



City of Lockhart, Texas
Emergency Utility Bill Relief Grant Program Guidelines
August 18, 2020

1. Program Objective

The Lockhart City Council has declared that the City's utility services are considered essential utility services to meet basic public health, sanitation, welfare, and public safety needs of its residents.

The Lockhart City Council has approved the implementation of the Emergency Utility Bill Relief Grant program which is intended to help City of Lockhart's inside-City residential utility customers to have uninterrupted access to utility services who are experiencing financial hardships due to COVID-19 pandemic and are unable to pay their utility bills.

2. Funding Source

The funding source for this emergency financial assistance program is from the City of Lockhart's allotment of Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) from the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM) under the CARES Act.

3. Effective & Program End Date

The City's Emergency Utility Bill Relief Grant program is effective March 1, 2020 to July 31, 2020. The City Council, at its sole discretion, subject to funding availability may authorize to extend the program end date to any date prior to December 30, 2020.

4. Eligibility Requirements

City's utility customers to be eligible must meet **ALL** requirements identified below to qualify for financial assistance under the City's Emergency Utility Bill Relief Grant program:

- a. Applicant must be experiencing a financial hardship due COVID-19 pandemic.
- b. Applicant must be experiencing a financial hardship due to loss of job or reduction in income related to COVID-19.
- c. Applicant must be an inside-City residential customer with an active utility account (not account that has been closed).
- d. Applicant must be the primary individual under whose name the utility account is registered and established.
- e. Applicant's income must be at or below the federal income thresholds for low income as shown in Exhibit A as attached herewith.

5. Eligible Financial Assistance

Only the following items are eligible and authorized for the use of grant funds under the City's Emergency Utility Bill Relief Grant program.

- a. City of Lockhart's utility bill issued for utility services and billed for the following months:
 - i. March 2020 cycle 2 utility bill due April 10, 2020
 - ii. April 2020 cycle 1 utility bill due April 25, 2020
 - iii. April 2020 cycle 2 utility bill due May 10, 2020
 - iv. May 2020 cycle 1 utility bill due May 25, 2020
 - v. May 2020 cycle 2 utility bill due June 10, 2020
 - vi. June 2020 cycle 1 utility bill due June 25, 2020
 - vii. June 2020 cycle 2 utility bill due July 10, 2020
 - viii. July 2020 cycle 1 utility bill due July 25, 2020
- b. All utility services provided by and billed for by the City of Lockhart which may include utility services for electric, water, wastewater, solid waste, and storm drainage.
- c. Monthly service charges for utility services.
- d. Late payment penalty.
- e. Service disconnection fee
- f. Does not cover account deposit or new service initiation fees.

6. Financial Assistance for Utility Account Credit

The financial assistance to inside-City residential utility customers who have met the eligibility requirements and who have been approved under the City's Emergency Utility Bill Relief Grant program will be aided as follows:

- a. The customer's utility account will be applied a monetary credit for the customer's monthly utility bill issued for utility services billed for the following months and for which the payment due date is on:
 - i. March 2020 cycle 2 utility bill due April 10, 2020
 - ii. April 2020 cycle 1 utility bill due April 25, 2020
 - iii. April 2020 cycle 2 utility bill due May 10, 2020
 - iv. May 2020 cycle 1 utility bill due May 25, 2020
 - v. May 2020 cycle 2 utility bill due June 10, 2020
 - vi. June 2020 cycle 1 utility bill due June 25, 2020
 - vii. June 2020 cycle 2 utility bill due July 10, 2020
 - viii. July 2020 cycle 1 utility bill due July 25, 2020
- b. The monetary credit applied to the customer's utility account is not for past due utility account balance(s) outstanding prior to the program effective date of March 1, 2020.
- c. No refunds to utility customers receiving financial assistance under the City's Emergency Utility Bill Relief Grant program shall be allowed and authorized.
- d. Any unused account credit arising as a result of the customer, who has been approved to receive financial assistance under this program, having made a utility payment before the financial assistance approval, shall rollover to the next month.

7. Documentation Required

The City of Lockhart inside-City residential customer to be considered for financial assistance under the City's Emergency Utility Bill Relief Grant program shall provide the following:

- a. Completed Application (Exhibit B attached herewith) and whichever is applicable,
 - 1) Proof of income or pay reduction (latest pay stub), or
 - 2) Proof of approved unemployment claim, or
 - 3) Letter from employer confirming business closure, layoff, or reduction in pay due to COVID-19, and
 - 4) City of Lockhart Affidavit Form with justification boxes to be checked, signed and dated (Exhibit C attached herewith).

8. Outsourcing of Program Intake & Administrative Services

Due to the urgent and emergency nature and objective of the City's Emergency Utility Bill Relief Grant program, the City Manager and or their designee is hereby authorized to consider, negotiate and recommend for City Council's approval a contract with a professional organization and or a business entity for securing application intake and administration of the grant program on behalf of the City of Lockhart.

9. City Council Authorization

The above program guidelines and eligibility requirements for the City's Emergency Utility Bill Relief Grant were initially reviewed on August 4, 2020 and finally approved by the Lockhart City Council on August 18, 2020.

Applications can be mailed to City Hall or dropped in night boxes with documentation. Approval or denial will be sent via postal address to applicants ~1 week after submission.



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EXHIBIT A
Federal Annual Income Thresholds for Austin-Round Rock MSA by Household Size

	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
Low Income	\$54,700	\$62,500	\$70,300	\$78,100	\$84,350	\$90,600	\$96,850	\$103,100

Source:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) income guidelines utilized for Section 8 program. This income threshold is based on 80% of FY 2020 MFI \$97,600 for Austin-Round Rock, TX MSA.



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EXHIBIT B
APPLICATION FORM

1. Today's Date: _____
2. Applicant's Name: _____
3. Name of Account Holder: _____
4. Utility Account Number: _____ (13-digits, no dashes)
5. My Utility Account: Is Active Has Been Closed-out
6. Service Address: _____
7. Number of People in Household: _____
8. Contact Email Address: _____
9. Contact Phone Number: _____ (10-digits, no dashes)
10. My Monthly Income: _____
11. My Spouse/Partner's Monthly Income: _____
12. Reason for Requesting Emergency
Financial Assistance: Experiencing Hardship Due to COVID-19
 Loss of Job Due to COVID-19
 Reduction in Income Due to Covid-19
 Other: Please Provide Explanation Below

13. Applicant's Signature: _____



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EXHIBIT C
AFFIDAVIT

I, _____, presently residing at _____, Lockhart, Texas 78644, County of Caldwell, Texas, do hereby solemnly swear that I and my family have been experiencing financial hardships due to COVID-19 and I am unable to pay my City of Lockhart utility bill.

I further solemnly swear that I have provided the following documentation as proof for:

1. Loss of job
2. Loss of income
3. Unemployment claim filed
4. Unemployment claim approved
5. Employer's letter confirming business closure, layoff, or reduction in pay due to COVID-19
6. Other: Explanation provided by me under item #12 on the attached application

I am requesting financial assistance under the City's Emergency Utility Bill Relief Grant Program. I hereby agree that should the information submitted by me to receive financial assistance under the City's Emergency Utility Bill Relief Grant Program is found to be untrue or false, any monetary credit applied to my City of Utility account will be immediately reversed and I will be responsible for all utility account balance.

By signing this Affidavit, I hereby attest that I have read this Affidavit, that I fully understand and acknowledge all claims and statements made by me in this Affidavit, and that all such claims and statements made by me in this Affidavit are completely true and accurate.

Signature of Applicant & Date