

Tri-County Rent Assistance Call List

Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties - emergency rent, eviction prevention, and housing-stability contacts.

This guide is for fast resource coordination. It does not guarantee funds. Rent assistance changes daily. Call before sending someone, ask what is open today, and ask who else is paying rent this week if they are out of funds.

Start here first

These are the strongest first calls because they either coordinate multiple partners, directly advertise rent/housing assistance, or are known local emergency-assistance pathways. Trident United Way is placed first because it is the broadest tri-county access point and has the most resource-network reach.

1. Trident United Way / 211 / Centers for Strong Families

Best for: Best first call for referrals, family coaching, and basic-needs referrals including rental assistance, housing support, utilities, benefits, debt/credit, food, legal referrals, and child care. Use the county center closest to the household.

Funding reality: Referrals are subject to funding and eligibility. Call before sending anyone in person. Best top-of-list because it sees the widest resource network.

Review/reputation check: Strong public credibility signal: Charity Navigator 4/4 for Trident United Way; United Way page also shows charitable ratings/certification badges. Some community reviews of United Way models can be mixed, but this remains the most useful tri-county starting point.

Contact: Dial 211 or text HELP to 211-211. Main: 843-740-9000. Berkeley CSF: 843-761-6033. Charleston Main Library CSF: 843-207-4210. Dorchester/Summerville CSF: 843-566-7040. North Charleston CSF: 843-207-4206.

2. Palmetto Community Action Partnership - GEAP

Best for: Emergency help for households with unexpected hardship, including rental assistance to avoid eviction, plus other emergency/basic-needs services.

Funding reality: Program limits include documentation, hardship within a recent time period, sustainable income, and once-per-year or once-per-24-month limits depending on program. High demand; appointments can go fast.

Review/reputation check: Legitimate community action agency; public client access often appears frustrating because of limited slots/funds. Some online employee/review signals are mixed, so use call-first expectations and do not promise help.

Contact: 1-844-769-6448; palmettocap.org. Watch the appointment system; emergency/rental assistance appointments may open in narrow windows.

Start here first - continued

3. ShelterNet - Humanities Foundation

Best for: Emergency financial relief for people vulnerable to losing housing. Funds can be used for past-due rent or utilities. Strong option when there is a clear crisis/setback.

Funding reality: Requires referral agency application. Funds go to landlord/utility, not client. Documents can include ID, income proof, eviction/delinquent bill notice.

Review/reputation check: Established housing nonprofit; ShelterNet has operated since 1995 and reports preventing eviction/utility loss for many households. Limited public client reviews; process depends heavily on referral partner.

Contact: Apply through a ShelterNet Referral Organization, not directly. Headquarters: 843-856-4120. Hope Center SRO listed on ShelterNet page: 843-579-6399.

4. Origin SC - Eviction Prevention / Housing Stability

Best for: Eviction prevention counseling, housing stability counseling, and direct financial assistance when funding is available. Good when legal/eviction process and budgeting are part of the crisis.

Funding reality: Referral-only for eviction prevention. Direct money is funding-dependent. Not a quick walk-in cash source.

Review/reputation check: Legitimate HUD/housing counseling style organization; current site clearly says eviction prevention is referral-only. Good for counseling and pathway building even when direct rent funds are unavailable.

Contact: Eviction Prevention: referral only through Lowcountry Homeless Coalition / Housing Crisis Line 843-737-8357. Info: 843-628-2301 or homelessprevention@originsc.org. Main: 843-628-3000.

Smaller charities and local backup calls

Use these after, or alongside, the main first calls. Smaller organizations may have less money, but sometimes they can act faster, know a neighborhood, or cover a gap that larger systems miss.

Resource	Area	Use / review / contact
Neighbors Together	Tri-county; North Charleston base	Limited rent, utility, transportation and basic-needs assistance by appointment. Use after TUW/Palmetto/ShelterNet. Review: Charity Navigator 3/4; strong community role, but funding can run out. Contact: 843-747-1788; 2105 Cosgrove Ave, North Charleston; neighborsstogether.org
Salvation Army Charleston SC Corps	Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester	Emergency rent/utility/basic-needs assistance when local funds are available. Worth calling for eviction or utility crisis. Review: established charity; actual help varies by local funding. Contact: 843-747-5271; Charleston Corps; salvationarmyusa.org
East Cooper Community Outreach (ECCO)	East Cooper / service-map limits	Financial assistance for rent, mortgage, or utilities. Clients generally must become/currently be ECCO clients. Application opens monthly and closes when allocation is exceeded. Strong public credibility: Charity Navigator 4/4; Facebook page indexed with 100% recommend from 15 reviews. Contact: 843-849-9220; 1145 Six Mile Rd, Mount Pleasant; eccocharleston.org
Our Lady of Mercy Community Outreach	Johns Island / Sea Islands / downtown outreach	Financial assistance for rent, mortgage, utilities, and critical home repair plus food, clothing, health and education services. Service area matters. Contact: 843-559-4109; olmoutreach.org

