

The End of RentHelpMN and the Remainder of the Eviction Off-Ramp (Feb. 2022)

Presented by Housing Justice Center



Who are we?

Housing Justice Center is a nonprofit public interest advocacy and legal organization whose mission is to preserve, protect, and expand affordable housing for low-income individuals and families.

We believe that housing is a human right, and we use tools such as legal advocacy, policy advocacy, education and research to bolster community-articulated strategies for housing justice.

Contact Us

General Inquiries: (612) 807-1139 or info@hjcmn.org

Today's Presenters: Max Tsai & Shana Tomenes

Contact Us

RentHelpMN related issues: (612) 807-1139

Email: mtsai@hjcmn.org

Agenda

1. End of RentHelpMN Overview
2. How do I check the Status of My Application? Username/Password Recovery
3. Prequalification Letter/Application Statuses
4. Common Remaining Documents
5. Appeals/What to do After Denial
6. FAQ
7. Q&A

RentHelpMN Basics – You must have been eligible at time of application to receive assistance

What is RentHelpMN?

- COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program distributed by Minnesota Housing

Who was eligible to apply?

1. Low-income Minnesota renters
2. Who were eligible for unemployment benefits OR had experienced financial hardship directly or indirectly due to the coronavirus outbreak
3. Who could demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability

RentHelpMN Basics Cont.

What is low-income for RentHelpMN?

- Renters must be at or below 80% of Area Median Income
- Ramsey County AMI
 - 1 Person Household - \$55,950
 - 2 Person Household - \$63,950
 - 3 Person Household - \$71,950
 - 4 Person Household - \$79,900

Documentation for Income Certification

- Form of ID for head of household – Must also document that they rent
- Documentation of household income for all adults – Tax and pay documents, employer certification.
- Most things can be self-certified to if documents are not available

RentHelpMN Basics Cont.

What types of rental properties are eligible for assistance?

- Apartments
- Single-family homes
- Rented manufactured homes
- Hotels, motel stays if they are the renter's primary residence
- Other informal lease agreements subject to review by the program

What costs will be covered?

- Assistance for up to 18 months (18 mo. Rent AND/OR 18 mo. Utilities)
- Costs were only covered IF YOU HAD BACK RENT AT TIME OF APPLICATION – utility costs (minus phone or internet) + up to 3 months of forward rent. Late fees are covered as well.

How do I Check the Status of My Application?

Ways to Check Status

- 1. Call 211
 - Ask to have your application connected to a field partner.
- 2. Log into your dashboard
- 3. (if landlord) email landlords@renthelpmn.org
- 4. (if application connected) – ask a field partner for a status update.

What if I Applied, But Don't Know My Username/Password?

