

City of Jamestown Vacant Rental Program

New York State
Homes and Community Renewal



Guidelines and Application

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

A. Purpose of Program

The purpose of the Vacant Rental Program (VRP) is to provide financial assistance to eligible property owners with a vast variety of home repairs to allow for occupancy. These repairs are intended to bring the home up to proper housing standards as defined by the current New York State and City of Jamestown Building Code.

Properties that receive funding through this program are intended to be rented out to income eligible tenants.

Properties that receive funding through this program are intended to be owned and rented for at least 10 years. The lien is transferable to new ownership under the same guidelines and requirements.

Source of Funds

This program is funded by New York State Homes and Community Renewal.

B. Funding Structure and Awards

There are two types of award opportunities through NYS VRP. A standard award can assist with up to \$50,000.00. Household income for new tenants must meet the HUD guidelines of 80% Area Median Income. An enhanced award can assist with up to \$75,000.00. Household income must meet the HUD guidelines of 60% Area Median Income.

There is no match requirement for this program. The property owner must ensure the scope of work remains within the funding threshold or can provide proof of funding to finance the remaining amount of the project.

Awards will be determined based on the attached rubric.

C. Program Exclusions

Property must be utilized for rental property for targeted low- to -moderate income individuals and families. Homeowner occupied rehabilitation is not permitted. Properties that are currently occupied and require displacement of the active tenant are not permitted. All property owners must see guidelines in Section I C.

SECTION I – ELIGIBILITY

A. Eligible Properties

Eligible properties must be:

- o 1–5 unit residential buildings (buildings cannot exceed 5 total units)
- o Mixed-use buildings with up to five (5) residential units
- o Any building that will be converted into a 1-5 residential building or mixed-use building with up to five (5) residing units

B. Ineligible Properties:

The following properties are expressly ineligible for participation in VRP:

- o Mobile
- o And/or manufactured
- o Properties in foreclosure
- o Detached accessory structures (unless previously used as a legal housing unit, as verified by the City Building and Zoning Code Enforcement Officer)
- o Conversion of existing units to additional or to fewer units

C. Eligible Property Owners

Property Owners must:

- o Live within the City of Jamestown (3 points), Chautauqua County (2 points), or Warren County, PA; Erie County, NY; or Cattaraugus County, NY (1 point). *Property owners who do not reside locally are not eligible.*
- o Not own more than 20 total units including all registers or associated LLCs
- o Disclose all owned or associated LLCs
- o Not have multiple unaddressed code violations (see rubric)
- o Be deemed a responsible owner by the Director of Development
 - o Up to date on all mortgages and all taxes of all owned and associated properties
 - o Current on all utilities
 - o Has proper insurance, or denial letter
 - o Acceptable correspondence with the DOD with minimal code violations

D. Eligible Activities

Funding must be used for rehabilitation of existing eligible vacant units and spaces into decent, safe, and affordable rental units. Rehabilitation activities must be necessary to turn vacant units into habitable and marketable rental units as determined by the New York State and City of Jamestown Building Code.

Fixtures that are permanent are permitted such as bathtubs, sinks, cabinets.

E. Ineligible Activities

Landscaping, pool repairs, luxury improvements, additions or new construction, electronics like security systems or cameras and all other unnecessary repairs are prohibited. Funding cannot be used to pay for insurance, taxes, or other debts.

Tenants cannot be removed from or evicted from a housing unit to receive grant funds. A tenant cannot be temporarily displaced through the duration of rehabilitation. Property must be verifiably vacant for at least 6 months.

Interior repairs that disturb painted surfaces in houses built prior to 1978 are generally not permitted. Contact the Chautauqua County Health Department for any questions or concerns regarding lead in your home

F. Minimum Zoning Standards

All work performed under this program must meet all applicable standards contained in the City of Jamestown's adopted zoning ordinance and local building and safety codes. For questions regarding zoning and/or building codes and permits, applicants can schedule an appointment with the City of Jamestown Building and Zoning Code Enforcement Officer, Larry Scalise at 716-483-7541 or at dod@jamestownny.gov.