Resource	Area	Use / review / contact
Society of St. Vincent de Paul - local parish conferences	Neighborhood-specific	Volunteer-run emergency help; may include rent, utilities, food, gas, or basic needs depending on parish boundaries and funds. Good small-charity option because chapters can sometimes act locally and personally. Contact: Summerville/St. John: 843-607-9157. Downtown: 843-727-1577. Stella Maris/SI/IOP: 843-814-1229. St. Benedict area lines vary.
Star Gospel Mission	Charleston / Lowcountry hardship	Faith-based emergency support for people in hardship. Public descriptions include utility, food, urgent household needs, and some rental assistance references. Verify rent funds before sending anyone. Contact: 843-722-2473; 474 Meeting St, Charleston; stargospelmission.org
Community Resource Center	North Charleston / Charleston County	Small community resource center offering essentials and emergency assistance; listed in local rental/food/clothing/utility assistance sheets. Less formal online footprint; use as call-first backup. Contact: 843-499-9498 or 843-530-6473; 3947 Whipper Barony Ln; communityresourcecenter.info
Charleston Trident Urban League	Charleston area	HUD-approved housing counseling; eviction prevention support by explaining process, rights, and connecting to resources. Important for court dates or landlord disputes. Not necessarily direct rent payment. Contact: 843-300-5246; ctul.org

What to ask and what to have ready

<p>Fast call script: Hi, I am helping someone in [county/city] who is behind on rent and at risk of eviction/housing loss. Do you currently have rent or eviction-prevention funds open? If not, who is paying rent this week? What documents do they need, and do you pay the landlord directly?</p>	<p>Documents to gather:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Photo ID for adults - Lease or rental agreement - Eviction notice, late notice, ledger, or landlord balance - Proof of income/benefits or job start - Proof of crisis/hardship - Landlord contact, W-9 if requested, and willingness to accept pledge/payment - Utility bill if bundled with housing crisis
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Best strategy when funds are scarce

- Call Trident United Way / 211 first, then Palmetto CAP and ShelterNet referral pathways.
- Ask every agency: "Who has rent money today?" Funding changes faster than websites.
- If the person has a court date, add Charleston Trident Urban League, South Carolina Legal Services, or legal aid immediately.
- If one agency can pledge part of the balance, ask the landlord whether they will accept partial pledge plus payment plan.
- Do not wait for a callback if an eviction hearing is scheduled. Keep calling and document every attempt.

Do not waste urgent time here first

Resource	Why it is not a first rent-fund call
Charleston County ERAP / COVID-era ERAP	Do not rely on it: Charleston County states ERAP is closed and funding depleted.
SC Stay Plus	Do not rely on it: SC Housing says SC Stay Plus is closed and will not reopen.
The Navigation Center	Use for housing navigation if needed, but user reports rent funds are out right now. Do not list as a rent-fund first call.
Old social media posts / old CARES Act rent programs	Many 2020-2022 links are closed. Use only if the current agency page confirms active intake.

Quick county routing

County / area	Best first calls
Berkeley County	Trident United Way Berkeley CSF 843-761-6033; 211; Palmetto CAP; ShelterNet via referral organization; Salvation Army Charleston Corps; Neighbors Together if North Charleston/tri-county service applies.
Charleston County / North Charleston	Trident United Way North Charleston CSF 843-207-4206 or Main Library CSF 843-207-4210; Palmetto CAP; Neighbors Together 843-747-1788; Salvation Army 843-747-5271; Community Resource Center; Star Gospel; ShelterNet via referral.
Dorchester / Summerville	Trident United Way Dorchester CSF 843-566-7040; St. Vincent de Paul Summerville 843-607-9157; Palmetto CAP; ShelterNet via referral organization; Salvation Army local/Charleston Corps; Help of Summerville may direct to Resource Connection 843-566-7040.
East Cooper / Mount Pleasant	ECCO 843-849-9220; St. Vincent de Paul area lines; Trident United Way/211; ShelterNet via referral; Palmetto CAP if eligible.
Johns Island / Sea Islands	Our Lady of Mercy Community Outreach 843-559-4109; Trident United Way/211; ShelterNet via referral; Palmetto CAP if eligible.

Review/reputation check summary

I checked official agency pages plus public rating/review signals where they were readily available. Major organizations with stronger public signals: Trident United Way and ECCO. Neighbors Together has a Charity Navigator rating but is more limited/funding-dependent. Smaller church/community resources may have little centralized review data; treat them as call-first backup resources and verify funds before sending anyone.

Source notes checked for this guide

Trident United Way CSF/contact/211 pages; Palmetto CAP GEAP/outreach pages; Humanities Foundation ShelterNet pages; Origin SC Eviction Prevention/Housing Stability pages; Neighbors Together rent/utilities and Charity Navigator; Salvation Army Charleston Corps and FindHelp listing; ECCO financial assistance/client/service map and public ratings; Our Lady of Mercy services; St. Vincent de Paul parish pages; Charleston County ERAP and SC Stay Plus closure pages.

Prepared as a Red Bird resource guide. Availability, eligibility, and funding can change without notice. Verify same day before sending someone, especially when there is no gas money, no phone battery, disability, children, or an active eviction deadline.