

Evanston Local Reparations

Housing Program Eligibility Application



Apply online: Reparations Eligibility Application

Application Opens: Tuesday, September 21

Application Closes: November 5, 11:59 p.m.

Approval Notification: end of November 2021

Online application is mobile phone friendly and applicants have the ability to save and return to complete at a later time.

To ensure equity, applications will not be approved until after the application closes on November 5.

In order to prepare for the online submission, please review the sample application questions as it relates to the three categories 1) Ancestor 2) Direct Descendant 3) Housing Discrimination.

[Sample Ancestor Application](#)

[Sample Direct Descendant Application](#)

[Sample Housing Discrimination Application](#)

Application review process

The Program Administrator shall verify the application and documentation for completeness. If an application is incomplete or if additional information is required, the Program Administrator shall notify the Applicant accordingly. The Applicant shall provide a complete application and provide all requested information within the stated time period or the application shall be deemed withdrawn.

In November, the Reparations Committee will approve eligibility based upon the Restorative Housing Guidelines. After the determination by the Committee, the Program Administrator shall notify the Applicant in writing if the application is denied or approved.

Where to Get Help With Your Application



On-site Office Hours Location: Fleetwood-Jourdain Community Center, 1655 Foster St.

Mondays from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

September 27

October 4, 11, 18, 25

November 1



Wednesday from 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.

September 29

October 6, 13, 20, 27

Resources for Application Documents**Evanston Public Library - Main Library**

1703 Orrington Avenue
Reference Desk, 2nd Flr.

Hours:

Sunday - 12 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Monday - 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Friday & Saturday - 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

On-site Library Resources

Phone Directories starting from 1920

ETHS Yearbooks - 1932-1969

Evanston Review Obituaries

Online Resource w/ Library Card

Ancestry.com paid version

Evanston History Center, 225 Greenwood Street

Research Room Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday between 1:00 pm and 4 pm. A maximum of 6 people will be allowed in the Research Room on any given day. We reserve the right to restrict the number of people allowed.

All visitors must wear masks for the duration of their visits to EHC. The Research Room will begin the closing process at 3:45 pm. Please check our website for special closure dates.

EHC website: <https://www.evanstonhistorycenter.org/>Research Room site: <https://www.evanstonhistorycenter.org/researchroom/>**Reparations Research**

The Evanston History Center (EHC) is pleased to announce that its research collection will be available for free to anyone who will be working on establishing a case for reparations in the City of Evanston. The EHC archives hold a significant amount of material related to people and houses in Evanston. In addition, our staff has years of experience interpreting the primary sources and assisting people with figuring out the stories of their families and their homes. Biographical files, city directories and phone

Restorative Housing Program Guidelines

Restorative Housing Program Guidelines

Restorative Housing Program FAQs



What is the Restorative Housing Program?

The first reparations initiative developed by the City of Evanston is the Restorative Housing Program. The Program acknowledges the harm caused to African-American/Black Evanston residents due to discriminatory housing policies and practices and inaction on the part of the City from 1919-1969. The goal of the Program is to:

- Revitalize, preserve and stabilize Black/African-American owner-occupied homes in Evanston
- Increase homeownership and build the wealth of Black/African-American residents;
- Build intergenerational equity amongst Black/African-American residents
- Improve the retention rate of Black/African-American homeowners in the City of Evanston

Funds support the following initiatives:

Home Ownership: The Home Ownership initiative provides down payment/closing cost assistance to purchase real property located within the City.

Home Improvement: The Home Improvement initiative provides funds to repair, improve, or modernize real property located within the City.

Mortgage Assistance: Mortgage Assistance initiatives provide funds to pay down mortgage principal, interest, and/or late penalties for real property located within the City

Is the Restorative Housing Program the only reparations program being offered by the City?