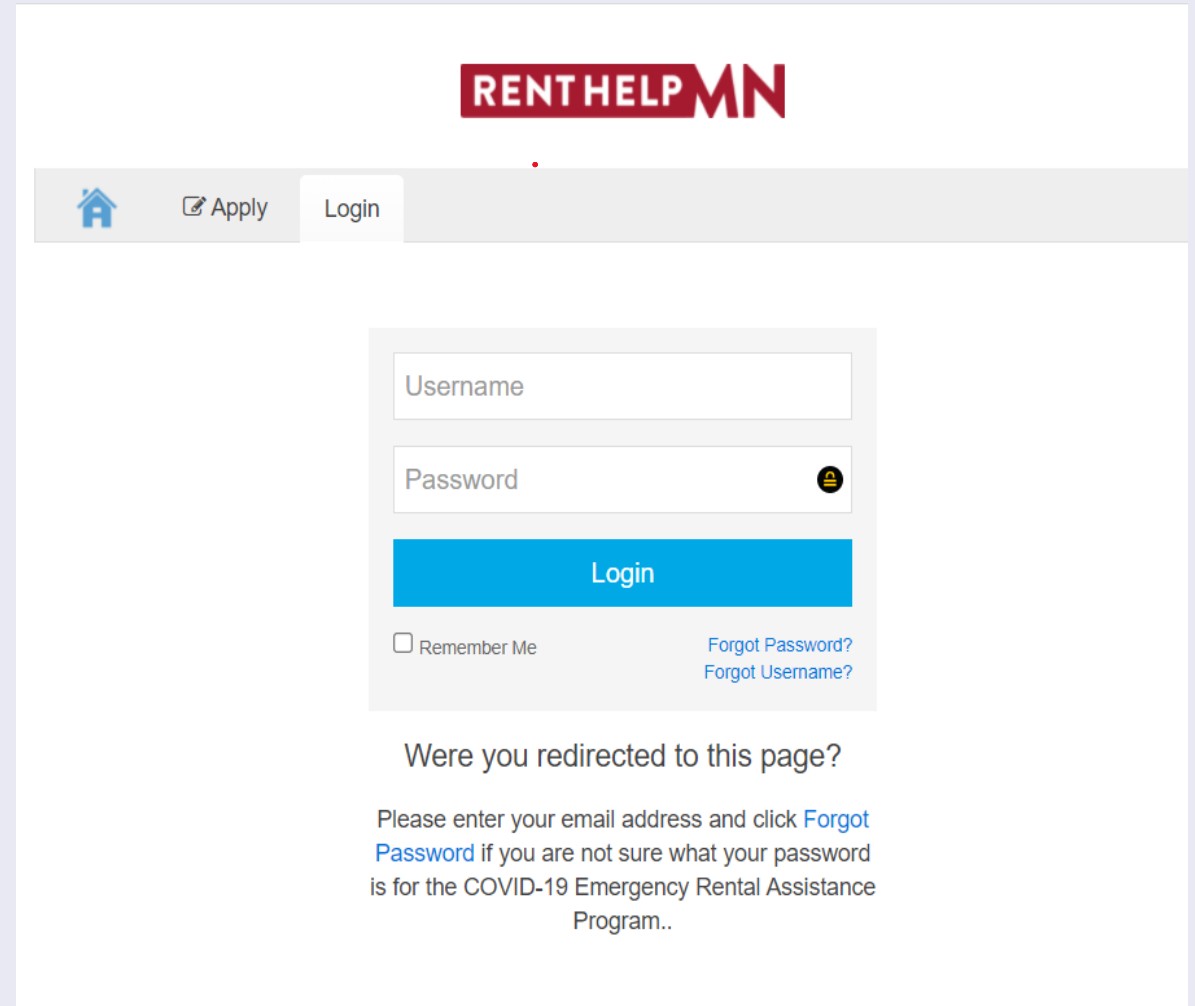
Reasons to use the Username/Password Recovery

- 1. I applied online, but forgot my username/password
- 2. I applied over the phone, and somebody filled in my application for me online, but I forgot or did not write down my username/password
- 3. I applied using a paper application
 - If you apply using a paper application, an online application will be created for you.

What if I Applied, But Don't Know My Username/Password?

