



Consumer Advisory

OPC Encourages Residents to Take Advantage of NEW COVID-19 Rent and Utility Assistance Program While Funds Are Available!

April 13, 2021

DC People's Counsel Sandra Mattavous-Frye wants consumers struggling to pay rent or utility bills due to the pandemic to know they now have more resources to call on. The Office of the People's Counsel commends Mayor Muriel Bowser for launching "Stronger Together by Assisting You" (STAY DC), a program funded with \$350 million in targeted COVID-19 relief from the federal government.

To qualify for STAY DC, you must be a renter or housing provider in the District who is at risk, or has a tenant at risk, of not paying rent or utilities on a residential dwelling, and meet income [eligibility requirements here](#). Renters whose landlords do not participate in the program or who normally make payments directly to utilities may be able to have assistance go straight to their utility companies.

Renters and housing providers can apply for rental and electric, gas and water bill assistance at stay.dc.gov. Applicants can call the **STAY DC Call Center at 833-4-STAYDC** for support throughout their application process, Monday through Friday from 7 am to 7 pm.

"We know many consumers have been forced to make hard choices, often between food, medicine, paying the rent or utility bills and have fallen behind. **STAY DC** can help take the economic pressure off and give consumers a chance to catch up, but we must get residents to apply before the funding goes away," stated People's Counsel Mattavous-Frye.

See more details below.

The STAY DC program is administered by the Department of Human Services (DHS) in collaboration with the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED), the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services (DMHHS), the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE).

STAY DC will provide support to residents through:

- **Back Rent:** Funding can be used to pay unpaid rent going back to April 1, 2020
- **Upcoming Rent:** Money can be used to pay forward rent, up to 3 months at a time
- **Utility Expenses:** Water, gas and electricity expenses can be paid on your behalf
- **Extended Support:** Housing support is available for up to 18 months, per tenant