No, the Restorative Housing Program is the first initiative developed for local reparations by the Reparations Subcommittee. Resolution 126-R-19 specifically identified housing assistance and relief initiatives for Black or African American residents in Evanston and various economic development programs and opportunities for Black or African American residents and entrepreneurs in Evanston. Once the newly formed Reparations Committee is seated in May, future reparations initiatives will be developed through additional community outreach.

What's the next step regarding the Evanston Restorative Housing Program?

Guidelines for the Evanston Restorative Housing Program will be submitted to City Council for approval at the March 22 City Council meeting. If approved, the Reparations Subcommittee will host a number of Q&A sessions to educate the community on the guidelines and prior to the implementation of the program.

When can I apply for the Restorative Housing Program?

The Evanston Restorative Housing Program will be discussed at the March 22 City Council meeting. If approved, the Reparations Committee will develop an application process. More details to follow.

Evanston Reparations FAQs



Why is the City of Evanston implementing local reparations?

After the passage of Resolution 58-R-19, “Commitment to End Structural Racism and Achieve Racial Equity,” in the summer of 2019, the Evanston City Council took action to address the historical wealth and opportunity gaps that African American/Black residents of Evanston experienced. Alderman Robin Rue Simmons sought a “Solutions Only” process with the support of the City’s Equity and Empowerment Commission to identify actions that the City could take to implement a meaningful repair and reparations policy. The first initiative identified was a housing program.

Why is the City’s first reparations program focused on housing?

In July 2019, the Equity and Empowerment Commission held community meetings to solicit feedback from community members on what reparations would look like for the City of Evanston. Affordable housing and economic development were the top priorities identified during those meetings. A report was submitted to the City Council for consideration and was the basis for Resolution 126-R-19, “Establishing the City of Evanston Reparations Fund and the Reparations Subcommittee.”

Reparations, and any process for restorative relief, must connect between the harm imposed and the City. The strongest case for reparations by the City of Evanston is in the area of housing, where there is sufficient evidence showing the City’s part in housing discrimination as a result of early City zoning ordinances in place between 1919 and 1969, when the City banned housing discrimination.

View the [Evanston Policies and Practices Directly Affecting the African American Community, 1900 - 1960 \(and Present\)](#) draft report written by Dino Robinson of Shorefront Legacy and Dr. Jenny Thompson of Evanston History Center.

How can I qualify for local reparations?

In Evanston, the local reparations fund was established to support initiatives addressing the historical wealth and opportunity gaps for African American/Black residents. The first initiative is the Restorative Housing Program. Once approved by City Council, the program guidelines will provide details on how individuals will be able to qualify and additional information regarding document verification and submission.

Why doesn’t the City give cash payments for Reparations?

Due to IRS reporting requirements, the City does not have the authority to exempt direct payments from either state or federal income taxes. As a result, a recipient would be liable for the tax burden associated with the award. The amount a particular recipient would owe would depend on their overall income, but it could be as much as 24 to 28 percent owed to the IRS and Illinois. The Restorative Housing Program disbursements of funds would go directly to the financial institution or vendor which will be responsible for the tax liability, not the resident.

How much money has the City dedicated to local reparations?

In November 2019, the Evanston City Council adopted Resolution 126-R-19, “Establishing the City of Evanston Reparations Fund and the Reparations Subcommittee.” The resolution committed the first \$10 million dollars of the City’s Municipal Cannabis Retailers’ Occupation Tax (3 percent on gross sales of cannabis) to fund local reparations for housing and economic development programs for Black Evanston residents.

Is Reparations only for African American/Black Evanston residents who are United States direct descendants of slaves?

No. The program identifies eligible applicants as Black or African American persons having origins in any of the Black racial and ethnic groups of Africa. The person must reside in Evanston at the time of disbursement of funds.

Does Evanston Reparations have local and national support?

Yes. [The National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America \(N’COBRA\)](#) and the [National African American Reparations Commission \(NAARC\)](#) both support and endorse Evanston's Restorative Housing Program.

How was the Equity and Empowerment Commission involved in Reparations?

