New York State of Opportunity | **Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance**

ERAP Best Practices | Encouraging Landlord Participation

As New York State's Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) enters a new month, the State is focusing on landlord engagement. Misconceptions about the program, eroding tenant relationships, and general misinformation has led some landlords to dismiss ERAP in favor of eviction or other remedy even though the benefits of participating in ERAP often far outweigh the alternatives.

There are a number of strategies that community-based organizations can take to encourage landlord participation, including outreach, education, application assistance, and mediation. Here are some best practices to consider for engaging these crucial stakeholders.

Outreach and Education

Strategy	Tip	Example
Reach out to local landlord associations	Offer to provide ERAP information and updates at regular association meetings.	*"Our agency meets with a prominent landlord association weekly to provide ERAP updates and help address barriers impeding participation."*
Leverage existing data and relationships	Contact landlords your agency has worked with on other temporary assistance programs.	*"Our city maintains a rental registry, which we plan to email and snail mail with ERAP info and details on where to get support."*
Conduct a survey to gauge landlord participation and concerns	Collect contact information in the survey to use for targeted outreach efforts.	*"We administered a survey with local landlords asking about the extent of arrears and whether they would be willing to work with our organization on ERAP applications."*
Highlight the benefits of ERAP participation	Focus advertising and outreach on making landlords whole, including the fact that payments are issued directly to owners.	*"We've emphasized to landlords that working with tenants on ERAP offers the best opportunity to recover back rent."*

Application Assistance

Strategy	Tip	Example
Contact tenants on behalf of landlords, and vice versa	If landlords or tenants are waiting on documentation from the other party, call that party directly to expedite the process.	*"Our organization works with both tenants and landlords to streamline the application process."*
Establish an individual or team dedicated to assisting landlords	Offer to assist with portal registration, document uploads, etc., just as you would for tenants.	*"We have established a "landlord liaison" who connects with landlords to provide education, assistance, and direction for working with tenants to submit the application."*
Reach out to nonresponsive parties	If a landlord indicates their tenant is unwilling to participate, call the tenant and offer to help complete their portion of the application.	Reluctant tenants and landlords may be more willing to participate if they know hands-on assistance is available.

Relationship Building and Mediation

Strategy	Tip	Example
Bring landlords and tenants together	Set up a phone call, videoconference, or in-person meeting to help work through issues between parties.	*"The pandemic has exacerbated the rift between many landlords and tenants. One-on-one meetings can help mend those relationships."*
Position your organization as a neutral advocate	Express empathy for both parties and highlight the mutual benefits of ERAP participation.	Resolving minor disputes can save landlords time and money and keep tenants stably housed.
Dispel misunderstandings	Point landlords to OTDA's FAQ webpage for information about required documents, eviction protections, and more.	Inform landlords that ERAP participation does not protect tenants from future non-payment or other lease violations.

Additional Resources

- **Video:** Understanding the Landlord Portal
- **Flyer:** Customizable ERAP Outreach Flyer for Landlords (English language version)
- **PDF:** Landlord Document Checklist (English language version)
- **FAQs:** ERAP Frequently Asked Questions

For more information and resources, including foreign language versions of the above documents, visit the OTDA website at https://otda.ny.gov/programs/emergency-rental-assistance/.