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August 07, 2020 - Governor Murphy and Lieutenant Governor Oliver Announce Emergency Grant Funding Program to Assist Small Landlords and Tenants

COVID-19 Press Information

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor Murphy and Lieutenant Governor Oliver Announce Emergency Grant Funding Program to Assist Small Landlords and Tenants

$25 Million in CARES Act Funding to be Allocated to Reimburse Small Landlords Whose Tenants Missed Rent Payments between April and July 2020

TRENTON – As part of the Administration's coordinated response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Phil Murphy and Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver today announced the creation of the Small Landlord Emergency Grant Program. The program, administered by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, will provide emergency grant funding to small property owners for COVID-19 related decreases in rent revenue for a four-month period between April and July 2020.

Funded through the CARES Act, grant amounts will be generated based on the total amount of missed rental payments and the number of COVID-impacted rental units that serve low- and moderate-income tenants. Landlords who receive assistance will be required to pass along benefits to their tenants by forgiving back rent and late fees accumulated by COVID-19 impacted units.

"To emerge stronger from this crisis, we need to make direct investments in our hardest hit neighborhoods and communities," **said Governor Murphy.** "Ensuring that responsible landlords can continue to maintain their properties and provide quality housing to our tenants is essential to our recovery. Through this program, we can also provide direct support to COVID-impacted renters by forgiving back-rent."

"We know that many of New Jersey's landlords are not companies or corporations. Rather, they are families and individuals. And like the families they rent to, they are struggling because they are often locked out of access to capital and federal resources," **said Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, who serves at Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and Chair of the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA) Board.** "The number one priority of this program is to offer much-needed relief to small landlords, who will in turn pass along the benefits to their tenants who are also fighting to stay afloat in the midst of this ongoing public health and economic crisis."

"No family should be without a home, especially in a national pandemic. Approximately 30% of all New Jersey renters and 27% of low- and moderate-income renters live in 3-10 unit buildings. We have designed this grant program to ensure that our most vulnerable renters and landlords get the help that they need," **said Charles A. Richman, Executive Director of the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency.** "At NJHMFA, our mission to ensure safe and equitable housing for every resident of New Jersey has never been more critical than during this crisis. These dollars will have the increased impact of securing financial sustainability for New Jersey's families. HMFA is enormously proud to provide

this assistance to landlords and tenants and thankful for Governor Murphy and Lt. Governor Oliver's championing of this program."

"No one should lose the roof over their head or their business because we failed to act during this crisis," **said Congressman Andy Kim.** "I voted to pass the CARES Act because we needed bold action to help get our communities through this pandemic, and I'm proud to see programs like this being set up that will help our neighbors stay on their feet during these tough times."

"This funding from the CARES Act will ensure that small landlords are able to maintain their livelihoods and support their families, and that tenants do not lose their homes during a pandemic," **said Congressman Tom Malinowski.** "I will continue to fight in Congress to bring federal resources home to help struggling New Jerseyans get through this crisis."

One-third of program funds will be reserved for applicants who are registered in DCA's RIMS database as individual or family owners. Qualified applicants must meet the following specifications:

- Owners with properties that have at least 3 but no more than 10 total housing units;
- Owners with properties that are not seasonal or vacation rentals;
- Properties must have current fire inspection certificates as of March 9, 2020;
- Owners of properties with at least one non-vacant rental unit impacted by COVID-19 between April and July 2020; and
- Owners with properties that have low- to moderate-income rent levels or rent based on up to 80% of the median area income.

Applications must be submitted between August 19th at 9:00 a.m. and August 26th at 1:00 p.m. to be considered.

Grant funding will be allocated on a case by case basis, based on the number of COVID-impacted units, and the amount of missed rent. Applicants must be the Primary Property Owner of a residential rental property in New Jersey and be registered with DCA's Bureau of Housing Inspection as of July 17, 2020. Applicants can check here to see if their property is registered.

For more information on the Small Landlord Emergency Grant Program, visit www.njhousing.gov/rentals/sleg

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