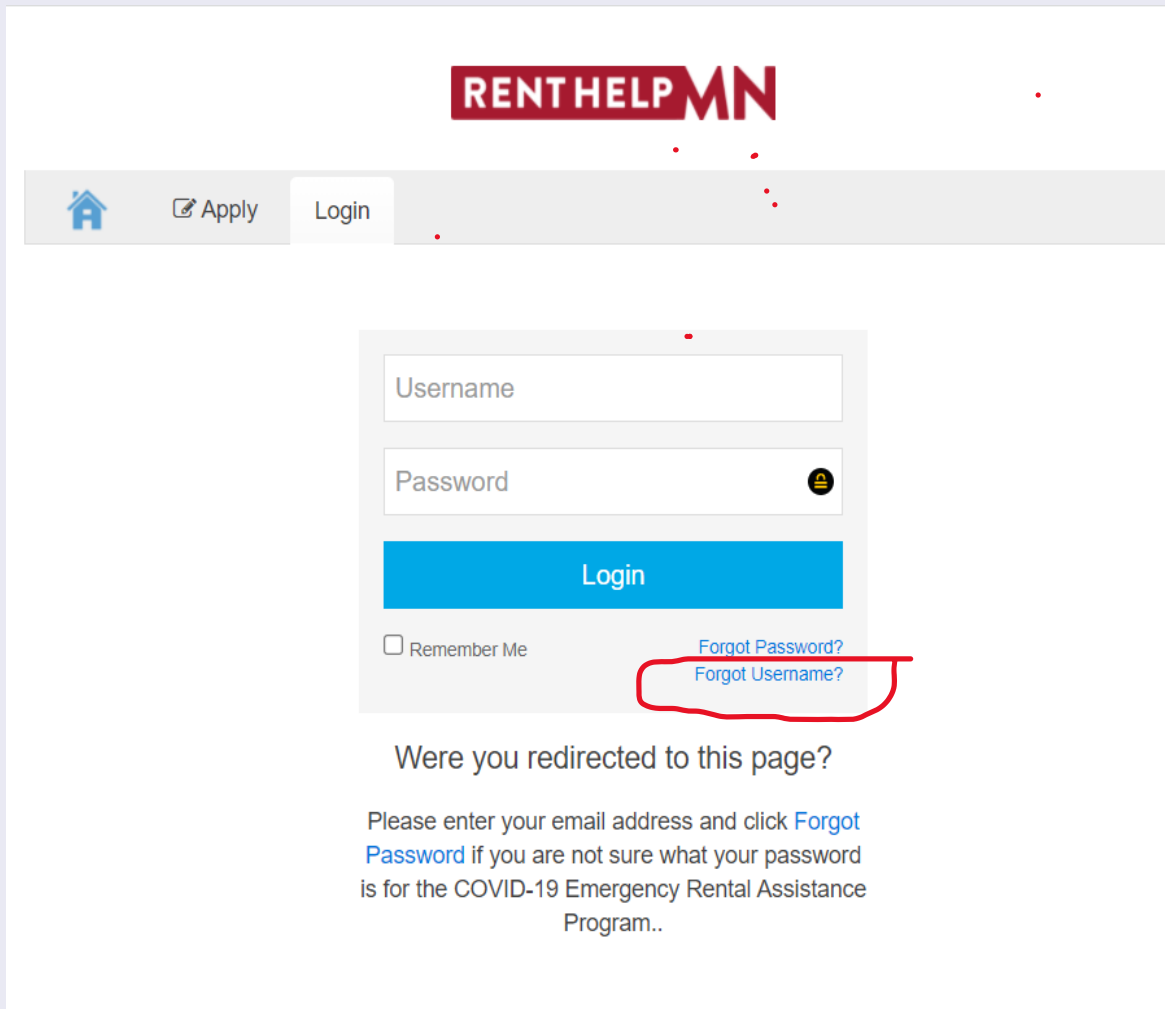
Username/Password Recovery

- Go to apply.renthelpmn.org/login
- You will need the email and/or the phone number that was used on the application



The screenshot shows the login page for RENTHELP MN. At the top, the logo "RENTHELP MN" is displayed in a dark red box. Below the logo is a navigation bar with a home icon, an "Apply" button with a checkmark icon, and a "Login" button. The main content area features a login form with two input fields: "Username" and "Password". The "Password" field has a toggle icon for visibility. Below the input fields is a blue "Login" button. Underneath the button is a "Remember Me" checkbox and two links: "Forgot Password?" and "Forgot Username?". At the bottom of the page, there is a section titled "Were you redirected to this page?" with a paragraph of text: "Please enter your email address and click [Forgot Password](#) if you are not sure what your password is for the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program.."


Forgot Username



RENT HELP MN

[Home](#) [Apply](#) [Login](#)

