



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 \$16 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 nearly \$16 million in funding to help keep county residents in their homes, Monroe County Executive Adam Bello and Mayor Lovely Warren announced today.

“With New York’s COVID-19 eviction moratorium set to expire on August 31, it’s important that anyone facing eviction due to the pandemic reach out to 211 to be pre-screened for EPPI 2.0,” said Monroe County Executive Adam Bello. “Monroe County residents who have suffered economic losses during the pandemic need to stay in their homes in order to keep our communities and neighborhoods strong. Safe housing for individuals and families also helps to reduce the spread of COVID-19. It’s also important that we assist the landlords who are facing serious economic losses through no fault of their own. Funding for EPPI 2.0 is still available and I urge anyone in the county who is facing eviction, or the loss of rental income, to apply.”

“This City and County partnership to assist families so they can stay in their homes is essential. While we have been able to assist numerous people in need, I know that we must continue to do more,” said Mayor Warren. “That’s why I encourage anyone struggling to pay their rent to work with their landlord and apply for help. Together, we can provide every family with the security of a stable home during this pandemic.”

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.

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.

Recognizing the need for people to easily access the help they need during the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis, County Executive Bello in September 2020 invested \$6 million in American Cares Act Funding to launch an Eviction Prevention Pilot Initiative in partnership with the city and community-based organizations. That initiative led to the infrastructure that is now EPPI 2.0.

As of mid-August, EPPI 2.0 grants have been provided to 3,500 households, with the average grant totaling \$4,800. The average processing time measured from the date an application is received to disbursement of a grant is between 35 and 40 days. More than 8,200 applications from tenants and landlords in 43 ZIP codes throughout Monroe County have been received since the program's inception. It is expected that the currently pending applications will account for an additional \$12 million in grant funds.

Under the terms of the federal government's Emergency Rental Assistance Programs, Monroe County was required to spend at least 65% of Round 1 funding by September 30. To date, the county/city program has spent 78% of the funding.

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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Media Contact:

Meaghan McDermott

O| (585) 753-1081 C| (585) 469-094365

MeaghanMcDermott@MonroeCounty.gov

Justin Roj

O| (585) 428-7135 C| (585) 397-4309

Justin.Roj@CityofRochester.gov