibility will be reevaluated upon change notification.

If other contributions towards rental costs are received, we will verify the specifics with the source, including how much and how long they will be contributing. Any contributions towards rent received from someone outside the household will be deducted in the calculation used to determine the amount of the RSP benefit.

Indicate the length of time the supplement will be offered to households (e.g., three months, six months, indefinitely, etc.) and whether there is a recertification process for the supplement.

We will authorize the supplement for three months (we feel there is value in having regular contact with the households, in order to provide case management), then offer the household the opportunity to re-apply. If the household still meets our criteria, we will authorize an additional three months. This will continue until the household is no longer eligible.

Indicate the payment mechanism (e.g., check, transfer of funds, etc.) and whether the supplement will be paid to the tenant or the landlord.

Payment will be authorized by check payable to and mailed to the landlord.

Indicate how fraudulent and/or cases determined to otherwise be ineligible will be handled, including the procedure for recouping funds, if necessary.

We will utilize existing fraud staff and procedures, when necessary.

If an overpayment occurs, we will refer to the Agency's Resource Assistant, who will be responsible for tracking and recovery, including offering payment plans, if needed. The Resource Assistant will send an initial letter with a repayment agreement, then manually track and send monthly billing statements. Claims with no activity for six months may be sent to collections.

Describe how the district/contractor will ensure that households do not receive duplicate benefits from other sources that may assist with paying future rent/ongoing rental supplements.

We do not plan to use HMIS for this purpose.

We will utilize an existing "Release of Information" to inquire and share information with our local Non-Profit organizations. We will also refer RSP information to our TA and SNAP staff so appropriate budget updates can be completed, which will avoid overpayments for those programs.

Applicants attest when signing the request form that they are not already receiving funding for their rent from another source.

The request form and approval letter instruct the household to report changes within 10 calendar days.

Indicate how client records will be maintained (e.g., paper file cabinets, electronic records, or a combination of both) and whether any specific software or system will be used. Notifications regarding eligibility determinations (e.g., approvals, denials and discontinuances) must be maintained in the case record for a minimum of six years following submission of the final expenditure report.

We do not plan to utilize HMIS.

All relevant forms and documentation will be scanned and saved to a shared folder on the "I drive" on the secure county network

Indicate how the progress of those served in the RSP will be monitored. Reports that describe the progress of RSP activities and those served will be required on at least a quarterly basis. A report template will be provided. Minimally, reports must include the amount of rental supplement payments provided, the number of households served and certain demographic information including receipt of TA and household composition.

We do not plan to utilize HMIS.

We will manually track data and include on reports as requested.

To the fullest extent possible, RSP funding should not be used to supplement existing Shelter Supplement Programs. Districts who currently have an approved Shelter Supplement Plan must indicate the following:

- **How the RSP will be different from their current approved Shelter Supplement Plan**
- **The process established to ensure funds are not duplicated**
- **How participating households will be distinguished**

Tioga County does not have an approved Shelter Supplement Plan.