Username

Password 

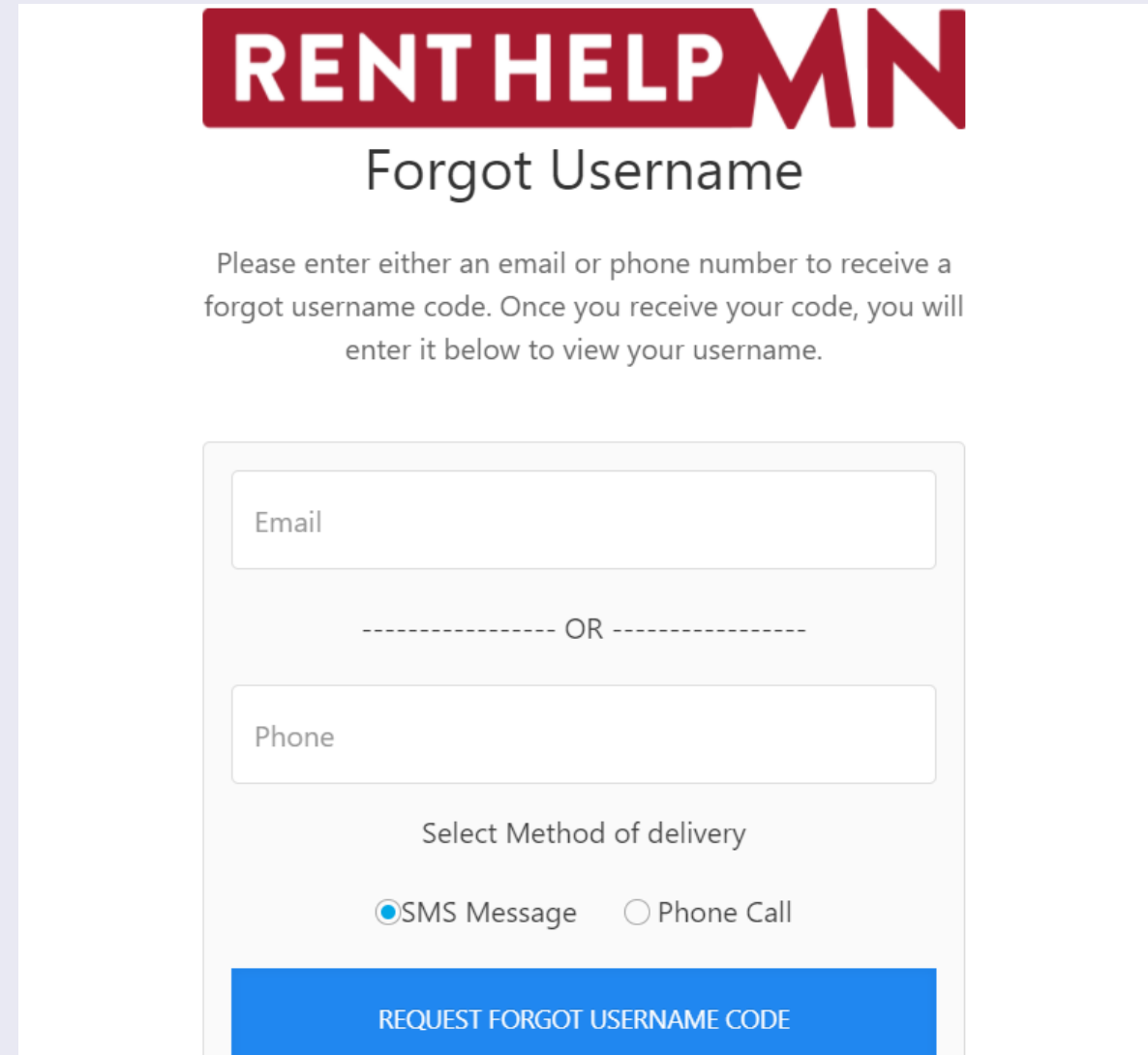
Login

Remember Me

[Forgot Password?](#)
[Forgot Username?](#)

Were you redirected to this page?

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RENT HELP MN

Forgot Username

Please enter either an email or phone number to receive a forgot username code. Once you receive your code, you will enter it below to view your username.

