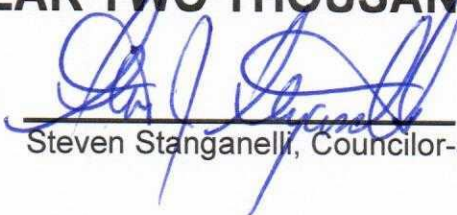




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CITY OF AMESBURY, MA

**CITY OF AMESBURY
IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-ONE**

SPONSORED BY:



Steven Stanganelli, Councilor-at-Large

BILL No. 2021-107

Anthony Rinaldi, District 2 Councilor

Michael Hogg, District 6 Councilor

An Ordinance to Establish a Means-Tested Senior Citizen Rental Assistance Program

Summary:

An Ordinance to establish a means-tested rental assistance program for senior citizens.

Whereas, it is a public policy goal to promote housing affordability for senior citizens seeking to age in place as long-standing residents of the City; and

Whereas, the City of Amesbury Housing Production Plan (2018-2022) notes that the distribution of the City's population that is over age 65 is projected to increase from approximately 13% in 2015 to 30% by 2035 (see page 14); and

Whereas, rental households with senior householders (age 65 years and over) have lower estimated median incomes (as of 2015 data) than the region, county, and state (see Housing Production Plan page 21); and 128 senior householders live below the federal poverty thresholds out of a population of 16,687 (Housing Production Report page 22); and

Whereas, a key strategy identified in the City's Housing Production Plan is to provide direct support for lower income renters struggling with housing costs (Housing Production Plan page 55);

so, therefore,

Be it Ordered by the City Council of the City of Amesbury assembled and by the authority of the same, as follows: That the City of Amesbury shall adopt a means-tested rental assistance program for senior citizens as follows:

SECTION 1. With respect to each qualifying resident of a parcel of real property classified as class one, residential in the City of Amesbury there shall be a rental assistance credit available to qualifying residents in an amount to be based on the circuit income tax credit under Section 6(k) of chapter 62 of the General Laws as adjusted annually by the Department of Revenue;

SECTION 2. For the purposes of this act, "parcel" shall be a unit of real property as defined by the board of assessors under the deed for the property and shall include a condominium unit;

SECTION 3. Applicants shall qualify for the rental assistance under Section 1 if all the following criteria are met:

- (a) The applicant is domiciled as a primary residence in a qualifying property in Amesbury;
- (b) The applicant or at least one of the joint applicants has been domiciled in a rental residence as a home in the City of Amesbury for at least five (5) consecutive years preceding the filing of an application for the rental assistance credit;
- (c) The applicant is a person who qualified and received the circuit breaker income tax credit the previous year under section 6(k) of chapter 62 of the General Laws;
- (d) The applicant is at least age 65 or older at the close of the previous year or jointly by persons either of whom is age 65 or above at the close of the previous year and if the joint applicant is 60 years of age or older; and
- (e) The Office of Community and Economic Development or designee(s) of the Mayor have approved the application.

SECTION 4. The Amesbury Housing Trust shall annually set the maximum rental credit amount provided for in section 1, provided that the amount of the credit shall not exceed a 150% match, and not less than a 50% match, of the amount of the circuit breaker income tax credit under section 6(k) of chapter 62 of the General Laws for which the applicant received in the previous year. The Amesbury Housing Trust shall annually set the maximum aggregate appropriation for this program from its own funds. The rental assistance funded by this act shall be funded with funds under the care and control of the Amesbury Housing Trust. The total appropriation may be supplemented by funds from the general budget as determined by the Mayor with approval of the City Council. Funding may also be supplemented from grants and fundraising. Rental assistance shall be available from total appropriated funds on a first-come, first-serve basis.

SECTION 5. A person who seeks to qualify for the rental assistance under Section 1 shall, before the deadline established by the Office of Economic and Community Development, file an application, on a form to be adopted by the Office of Economic and Community Development, with the supporting documentation of the filed income tax return of the applicant showing the Circuit Breaker tax credit. The application shall be filed each year for which the applicant seeks the rental assistance.