APPLICATION GUIDELINES:
MORTGAGE PAYMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM

PURPOSE
The Mortgage Payment Assistance Grant Program provides financial assistance to eligible homeowners who are currently unemployed or underemployed as a result of COVID-19 and have fallen past due with mortgage and utility payments and/or are in jeopardy of future payment delinquency due to lost or diminished income.

FUNDING SOURCES
Development Block Grant (CDBG) and State Community Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP), in compliance with 24 CFR 570.207(b)(4), provide “emergency grant payments made over a period of up to three consecutive months paid directly to the provider of such items or services (rent or mortgage) and utilities (water, garbage, sewer, electric and communication services) on behalf of an individual or family.”

ELIGIBILITY
The total household income of an individual or family cannot exceed 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) for the St. Petersburg/Tampa/Clearwater geographic area as adjusted for household size.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80% AMI</td>
<td>$39,400</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
<td>$50,650</td>
<td>$56,250</td>
<td>$60,750</td>
<td>$65,250</td>
<td>$69,750</td>
<td>$74,250</td>
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UNDERWRITING
On March 27, 2020, the President signed the CARES ACT into law which, among other things, provides broad relief for mortgage loan borrowers. Under the provisions of the CARES ACT, CDBG and SHIP rules and regulations, the City created the Mortgage Payment Assistance Grant Program that provides emergency grant funding for its citizens who have been negatively impacted by COVID-19, preventing them from maintaining current mortgage and utility payments. The City’s responsibility is to ensure that the emergency grant is provided to those homeowners who cannot, by any other means, meet their mortgage or utility payment obligations due to temporary unemployment or health conditions caused by the pandemic.

The emergency grant will not be funded if:
- Mortgage payments were delinquent prior to April 1, 2020 unless evidence by the impact of COVID-19
- Mortgage or utility payments are delinquent for any reason other than from the results of COVID-19
- Are obligated to the City for any lien or assessment
- An IRS lien or judgment is active
- Mortgage payments are currently delinquent more than 90 days and the homeowner cannot show means to bring and maintain current payments moving forward
- The homeowner is currently in a mortgage forbearance agreement with the primary lender
- The homeowner has liquid assets in an amount exceeding $4,000

PRIORITY
Consideration will be given to homeowners on a first-come-first-qualified basis with priority granted to homeowners:
- Who previously received assistance through the City’s Purchase Assistance Program as a first-time home buyer
- Whose total household income is at or below 50% AMI
- Who are of special needs or have a household member with special needs
PROPERTY
Single Family Residential (SFR) must be:

- Located within the St. Petersburg municipal boundaries
- Occupied as the principal homestead residence of the homeowner
- Valued at less than 90% of the average sales price established within the Clearwater-Tampa-St. Petersburg geographic area ($294,601)

ASSISTANCE
The Grant Program provides direct payment funding available in a total amount not to exceed $8,000 for payment of no more than three consecutive months mortgage payments and three consecutive months utility payments paid directly to the first mortgage lender and the electricity, water, garbage and sewer service provider.

UNDERWRITING
Determination of Income eligibility will be underwritten in accordance with HUD’s Handbook 4350.3 Chapter 5, 24 CFR92.203 (a)(1) and/or by (2) 24 CFR92.64(a); §92.203(a)(1)(ii) waiver that permits self-certification with a minimum of two months source documentation in lieu of standard source documentation requirements to determine eligibility. In most cases all source documentation will be required given the risk of possible future audit.

- Applicants requiring emergency assistance related to COVID-19 may not have documentation that accurately reflects projected or anticipated income and would not qualify for assistance if the current mechanism of calculating income were to apply.
- The waiver to accept self-certification applies to those who have diminished or no income due to loss of employment either temporarily or permanently. However, all income must be taken into consideration and verified including unemployment compensation, emergency benefits and all sources of income that may apply excluding the MAPG grant.
- This waiver remains in effect until December 31, 2020. Income review is required within 90 days after the waiver period and must be documented in file no later than March 31, 2021. To ensure eligibility, applicants will be assisted month to month for a period not to exceed three months. At each interval of funding, income will be documented and re-calculated based on self-certification or by standard practice on a case-by-case basis.
- Applicant must complete a Self-Certification Form and take an Oath of Affirmation. The Self Certification form does not have to be acknowledged by the City.
- If there is any doubt that the applicant’s income may exceed 80% AMI, at the time of application or after the 90-day review of income, then the waiver would not apply and full compliance with HUD’s rule for verifying income would apply.
- Alternate documentation is considered “third party verification” and is an acceptable source of income verification.
- Income Certification of Income, Award Letter and other documents requiring signature can be mailed, scanned to applicant via e-mail, electronic signature acceptable with confirmation (additional clarification necessary).
- Applicants are not eligible for the Mortgage Payment Assistance Grant if assisted with payment of mortgage or utilities from another source.

APPLICATION DOCUMENTATION
The following documentation should be submitted to complete the Mortgage Payment Assistance Grant Program application unless a Self-Certification of Income, which limits source documentation, is under consideration:

- Application signed by all adult household occupants
- Budget worksheet and hardship disclosure
- Photo identification of all adult household occupants
- Birth certificates of all household occupants under the age of 18
- Copies of 60 days’ pay stubs for all working adult household members
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- Most recent P & L or IRS Schedule C for all self-employed members of the household
- Two months checking and account statements from all adult household members
- Current savings account and other asset account statements
- Evidence of child support
- Mortgage loan statement, loan account number, payment history and lenders contact information including telephone number
- 60 days’ pay stubs reflecting year-to-date income
- Utility account statements (water, garbage, sewer, electric)
- Evidence of loss of employment or diminished income
- Contact information for all family members or others who provide financial support to the household
- Evidence of unemployment compensation and/or other sources of income

CLOSING DOCUMENTATION
The following documents are required to provide funding the Mortgage Payment Assistance Grant Program:

- Statement of Understanding Form including Duplication of Benefits
  a. A Statement of Understanding is a legally binding document that references all rules and regulations that a person or parties must follow while initiating any kind of transaction or deal, using any service.
  b. Duplication of Benefit Statement refers to subsequent federal benefits or charitable donations received by a beneficiary recipient of SHIP and/or CDBG funds in connection with COVID-19.
- Self-Certification of Zero Income and Questionnaire
- Verifiable Self-Certification of Income
  a. A beneficiary's affirmed statement of income at the time of assistance when the standard method of third-party verification cannot be documented. This approach to income documentation can put the activity at possible risk if the beneficiary is later audited and determined over the applicable income limit.
- Income Certification
  a. Anticipated or projected income based on third-party verification including accepted alternate documentation for employment, public assistance, Social Security, child support, military pay, VA benefits, unemployment, pension/annuity, self-employment, zero income and asset income.
- Award Letter
  a. Defines amount and conditions of the Program Grant
- Income Contribution Form
  a. Verification of income derived from contribution by family members or others who provide cash payment to the applicant’s household.
  b. Contribution income is not considered if payment is made directly to purchase groceries, transportation, personal care, etc.
- Project Set-up
- Check Request
  a. Including Purchase Order Number