Email

----- OR -----

Phone

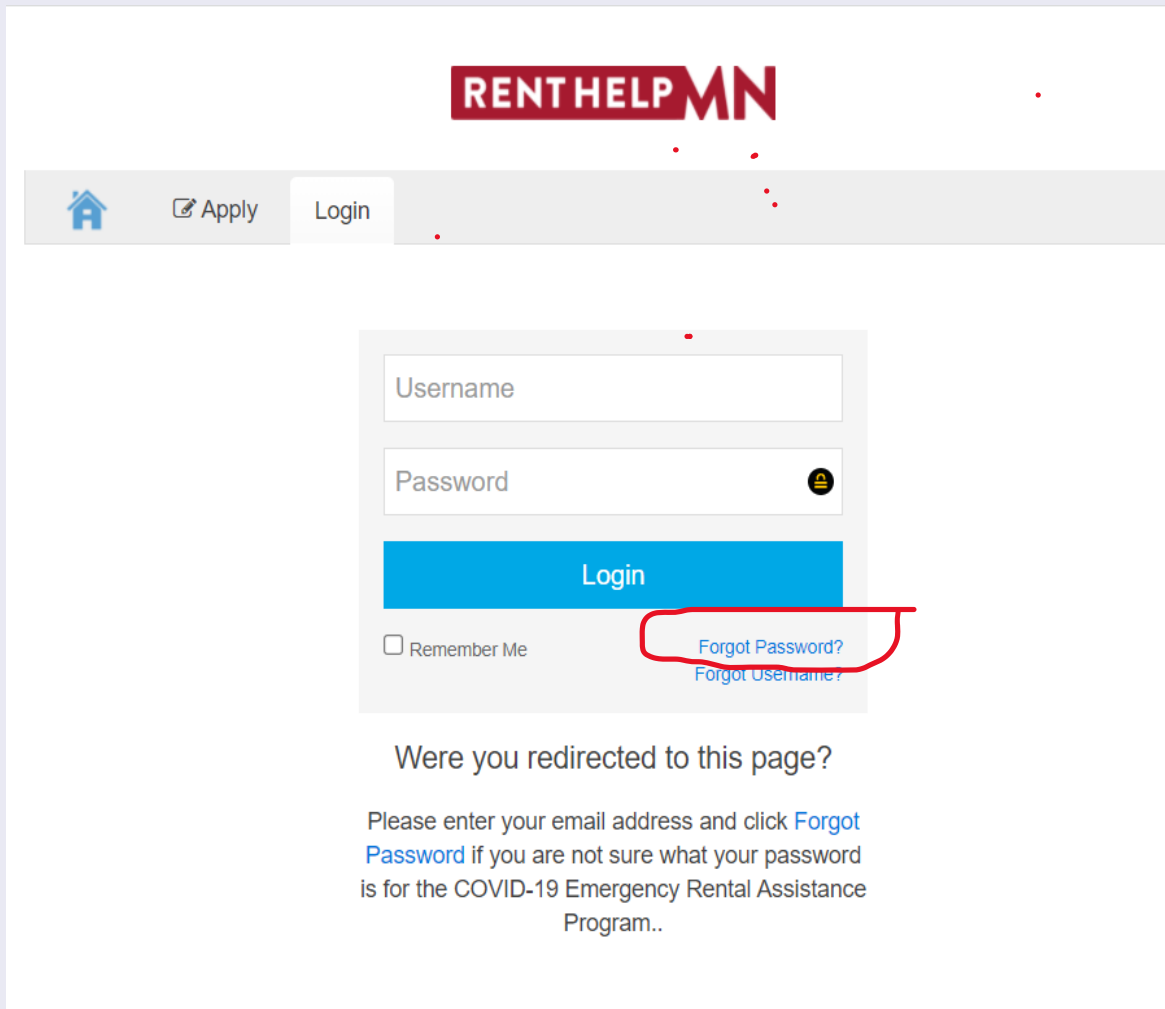
Select Method of delivery

SMS Message Phone Call

REQUEST FORGOT USERNAME CODE

Forgot Password


NOTE: New password must be min. 15 characters



RENT HELP MN

[Home](#) [Apply](#) [Login](#)