SECTION II – APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Application Procedures

- Applications will be received on a rolling basis.
- All applications complete with **all required documentation** must be submitted in person at CODE, Inc, 40 Winsor Street, Jamestown, New York 14701
- Contact:
 - Chris Jock
 - CODE Inc.
 - 411 Winsor St.
 - Jamestown, NY
 - 14701

- **Incomplete applications or applications submitted without all required documentation will be rejected. All documentation must be submitted at the same time.**
- See attached rubric for assistance

B. Application Instructions: Complete the attached program application and attach all required documentation.

Please attach the following documentation to your application:

1. **Deed: Provide** a copy of the deed to prove ownership of home. Deed must be on file in the County Clerk's office.
2. **Proof of Payment of Property Taxes: Applicant** must provide proof that property taxes are paid and current or that you have an executed payment agreement and are current on your payments.
3. **Proof of Current Mortgage Payments or Proof of Payoff**
4. **Proof of Homeowner's Insurance or Request a Waiver**
5. **Proof of Flood Insurance: Properties** located in flood zones will be required to have flood insurance.
6. **Proof of Vacancy.** A condemnation notice, BPU/National Fuel usage statement, or statement from the USPS.
7. **A full project proposal must be included with the application.** Please include as much detail as possible to help justify the project. An estimate from a General Contractor is preferred.
8. **A Responsible Owner Sign-off from the Director of Development.** The attached Responsible Owner letter must be signed by the Director of Development to complete this application. See rubric for details.

C. Property Inspection: All properties are subject to an interior and exterior inspection by the Department of Development's Code Enforcement Division. Inspections may occur during the application process, throughout the duration of the project, and upon project completion.

D. Expectations for Homeowners: It is expected that all homeowners will work in **good will** with the Department of Development (DOD) for the administration of this grant program. All homeowners must:

1. Sign a **Liability and Tax Agreement** with the City of Jamestown. This holds the City harmless from any actions resulting from the project, and certifies that all city, county, and school taxes and Board of Public Utilities bills are paid and current, and will be kept current by the owner.
2. NYS requires a 10-year transferable lien to be placed on the property.
3. Remain responsive to requests from DOD. Non-response or untimely responses for information or inspections will deem the applicant ineligible.
4. Allow safe on-site inspections before, during, and after repair work.
5. **Secure a Permit and/or permission slips from the DOD when necessary.**

NO WORK IS TO BEGIN UNTIL YOU OR YOUR CONTRACTOR HAVE OBTAINED A PERMIT FROM THE DOD. IT MUST BE DISPLAYED IN A FRONT WINDOW.

Note: Willful withholding of information or false statement of material fact will be considered grounds for disqualification and possible prosecution. For more information call (716) 483-7654

For a full description of the program requirements please visit Jamestownny.gov or request a copy in person at 200 E 3rd St. Jamestown, NY, 14701, 4th Floor.

I/we have read, understand, and agree to the terms of the Vacant Rental Program guidelines.

Property address: _____ **Jamestown, NY**

Property owner/s: _____ **Date:** _____

NYS VACANT RENTAL PROGRAM (VRP)

Property Owner Grant Assistance Application

APPLICANT INFORMATION			
Owner Name:		Phone:	
Additional Owners:		Email:	
Owner Permanent Residence Address			
Street Address:			
City, Zip:			
Total Number of Properties Owned by or Under Control of Applicant		Total Number of Residential Rental Units owned by or Under Control of Applicant	
PROPERTY INFORMATION			
Mailing Street Address:			
City, Zip:			
Property Deed/Title in the name of:			
Number of Housing Units (<i>current</i>)		Year Built:	
Number of Housing Units Anticipated (<i>post-rehabilitation</i>)		Is Property Fully Insured?	
Number of Eligible Vacant Units		Are Property Taxes Current?	
Number of Units to be Assisted with VRP Grant Funds		Is Property in Foreclosure?	
Describe property including any current uses and occupancy			
GRANT REQUEST			
Type of Grant Award Requested	☐ Standard <i>Up to \$50,000 per eligible unit - units affordable to 80% AMI level</i>		☐ Enhanced <i>Up to \$75,000 per eligible unit - units affordable to 60% AMI level</i>
Estimated Number of Vacant Units to be Assisted with VRP Grant Funds		Estimated Total Grant Funds Requested	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS *(initial each)*

Describe the anticipated rehabilitation activities for which you are requesting VRP grant assistance

