



BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Mission Statement

On behalf of the Citizens of Baltimore City, the Committee on Economic and Community Development (ECD) is responsible for supporting strong thriving communities ECD will review proposed zoning and land use changes, tackle issues related to economic development, oversee housing policy, and promote equitable economic opportunity for all Baltimore residents.

The Honorable Sharon Green Middleton

BRIEFING

June 15, 2021

2:30 PM

Virtual Webex Meeting

Legislative Oversight LO #21-0010

Briefing – Emergency Security Deposit Relief

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Committee: Economic and Community Development

Legislative Oversight: 21-0010

Briefing – Emergency Security Deposit Relief

Purpose:

For the purpose of reviewing the program which would allow for distribution of federal Community Services Block Grant funds to be used for emergency security deposits.

Background

The City of Baltimore recently announced expansion of the Eviction Prevention Program to assist low-income City residents by providing additional resources to help cover the cost of security deposits. See the attached press release. The initiative would:

- Begin this fall
- Create a designated fund generated from \$3.3 million in supplemental FY20 Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds
- Expend funds between September 2021 and September 2022
- Help vulnerable residents move toward long-term housing stability
- Provide up to \$2,000 per unit to cover the cost of security deposits for Baltimore City renters
- Provide access to legal and relocation services and utilities assistance

Applicants must:

- reside in a rental unit that is registered and licensed in Baltimore City
- have an income 125 percent of the federal poverty level
- have a signed lease
- provide documentation of security deposit requirements

The Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success will oversee administration of the initiative and use a central online portal to process applications.

Analysis by: Jennifer L. Coates
Analysis Date: June 14, 2021

Direct Inquiries to: 410-396-1260

Mayor Scott Announces Expanded Eviction Prevention Program for Tenants, Including Dedicated Fund for Security Deposit Assistance

Thursday Jun 10th, 2021



Brandon M. Scott

Mayor,

Baltimore City

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BALTIMORE, MD (Thursday, June 10, 2021) — Mayor Brandon M. Scott is announcing an expansion of Baltimore City’s Eviction Prevention Program, as part of a continuing effort to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic through a lens of equity while investing in needed support for the city’s most vulnerable residents.

The expansion will provide tenants with additional resources for long-term housing stability. Starting this fall, the City will launch a designated fund to cover the cost of security deposits for Baltimore City renters up to \$2,000 per unit. Tenants will also have access to legal and relocation services, utilities assistance, and case management to move toward long-term housing stability.

“All Baltimoreans deserve safe and stable housing. As we emerge from this pandemic, we must address barriers to long-term housing stability for our residents, like unaffordable security deposits,” **said Mayor Brandon M. Scott**. “This expansion of eviction prevention resources — including a dedicated fund for security deposits — is the result of months of collaboration between the Mayor’s Office, Mayor’s Office of

Children and Family Success, and the Department of Housing and Community Development to support Baltimore families while also safeguarding the rights of renters.”

The security deposit fund will be generated from \$3.3 million in supplemental funds from a FY20 Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) to respond to the coronavirus pandemic. Between September 2021 and September 2022, when the funds must be expended, the City will provide security deposit assistance of up to \$2,000 per unit.

To be eligible, applicants must have an income of 125 percent of the federal poverty level, reside in rental units that are registered and licensed with Baltimore City, have a signed lease, and provide documentation of a security deposit requirement.

The Eviction Prevention Program is administered by the Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success (MOCFS) through Baltimore City’s Community Action Partnership (CAP) centers. Because Eviction Prevention Program funding spans federal, state and local sources, each with its own timeline and income eligibility criteria, MOCFS will process applications for assistance through a central online portal and refer applicants for specific resources based on their eligibility. The security deposit program will be an exception in that it will have a unique application process supported by designated funds and a designated staff.

“This addition to the current Eviction Prevention Program strengthens our overall efforts to achieve housing stability in Baltimore City,” **said MOCFS Executive Director Tisha Edwards.** “From the time we launched the program last fall we have witnessed a continuous increase in need, and to meet that need we have been investigating funding sources that would allow us to expand opportunities to provide families the chance to find safe, secure and stable housing. Providing funds to cover the cost of their security deposit is one key way to do just that.”

“The ability to pay a security deposit is a known barrier to obtaining affordable housing, and this effort will further our goals to promote housing stability throughout Baltimore City and help our most vulnerable residents secure safe and affordable housing,” **stated Acting Housing Commissioner Alice Kennedy.**

Other new housing stability supports coming online this summer include a partnership between MOCFS and United Way of Central Maryland that will redirect \$16 million in State funds to direct rental assistance. United Way will make bulk payments to landlords of multifamily housing properties with large numbers of tenants.

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