Username

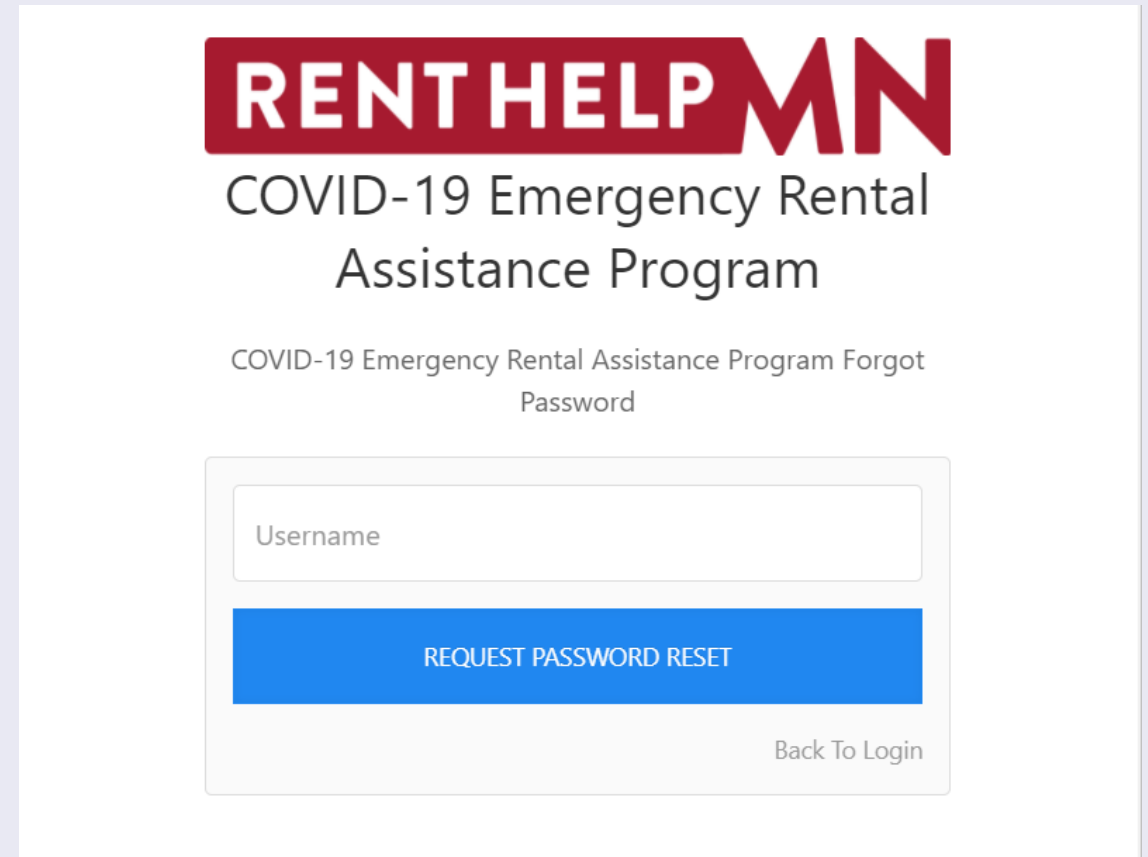
Password 

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Remember Me [Forgot Password?](#)
[Forgot Username?](#)

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RENT HELP MN

COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program

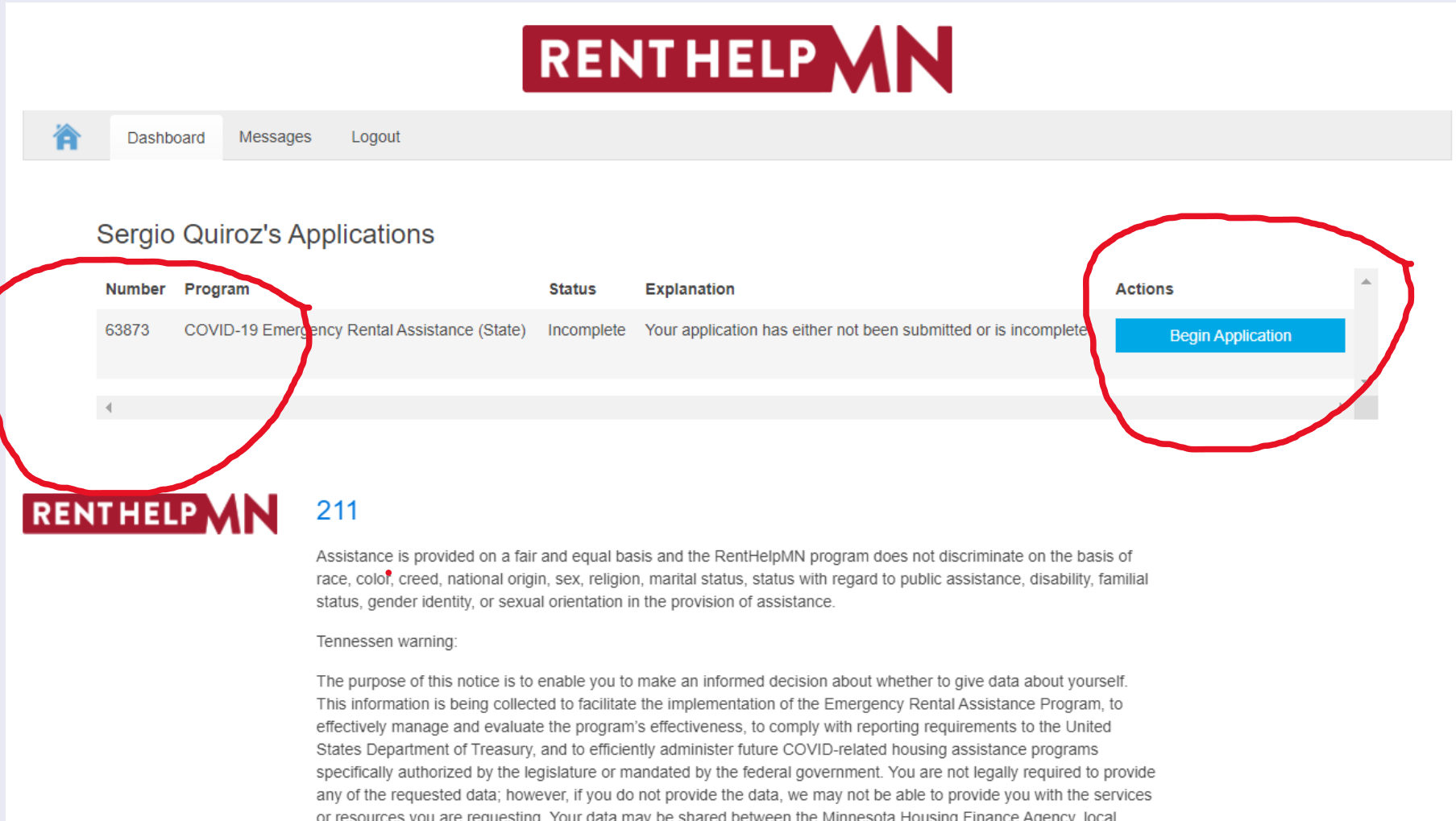
COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program Forgot Password

