



City of Rochester • County of Monroe

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COUNTY/CITY EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EPPI 2.0 HAS SO FAR PROVIDED MORE THAN \$10 MILLION IN HELP TO COUNTY RESIDENTS

ROCHESTER, NY – Since its inception in late March, the joint Monroe County/City of Rochester Emergency Rental Assistance Program (EPPI 2.0) has provided more than \$10 million in funding to help keep county residents in their homes, Monroe County Executive Adam Bello and Mayor Lovely Warren announced today.

“It is critically important that Monroe County residents who have suffered from economic losses during the COVID-19 pandemic get to stay in their homes without fear of eviction or homelessness,” **said County Executive Bello**. “I am grateful to the Lifeline/211 call center and the non-profit agencies in Monroe County and Rochester for all their help in making sure this vital assistance gets to the individuals and families who need it. Preventing eviction and homelessness keeps our community and neighborhoods strong, provides stability for working families and their landlords and helps stabilize our economy. I continue to urge anyone in the county who is facing eviction due to the pandemic, or their landlords, to reach out to 211 to be pre-screened for EPPI 2.0.”

“The level of participation in the City-County rental assistance program is a testament to the value of this initiative and a reminder that many residents are still struggling to recover from the pandemic and require our support,” **said Mayor Warren**. “I want thank all of the agencies who are working to make this program possible, including our Congressional delegation, Monroe County and our partners in the human service sector. Collaborations like this help us preserve and protect the fundamental human right of safe, quality and affordable housing, which is a critical component of our efforts to create more jobs, safer and more vibrant neighborhoods and better educational opportunities.”

The County/City EPPI 2.0 program is made possible by efforts of Sen. Charles Schumer, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand and Rep. Joe Morelle to include \$25 billion for rental assistance in federal stimulus legislation passed this year. In late 2020, the federal government provided \$16 million to Monroe County and \$6 million to the City of Rochester to help working families at risk of eviction stay in their homes. The American Rescue Plan passed in March gave an additional \$12.5 million to the county and \$4.8 million to the City in order to keep offering rental assistance for months to come.

“Housing insecurity threatens the health and well-being of our communities and it is essential that families can access safe and affordable housing. The American Rescue Plan took incredibly important and significant steps to reduce poverty and to ensure that every New Yorker has a roof over their heads,” **said Senator Kirsten Gillibrand**. “I am proud of the determination and spirit of collaboration shown by the City of Rochester, Monroe County and their partners in the non-profit community in administering this critical program.”

“Every person has the right a safe, stable place to call home—but the COVID-19 pandemic has threatened that right for countless families in our community and across the country who are struggling to make ends meet,” **said Congressman Joe Morelle**. “I was proud to help secure funding through the CARES Act to ensure families have access to the support they need to remain in their homes and recover from the impacts of this crisis. I’m grateful to

County Executive Bello for taking swift action to distribute this funding and uplift our community during these challenging times.”

The City and County pooled their resources to create a unified, cost-effective program and then partnered with the 211/Lifeline call center and 13 local non-profit agencies to help screen potential applicants, complete applications and provide direct relief payments to property owners on behalf of their qualified residential tenants.

“Access to critical resources for our community is priority,” **said Angelica Perez-Delgado, President and CEO of the Ibero-American Action League.** “Ibero is proud to partner with Monroe County, 211 and other community based organizations to ensure equitable access to this vital resource. Our Stability, Employment and Educational Division has disbursed over \$1M in eviction prevention dollars to date, helping families avoid eviction.”

“For survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence, safe housing is quite possibly the most important piece on the journey to a safe life,” **said Meaghan de Chateauvieux, president and CEO of Willow.** “Access to the EPPI 2.0 funds has literally been life-saving for survivors in our community. Survivors have been able to stay in their homes and take respite during a trying time. Making sure this support is received by those in our community who need it the most during these challenging 18 months has been gift. We are grateful to Senator Schumer, County Executive Bello, and Mayor Warren for their leadership.”

“This funding has been a lifeline to thousands of families in our community,” **said Scott Benjamin, CEO of Charles Settlement House & Community Place of Greater Rochester.** “People’s lives spiral out of control when they can no longer pay for basic needs. Keeping people in their homes during the pandemic is crucial for the families who are behind in their rent and for the landlords who cannot make a living when people are unable to pay the rent. Our community should be proud of the partnership between government and non-profit human service organizations that came together to integrate services and keep families in their homes.”

“Many of our clients have avoided eviction because they have been approved for funds from this project,” **said Carla Palumbo, President & CEO of the Legal Aid Society of Rochester.** “We are proud to work with our partners in government and the not-for-profit sector to help our clients avoid life altering disruptions, like eviction. We are thankful that this process has been rolled out smoothly and, importantly, we have had great lines of communication with DHS and local rental assistance providers.”

As of July 14, more than 2,300 applications have been fully approved, providing county residents and their landlords with just over \$10 million in relief. Another 2,680 applications are pending. In total, more than 6,300 applications have been received under the EPPI 2.0 program, representing tenants in 43 ZIP codes throughout Monroe County.

What is EPPI 2.0?

The Monroe County/City of Rochester EPPI 2.0 program provides rental assistance for people affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is targeted toward low-income households who have experienced a COVID-19 related loss of income. Gross monthly income limits for the program are at or below 80% of the area median income, or about \$5,092 for a family of four.

The program provides up to 12 months of back rent, and up to three months of future rent if the household cannot afford ongoing rent.

How does it work?

Interested individuals call 211 for pre-screening. The 211 center – which is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week -- will refer potentially qualified applicants to one of 13 local non-profit agencies, which will assist the individual with completing their application. Once the applications are approved, property owners will receive a direct payment on behalf of their tenant. Landlords may also initiate and complete the application process on behalf of a qualified tenant, with the tenant’s permission.

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