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS *(initial each)*

My eligibility for the program includes verification by the City of Jamestown that I am a "Responsible Owner"	
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I, or an immediate family member, may not serve as the contractor for the rehabilitation work	
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I have not, and will not, displace a tenant for the purposes of making a unit eligible for grant assistance	
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The City of Jamestown will conduct a property site inspection to verify eligibility for grant assistance	
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If my property is constructed prior to 1978, the grant program requires a Lead Risk Assessment to be conducted in any unit receiving assistance (and any tenant means of egress) and that the rehabilitation scope of work is required to address any identified lead hazards	
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Units that receive VRP grant assistance are subject to affordability requirements for 10 years, including selecting income-qualified tenants and a limit to the monthly rent charged to tenants	
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If selected for a VRP award, I will be required to execute an agreement with the City of Jamestown and file a Declaration of Interest on the Property with the County Clerk	
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SIGNATURES

Signature of Owner	Signature of Co-Owner
Date	Date

Additional NYS VRP Requirements

Please include the following documents with your NYS VRP Application:

- ☐ A copy of the deed
- ☐ Proof of insurance or denial of insurance (coverage is required at the end of project)
- ☐ Proof of paid taxes (school, city, county)
- ☐ Proof of residency (Utility bill, ID, and one other document with address listed)
- ☐ Proof of vacancy (BPU usage report and/or condemnation notice and/or statement from USPS)
- ☐ All LLC affiliations, vested interests, or ownership must be disclosed with a signed affidavit
- ☐ A full scope of work
- ☐ Signed “Responsible Owner” statement by Director of Development
- ☐ Proof of available financing for projects that exceed granted amount (loan agreement, bank statement)

Is there active code enforcement on the property?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Code Enforcement Officer assigned: _____

New York State requires that all applicants must not own any more than 20 total units including all associated LLCs.

New York State requires that all applicants are **local** residents (see rubric for details).

Units must have been vacant for at least 6 months at the time of application release.
[DATE]

Units must be rented to qualifying tenants with a 1-year signed lease within 3 months of project completion.

Applications will be graded based on the attached rubric and awards will be prioritized based on the number of points received.

VRP Responsible Owner Certification



Property Address: _____

RESPONSIBLE OWNER CRITERIA
CRITERIA
Current on all mortgage(s) payments (and any loans secured by the property)
Current on all property taxes held under property owner
Current on utility payments ¹
Has current comprehensive property insurance policy ²
Not in Bankruptcy
No outstanding federal, state or local liens on the property
No history of Fair Housing violations
Not under current investigation by: Department of Health, EPA, HUD, state or agency, or local government for law or regulation of violation
Property owner demonstrates responsible ownership through maintenance, lack of reported concerns, lack of litigation initiated by tenants or City of Jamestown entities
History of responsiveness to Code Enforcement/Department of Development, Fire Department concerns
Business entities are required to disclose all LLCs they have a vested interest in and their respective operating agreements.
*If the property does not have current or recent utility hookups, the Department of Development may waive this requirement if it can be determined that utilities were not shut off due to lack of payment and that any recent payment obligations were being met.
**A waiver may be requested by the Department of Development from the Office of Community Renewal for insurance requirements if the property owner can provide refusal of coverage by two insurance companies and if comprehensive insurance will be obtained upon completion of the project.

Owner Name(s): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Date: _____

Crystal Surdyk
Director of Development

Address: _____ **Date Received:** _____ **Time:** _____

	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points
Property Owner Address Verification	Has three (3) required documents demonstrating proof of residency Located within Jamestown city limits	Has three (3) required documents demonstrating proof of residency Located within Chautauqua County	Has three (3) required documents demonstrating proof of residency Located within the three (3) adjacent counties	Missing at least one document demonstrating proof of residency Located outside of Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Warren (PA) or Erie countries
Number of Units Owned	No more than 20 total units owned by property owner or affiliated LLCs	-	-	More than 20 units owned by property own or affiliated LLCs
Property Owner History on all owned / managed properties	Does not have a history of unresolved or unaddressed code complaints Has Responsible Owner sign off from DOD Director	Responds to and addresses code violations. Occasionally correspondence exceeds compliance period. Has Responsible Owner sign off from DOD Director	Has at least 5 unaddressed and open code violations. Oftentimes correspondence exceeds compliance period. Has conditional Responsible Owner sign off from DOD Director	Was not able to obtain Responsible Owner sign off from DOD Director

	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points
Project Proposals	Project proposal is clear with a full project description	Project proposal is missing key details	Project proposal is weak	Project proposal not provided
Vacancy Status	Has been vacant at least 6 months. Has condemnation notice; Or Has BPU/National Fuel usage statements; Or A statement from the Post Office stating the unit is vacant.	-	-	Has not been vacant for at least 6 months. No verification of vacancy.

Was the application complete? ☐ Yes ☐ No (Disqualification)

Point Total: _____

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____