

Texas Eviction Diversion Program (TEDP) Pilot Program

BACKGROUND:

The Panhandle counties of Potter, Randall and Deaf Smith have been selected to participate in a ***pilot program*** that will escalate to a Statewide program within the next several months – the Texas Eviction Diversion Program or TEDP. The funding for the TEDP originates with the CARES Act and comes to Texas from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA). Though it’s only expected to run for a short period, the results of this pilot will be used to help inform the soon-to-follow Statewide program. TDHCA will have oversight of this pilot program and the Statewide program. The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC) is serving as the local program administrator.



WHAT IS THE TEDP:

The TEDP is intended to help eligible Texas tenants, who’ve fallen behind on their rent as a direct result of the COVID and who’ve been sued for eviction, stay in their homes and provides landlords an alternative to eviction. If both the tenant and landlord agree to participate in the TEDP and both meet the minimum requirements listed on the table below, the TEDP *may* provide **up to six months** of rental assistance.

Landlord Eligibility Criteria	Tenant Eligibility Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance for rent no older than April 2020 • Rent for the household assisted may not exceed the TDHCA maximum limits • Must have a bank account and accept direct deposit • Units that are already receiving project-based assistance or are public housing units are INELIGIBLE • Units that are owned by a unit of government may be ineligible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household income at or below 200% of poverty★ • Household has been financially affected by the COVID-19 pandemic • Tenants are INELIGIBLE if they are receiving tenant-based voucher assistance, are in a unit receiving project-based assistance, or are in public housing

★ **200% of Poverty Threshold** (listed by persons in household)

1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
\$25,520	\$34,480	\$43,440	\$52,400	\$61,360	\$70,320	\$79,280	\$88,240

* - For household of more than 8 persons, add \$8,960 for each additional person.

HOW WILL THIS PANHANDLE PILOT BE OPERATED?

The Justice of the Peace Courts in the three participating counties will be the gatekeepers of this pilot program. In order to participate in the program; the landlord ***must have*** filed an eviction case against the tenant.

As part of the trial, the presiding Justice of the Peace will discuss the program with the landlord and tenant. If both agree to participate in the program, the Judge will issue a 60-day eviction delay to provide sufficient time for the parties to pursue assistance through this pilot program. The Judge will then provide each party a copy of the State of Texas Eviction Diversion Program Brochure and refer them to the PRPC's website for further information.

In order to determine if rental assistance can be provided, the Tenant and Landlord will first have to hold a consultation with the PRPC Program Coordinator.

CONSULTATION, ASSESSMENT & DETERMINATION:

Due to the current pandemic and for the safety of everyone involved, to the extent possible, all Panhandle pilot program activities will be conducted remotely. Once both parties have consented to TEDP participation and the eviction has been abated by the Court for 60-days, the parties will then take the following steps **in the order presented:**

Step #1. Go to the PRPC TEDP Page at: [PRPC TEDP Program Page](#) (this is the one-stop page for this program).

Step #2. **FOR TENANTS:**

- a) The Tenant must first gather all the documents listed in the **Tenant Documents** section and then, save them electronically.
- b) When all the documents, including those requiring signatures, are ready for upload, then click on the **Tenant** link found in the line that reads "To register/upload documents: Tenant"
- c) This will take you to the Tenant Registry page. Complete the form; the lines led by an asterisk "*" are required fields.
- d) The * Case # is the number assigned to the eviction order by the JP Court.
- e) Check the boxes to indicate which documents you're uploading. You can upload them at one time or you can upload them on separate occasions but all required documents must be received by the PRPC before the consultation is held.
 - Pay Stub or Income evidence for past 30 days
 - Tenant TEDP certification (completed)
 - TEDP Application
 - Written Lease or Evidence of Unit Tenancy
 - Personal ID (Gov't Issued)
 - Tenant TEDP form (completed)
- f) Create your User Name and Password. **MAKE SURE** you save your username and password.
- g) Fill in the security code at the bottom of the page and then hit Submit
- h) This will take you to the page where your documents will be uploaded. Click the folder on the Supporting Doc field (📁) and then retrieve the document from the location you saved it to. Move to the next item and repeat the process. Please note - you **do not need** to fill in any field other than the Supporting Doc field. When all your documents have been uploaded, hit the Submit button and that will take you to a new page title Tenant Registry".

- i) Go to Step 2) on the registry page and click on the [here](#) link in the sentence, “The available consultation timeslots can be found [here](#).” This will take you to a page with an appointment box.
- j) Use the Username/Password you created under f) above to sign into the appointment box and choose on the available time slots available.

It will be most beneficial and expedient if we can meet with the Tenant and the Landlord at the same time. So, we recommend the Tenant coordinate with the Landlord to select a consultation time that will work for the schedules of both parties.

It should also be noted that all required documents, those required of the Tenant and those required of the Landlord must be uploaded **at least** two days before the scheduled consultation. The PRPC may have to postpone a consultation if the required documents aren’t received with enough time to review and assess them before the consultation is held.

Step #2. FOR LANDLORDS:

Landlords will essentially follow the same steps taken by Tenant; only instead providing the documents listed under the Landlord Documents column and using the **Landlord** link found in the line that reads “To register/upload documents: Landlord”

Step #3. CONSULTATION: The purpose of the consultation is for the PRPC to clarify the details on the level of rental assistance being requested and to gather any additional information which may be needed before a final decision can be made on approving the request.

These consultations will be conducted remotely using GoTo Meeting. Once the PRPC Program Coordinator has confirmed that all the documents required with Step #2(s) have been uploaded, a meeting link will be emailed to both the tenant and the landlord. Within 24 hours, PRPC will email the tenant and landlord a letter confirming the results of the determination made during the consultation.

If it’s determined that the Tenant qualifies for TEDP assistance, the Tenant may be provided up to six months of rental assistance, including months in arrears. However, the payment will be made directly to the landlord on the condition that all late fees, court fees or extraneous fees will be waived. The PRPC will then communicate that determination to the JP Court that heard the original eviction case.

It’s important to note that this is a pilot program intended only for Potter, Randall and Deaf Smith Counties and that the program funding is extremely limited. Its anticipated that approximately 40 households, distributed proportionately across the 3-county project area on the basis of persons in poverty, will be served by this pilot on a first come-first served basis. First come being defined as those tenants/landlords who’ve met the TEDP criteria and who’ve been the first to properly upload their required documents into the Registry and had their consultation with the PRPC Program Coordinator. Based on the funding available, its anticipated this program will serve the following number of households in each of the participating counties.

Participating Counties	Anticipate Serving
Potter County	25 - 35 Households
Randall County	15 - 20 Households
Deaf Smith County	9 - 10 Households

It’s also important to note that this pilot program is preceding another version of the TEDP which will be more significantly funded and serve the entire state. The lessons learned from this pilot will be used to improve the effectiveness of the TEDP program to follow.

For more information, please contact the PRPC’s Program Coordinator at (806) 372-3381.