



News

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For Immediate Release: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 David Levinsky (609) 265-5020

Burlington County partnering with Murphy administration to distribute \$13 million in rental assistance

MOUNT HOLLY – The Burlington County Board of Commissioners announced a new partnership with Gov. Phil Murphy’s administration that will speed significant rental assistance to Burlington County households facing eviction or other financial hardships stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under the partnership, Burlington County will contribute \$13 million in rental assistance funds to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs to administer and distribute to eligible Burlington County households as part of the state’s Emergency Rental Assistance Program.

Entering the partnership will allow the funds to be awarded quickly and will also streamline administration costs and leverage state money to maximize the assistance available for Burlington County residents.

“From the earliest days of the pandemic, Burlington County has been committed to assuring that our residents make it through this crisis and receive the help they need,” said Burlington County Commissioner Director Felicia Hopson. “One of our most important actions is providing housing assistance so that our residents can stay in their homes. Hundreds of residents in Burlington County are facing the burden of owing thousands of dollars in back rent or utilities. Partnering with the State in this much-needed program allows us to quickly reach those who need it most and ensure that the maximum amount is available to our residents.”

The Burlington County funding will be distributed by DCA through Phase II of the state’s Emergency Rental Assistance Program. Up to 12 months assistance to pay for back rent owed or future rent will be made available to eligible households that can demonstrate an income loss due to the pandemic. Eligibility will also be limited to households earning less than 80% of the Area Median Income, which is currently \$54,150 for a single resident in Burlington County and \$77,300 for a family of four.

Funding for the New Jersey program was provided by a December pandemic-aid bill approved by Congress and the White House.

While the program is being administered statewide, Burlington County’s \$13 million in contributed funds will be reserved solely for Burlington County residents. County residents will also be eligible for a portion of \$353 million being allocated by the State of New Jersey for the program.

Households earning less than 50% of the Area Median Income with a resident who has been unemployed for 90 days or longer will receive preference for selection.

The Department of Community of Affairs is scheduled to begin accepting applications for the program on March 22 and hopes to begin awarding assistance on May 1. Tenants can apply for the aid directly and landlords can also apply on their tenants' behalf, according to the DCA. Payments will also be made directly to landlords.

To apply online go to <https://njdca.onlinepha.com/>

“Making this rental aid money available quickly is critical both for our families in trouble and the landlords who are experiencing their own financial headaches,” said Hopson, who is the Board of Commissioners liaison to the County Department of Human Services. “By extending this aid, we hope to help both tenants and landlords get back on their feet.”

The federal government has imposed an eviction moratorium through March 31 and New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy has also signed an Executive Order suspending them during the current COVID-19 health emergency. However, once the federal moratorium expires and the New Jersey emergency declaration is lifted, eviction proceedings will be able to move forward.

Already more than 3,000 landlords in Burlington County have made filings in Superior Court to begin eviction proceedings once the moratorium is lifted.

“That’s 3,000 Burlington County families that could potentially end up displaced and on the streets. The impact would be catastrophic,” said Hopson. “We remain hopeful that by acting now we can prevent this looming crisis.”

Additional information about the program can be found online at www.nj.gov/dca/cverap2.shtml or by calling DCA’s Applicant Services at (609) 490-4550 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week during the open enrollment period.