Gov. Pritzker Launches Largest Emergency Housing Assistance Programs in the Nation

Press Release - Monday, August 10, 2020

CHICAGO - Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) today announced that applications for rental assistance are now available for renters who have lost a job or income due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, IHDA will allocate $150 million to help income-eligible residents across the state pay their rent during this national emergency. Following the application period for rental assistance, IHDA will open applications for Emergency Mortgage Assistance, providing $150 million to homeowners impacted by COVID-19. Taken together, these programs are the largest emergency housing assistance programs in the nation and will help approximately 40,000 households before the end of 2020.

"We are in a moment that requires a historic effort to mitigate this virus's devastating effects on the health and livelihoods of the residents of this state - one that centers on rebounding with a stronger, more inclusive economy on the other side," **said Governor JB Pritzker.** "Keeping people in their homes isn't just a moral obligation, it's an economic one, and I'm incredibly proud that even in tough financial times for the state, we used our federal resources to build the largest pandemic housing stability program of any state in the nation."

"As COVID-19 continues to impact our state, it is more important than ever that vulnerable households have the resources and support they need to stay in their homes," **said IHDA Executive Director Kristin Faust**. "I thank Governor Pritzker and the Illinois General Assembly for making this funding possible, and I encourage those who have lost a job or seen their income decline as a result of COVID-19 visit our application portals to apply."

Emergency Rental Assistance Program

With applications now available, the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERA) will support Illinois tenants unable to pay their rent due to a COVID-19-related loss of income. Tenants whose applications are approved will receive one-time grants of $5,000 paid directly to their landlords to cover missed rent payments beginning March 2020 and prepay payments through December 2020, or until the $5,000 is exhausted, whichever comes first. The assistance will be in the form of a grant and repayment will not be required. Applications for ERA will be accepted August 10th through August 21st. Due to anticipated high volume, the application window may close early. IHDA will use a third-party entity to select a pool of applications to be reviewed for eligibility. Approximately 30,000 tenants are expected to receive funding. Apply online at: **era.ihda.org**.

Tenant Eligibility:

- Household income before March 1, 2020 was at or below 80 percent of the Area Median Income;
- An adult member of the household must have had a loss of income due to the COVID-19 crisis on or after March 1, 2020; and
- Household has an unpaid rent balance that began on or after March 1, 2020.

Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program

Available August 24, 2020, the Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program (EMA) will assist homeowners who have experienced a COVID-19-related loss of income resulting in past due mortgage balances starting March 2020. Approved applicants will receive up to $15,000 paid directly to their mortgage servicer. Assistance will cover the homeowner's past due or forbearance balance and their regular mortgage payments through December 30, 2020, or until the funding is exhausted, whichever comes first. Payments may include all escrowed first mortgage expenses including property taxes, insurance and certain fees. The assistance will be in the form of a grant and repayment will not be required. Applications for EMA will be accepted from August 24th through September 4th. Due to anticipated high volume, the application window may close early. IHDA will use a third-party entity to select a pool of applications to be reviewed for eligibility. The program is expected to assist approximately 10,000 households. Apply online at: **ema.ihda.org**.

Homeowner Eligibility:

- Household adjusted gross income from 2019 Tax Return was at or below 120 percent of the Area Median Income;
- An adult member of the household has had a loss of income due to the COVID-19 crisis on or after March 1, 2020;
- Homeowner's mortgage was current as of February 29, 2020;
- The mortgage is past due or in forbearance.

Financial assistance from both programs is funded through Illinois' allocation of federal Coronavirus Relief Funds from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (P.L. 116-136).

Passed in March 2020, the CARES Act provided $3.5 billion in Coronavirus Relief Funds to the State of Illinois to help residents and businesses impacted by the pandemic. In May, the Illinois General Assembly directed a portion of this funding to IHDA to provide direct assistance to struggling renters and homeowners. The funding must be completely distributed by December 30, 2020.

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About the Illinois Housing Development Authority

*IHDA (**www.ihda.org**) is a self-supporting state agency that finances the creation and the preservation of affordable housing across Illinois. Since its creation in 1967, IHDA has allocated $18 billion and financed approximately 255,000 affordable housing units for residents of Illinois.*

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