Username

REQUEST PASSWORD RESET

[Back To Login](#)

The Renter Dashboard



The screenshot displays the RentHelpMN Renter Dashboard. At the top, the RentHelpMN logo is prominent. Below it, a navigation bar includes a home icon, 'Dashboard', 'Messages', and 'Logout'. The main content area is titled 'Sergio Quiroz's Applications' and features a table with the following columns: 'Number', 'Program', 'Status', 'Explanation', and 'Actions'. A red circle highlights the first row of the table, which contains the application number 63873, the program name 'COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance (State)', and the status 'Incomplete'. Another red circle highlights the 'Begin Application' button in the 'Actions' column of the same row. Below the table, there is a 'RENTHELP MN 211' logo and a paragraph of text regarding the program's non-discrimination policy and a Tennessee warning.

Number	Program	Status	Explanation	Actions
63873	COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance (State)	Incomplete	Your application has either not been submitted or is incomplete	Begin Application

RENTHELP MN 211

Assistance is provided on a fair and equal basis and the RentHelpMN program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, religion, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, familial status, gender identity, or sexual orientation in the provision of assistance.

Tennessee warning:

The purpose of this notice is to enable you to make an informed decision about whether to give data about yourself. This information is being collected to facilitate the implementation of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, to effectively manage and evaluate the program's effectiveness, to comply with reporting requirements to the United States Department of Treasury, and to efficiently administer future COVID-related housing assistance programs specifically authorized by the legislature or mandated by the federal government. You are not legally required to provide any of the requested data; however, if you do not provide the data, we may not be able to provide you with the services or resources you are requesting. Your data may be shared between the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, local

What is a Pending Status?

A Pending Status is a Status Still Being Processed by MN Housing

- (Non-Exhaustive) Examples of pending statuses;
 - Pending Initial Review
 - Requires Applicant Response
 - Declined by Landlord
 - Appeal Pending
 - Final Review
- (Non-Exhaustive) Examples of NOT pending Statuses
 - Declined by Program
 - Declined by Renter
 - Withdrawn

Common Requested Documents

Common Documents Requested

- Rent Ledger
- Rental Agreement
 - Household Change Sometimes Required if Lease is Different than Current Situation
- Utility Bill
- Self-Verification Forms Available at renthelpmn.org/resources

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Self-Verification Form

Print out a bunch of these ahead of time if you are going to run into a bunch of clients.

Only use if Document submission is unavailable/impracticable

RENT HELP MN

Self-Verification of Landlord/Tenant Relationship and Rent Owed (if no written lease and Landlord cannot or will not sign Verification of Landlord/Tenant Relationship)

Applicant's Name _____

Rental Property Address: _____

Landlord's Name (name where rent is sent) _____

Landlord's Address: _____

Landlord's Phone: _____

Landlord's Email: _____

Landlord owns the property Yes No

Landlord is the management company authorized to manage the property Yes No

Applicant move in date: _____ Expiration of tenancy (if any) _____

Monthly rent payment: _____ Rent Past Due _____

Are any utilities included in the rent payment? Yes/No If yes, please list:

I understand that I may need to provide additional information or answer additional questions because I am not able to produce a written lease or a Verification of Landlord/Tenant Relationship and Rent Owed with a signature from my landlord. Yes No

I certify that the information presented in this certification is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I further understand that providing false representations constitutes an act of fraud. False, misleading, or incomplete information may result in denial of the application, repayment of any funds received through the RentHelpMN program, or other remedies available under law.

Signature of Applicant

Printed Name of Applicant

Date

Types of Self-Certification

Non-exhaustive List of Things you can Self-Certify

- **Rent Statement/Ledger**
- **Rental Agreement**
- **No Income**
- **ID**
- **Household Change (if current household different from household on the lease)**

Rent Statement/Ledger Self-Cert Pt. 1

Emergency Rent Assistance Program Landlord Statement/Ledger of Rent Due

Use this form to create a rent and fees statement to use to request past due rent and fees owed to your landlord back to March 13, 2020.

Please note: By completing this form, a landlord is providing a statement that the following information is true. Completing this form allows us to process rent assistance more quickly.