In July 2019, the Equity and Empowerment Commission held community meetings to solicit feedback from community members on what reparations would look like for the City of Evanston. Attendees identified five priority categories for action, which include:

- Housing
- Economic development
- Education
- Finances
- History/Culture

This report was submitted to City Council for consideration and was the basis for the Resolution 126-R-19, “Establishing the City of Evanston Reparations Fund and the Reparations Subcommittee.”

The housing initiative is the first program established by the City of Evanston as part of local reparations. Once the newly formed Reparations Committee is seated a community outreach plan will be developed to ensure members of the community are participating in the development of future reparations initiatives.

How have community members been involved in the process?

- The Equity and Empowerment Commission held two community meetings in July 2019 to solicit feedback from the community to identify meaningful solutions for reparations.
- The Reparations Subcommittee hosted three town halls - in December 2019, May 2020 and August 2020 - to educate and inform the community on Reparations at the Local and Federal

Evanston Community Day: Building Black Wealth Through Homeownership Workshops



Dearborn Realist Board will host a Community Day: Building Black Wealth Through Homeownership Workshop on **Saturday, December 4** from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Faith Temple, 1932 Dewey Ave., Evanston, IL.

[Community Day: Building Black Wealth Through Homeownership Workshop Flyer](#)



Reparations Committee



On November 9, 2020, City Council adopted of Ordinance 102-O-20 amending portions of the City Code codifying the Reparations Committee. The **new Reparations Committee** expands the number of the members on the committee to include non-aldermanic members, along with updated roles and responsibilities that reflect the work being completed by the Reparations Subcommittee.

The Reparations Committee includes 5th Ward Councilmember Bobby Burns, 2nd Ward Councilmember Peter Braithwaite, Chair, 8th Ward Councilmember Devon Reid and residents Bonnie Lockhart, Claire McFarland Barber, Robin Rue Simmons and Carlis Sutton.

The Committee will work with residents, City staff and experts to explore and identify programs and opportunities to be supported by the Reparations Fund.

Information on the Reparations Committee, including members, meeting agendas, minutes, and meeting videos, is available via the [Reparations Committee webpage](#).

The Reparations Subcommittee was dissolved in May 2021. Past meetings including videos, agenda, and minutes can be found here: [Reparations Subcommittee webpage](#)

Donate



Legislative Actions to Date



In 2002, the City Council supported US House Resolution 40 (HR-40), calling for a Federal Commission to study slavery and its vestiges, and to make recommendations for reparations, with the adoption of Resolution 43-R-02, "Slave Reparations."

In November 2019, the Evanston City Council adopted [Resolution 126-R-19, “Establishing the City of Evanston Reparations Fund and the Reparations Subcommittee.”](#) The resolution committed the first ten million dollars (\$10,000,000.00) of the City’s Municipal Cannabis Retailers’ Occupation Tax (3% on gross sales of cannabis) to fund local reparations for housing and economic development programs for Black Evanston residents.

In passing [Resolution 58-R-19, “Commitment to End Structural Racism and Achieve Racial Equity”](#), In June 2019, the City of Evanston government recognizes that like most, if not all communities in the

Reports



[Evanston Policies and Practices Directly Affecting the African American Community, 1900 - 1960 \(and Present\)](#)

[Equity and Empowerment Commission Reparations Recommendations - Wealth and Opportunity Gaps](#)

[Equity and Empowerment Commission - Recommendations on Actions to Address Wealth and Opportunity Gaps](#)

[Redlining in Evanston](#)

[Cannabis Arrests and Compliance Tickets](#)

[Reparations: Redressing Institutional Racism and Redlining](#)

[Financial Wellness Education Workshops](#)

[Local Reparations - Kamm Howard](#)

[Public Funding of Evanston's Local Reparations Program - Alderman Rainey](#)

[Developing a Segregated Town, 1900 - 1960](#)

How to Stay Informed



[Reparation Community Engagement Form](#)

Videos

Restorative Housing Application Informational Session - Virtual Webinar