

Virginia Housing HCV HOTMA Fact Sheet:

HELP DURING A FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

HOTMA changes how certain health, medical, disability assistance, and childcare expenses are deducted from your family's income. These deductions are used to calculate your adjusted income and may affect how much rent you pay. **If a change to one of these deductions makes it difficult for your family to pay rent**, you may qualify for temporary help called a **hardship exemption**.



Help may be available for certain eligible health and medical expenses or child care expenses.



You must contact your local housing agency (LHA) to request hardship exemptions.



Complete the Hardship Request Form and provide supporting documentation.

WHO MAY REQUEST HELP?

You may be able to request a hardship exemption if:

- Your family has eligible health, medical, attendant care, or disability-related expenses and is experiencing financial hardship; or
- Your childcare deduction is ending, but you still need childcare and losing the deduction would make it difficult to pay rent and **is needed** for you to work or attend school/training.

Hardship exemptions are temporary. Approval is based on your family's circumstances and Virginia Housing's hardship policy.

HELP WITH HEALTH, MEDICAL, AND DISABILITY-RELATED EXPENSES

An elderly or disabled family may receive a deduction for eligible, unreimbursed health and medical expenses that are more than **10% of the family's annual income**. "Unreimbursed" means that the expense was not paid or repaid by insurance, another person, or another organization.

Eligible expenses may include:

- Health and medical expenses paid by an elderly or disabled family;
- Attendant care for a family member with a disability; and
- Equipment or other assistance that allows a family member to work.



Virginia Housing HCV HOTMA Fact Sheet:

GENERAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL HARDSHIP

An elderly or disabled family, or a family that includes a person with a disability, may request temporary hardship relief if:

- The family's eligible health, medical, attendant care, or disability-related expenses increased; or
- The family experienced another change that made it difficult to pay rent, and the change would not otherwise result in an interim review.

HOTMA hardship relief applies **only** to eligible medical or disability-assistance expenses. If approved, eligible expenses that are more than **5% of your family's annual income** may be deducted during the hardship period. This is lower than the regular 10% threshold and may reduce your adjusted income and rent.

HOW LONG DOES THE HARDSHIP EXEMPTION LAST?

The hardship exemption ends:

- After 90 days; or
- When the circumstances that caused the hardship end.
- **Whichever happens first.**

Virginia Housing may approve one or more additional 90-day periods if the hardship continues and your family remains eligible. You may need to provide updated information or documentation before an extension is approved.

You must report when your circumstances change. Contact your LHA if your expenses decrease, your income changes, or the circumstances that qualified your family for relief no longer apply.

HELP WITH CHILD CARE EXPENSES

Your family may receive a deduction for reasonable, unreimbursed childcare expenses for a child under age 13 when the care allows a family member to:

- Work;
- Look for work; or
- Attend school or job training.

"Unreimbursed" means that the expense was not paid or repaid by another person, agency, or organization.

When childcare allows a family member to work, the deduction generally cannot be more than the employment income earned by the person who is able to work because childcare is available.

CHILD CARE HARDSHIP EXEMPTION

If your childcare deduction is ending, you may request temporary hardship relief to continue the deduction.

You may qualify if:

- Losing the deduction would make your family unable to pay rent;
- The childcare expense is still necessary; and
- The family members are no longer working, looking for work, or attending school or job training.



Virginia Housing HCV HOTMA Fact Sheet:

HOW LONG DOES THE CHILDCARE HARDSHIP EXEMPTION LAST?

A childcare hardship exemption may last for up to 90 days.

Virginia Housing may approve one or more additional 90-day periods if the hardship continues and your family remains eligible. Virginia Housing may end the exemption if the childcare is no longer necessary or the family no longer meets the hardship requirements.

HOW TO REQUEST A HARDSHIP EXEMPTION

Contact your LHA as soon as you believe a change to your health, medical, disability-related, or childcare deduction will make it difficult for your family to pay rent.

Your LHA will ask you to complete a [Hardship Request Form](#) and provide supporting documentation.

Documentation may include bills, receipts, statements from service providers, proof of payment, or information about changes in your income or family circumstances.

Do not wait until you miss a rent payment. Request help as soon as you know that a deduction is changing or that your expenses have increased.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU APPLY?

Your LHA will review your request using its hardship policy. Submitting a request does not guarantee that it will be approved.

You will receive a written notice explaining:

- Whether your request was approved or denied;
- The reason for the decision;
- How the decision affects your adjusted income and rent;
- The date an approved exemption begins;
- The date the exemption is expected to end; and
- Your responsibility to report when the hardship ends.

If your request is denied, the written notice will explain the specific reason for the denial.

If an approved hardship exemption ends and your rent will increase, you will receive at least 30 days' notice before the rent increase takes effect.