Date Completed: _____

Landlord Name: _____

Property Name: _____

Landlord contact information (phone and/or email): _____

Tenant Name: _____

Address of tenant, including unit number: _____

Move-in or lease dates: _____

Please verify that the tenant listed about is paying rent to a lease holder.

_____ has been living at _____ since _____.

This person _____ owes \$ _____ per _____ for rent.

Fees included in this statement are for:

Pre-Qualification Letter

RENTHELP MN

[Dashboard](#) [Messages](#) [Logout](#)

Sergio Quiroz's Applications

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63873	COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance (State)	Incomplete	Your application has either not been submitted or is incomplete	Begin Application

RENTHELP MN

211

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RENT HELP MN

Fill & Sign

App # → Your Application [redacted] Status as of *Today*
[redacted] ← *Status*

Your application's status reflects its current step in processing. Please check your email for updates and possible requests for additional information.

- [redacted]

Status →

Proof of Pending Application for COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance

To whom it may concern,

[redacted], [redacted] submitted an application for COVID-19 emergency rental assistance through RentHelpMN.org. This website hosts a program made possible by federal emergency rental assistance funds and is administered by a partnership between Minnesota Housing, the counties of Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey and

Eviction Off-Ramp & RentHelpMN Protections

The Eviction Off-Ramp

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- Final protections end on June 1, 2022
 - Protects Minnesotans from nonpayment of rent eviction who have a pending application for RentHelpMN
 - Landlords can check on their landlord portal to see if tenant has applied for RentHelpMN
 - Tenants who get an eviction notice while having a pending RentHelpMN application should communicate that to their landlord AND attend court

What if I was denied?

- **Most denials come via email – make sure to check email consistently**
- **Most common reasons for denial**
 - **Lack of communication**
 - **Incomplete documents**

How to Appeal a RentHelpMN denial

Appeal can only be done by mail or by fax

- Instructions & required cover letter forms can be found on renthelpmn.org/resources
- Appeal must be sent within 10 days
- No specific form – a letter will do
 - State the following in the letter:
 - Who you are; Name, Address, Application ID # (if known)
 - Why you were denied (if known)
 - Why this denial was in error
 - Why you should be eligible
- What to include
 - Letter
 - Cover page
 - Documents (if applicable)

What if I was denied?

Important Things to Know

- “Within 10 days” – to be safe, submit within 10 days of when you see the status changed to “denied by program” (but should be from when an email or letter is sent).
 - If you receive letter or email at a later point, you can argue for 10 days after receipt of that letter if you miss the initial 10 day window.
- “Pending Appeal” is a pending application status under the off-ramp
 - Eligible for protections like any other off-ramp status.
- There will likely be lag between an appeal sent and that status reflected in the dashboard/applicant status
 - Status is not updated until appeal received and manually changed by processor. Keep a copy of what you sent as proof of appeal.

Who can help me file a RentHelpMN appeal?

Appeals can be confusing. It never hurts to reach out to get answers to your questions!

- Contact your field partner if you worked with a field partner to complete your application
- Call 2-1-1 to be connected with a field partner who can help you navigate the appeals process
- Call the Housing Justice Center – 612-807-1139

The timeline to file an appeal is short--make sure to reach out as early as possible to get answers to your questions and help completing your appeal.

Frequently Asked Questions

I applied by the deadline. Will RentHelpMN run out of money before my application is processed?

- That is unlikely. Based on current communication from Minnesota Housing it is unlikely that the program will run out of money and will be able to process and pay all of the applications that are pending.

Does my landlord have to participate in the RentHelpMN process?

- No, but landlord non-participation may slow down the application. However, in the event of landlord non-participation, money will be paid directly to the tenant instead of the landlord.

What if I have moved or plan to move before I would be approved for RentHelpMN?

- Your application will be denied, and you will not have the opportunity to reapply.

Frequently Asked Questions

How many months of assistance can I ask for?

- 18 Months of utilities AND/OR rent.

Can my Landlord Evict Me After I Receive Assistance?

- Landlords cannot evict tenants for non-payment of rent while a rental assistance application is pending (i.e. not denied OR paid out)
- Can still be evicted for other material breach reasons

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I check the status of my application?

- Check your portal (regularly, if possible!), or call 211.
- Sometimes email notification for communications
- Sometimes case managers will call you

Does the Landlord or Tenant get a Letter when they Reach "Funding approved"?

- No – but should receive confirmation after payment is sent
- Payment letter should show breakdown of months requested and amount of payment for each month of assistance.

Thank you!

Contact Us!

(612) 807-1139

info@hjcmn.org

Questions?