

Housing Initiatives of Princeton (HIP) has been working hard over the past year to help our community avoid the tsunami of evictions that is predicted to harm so many hardworking area residents, drawing on public and private funding to significantly expand its emergency rental assistance services to respond to the moment.

In December 2020, Princeton Council passed a resolution, authorizing an agreement with HIP through which we are administering the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds the town received from the federal government to promote housing stability. This much needed \$319,000 is being used to help ensure that low-income workers whose incomes were affected by the pandemic are able to retain their housing and not worry about being evicted when the eviction moratorium is lifted.

Local landlords are stepping up in response to this crisis with more than 90% agreeing to accept a 20-25% discount on the monthly rental payments. This enables HIP to stretch the CDBG funds to meet the need resulting from this relentless crisis while still allowing landlords – many of whom are local residents themselves – to cover their costs.

As of March 3, 2021, HIP has used these funds to assist over 40 households, including 88 adults and 64 children. As a result of the mediated discounted rental amounts, instead of committing \$200,000, we have an extra \$40,000 to help other struggling families.

“The pandemic has had a devastating effect both economically and in health outcomes on our most vulnerable neighbors,” Carol Golden, Chair of HIP notes. “We are grateful for the opportunity to provide these much-needed funds so that people can stay safely in their homes.”

Launched in 2004, HIP is a community-based nonprofit that provides transitional housing with wraparound services to low-income working families with children and financial assistance to help renters retain or secure affordable housing. The need for these services increased drastically this past year as COVID-19 evolved from a health crisis to also become an economic crisis. We’ve been able to provide rental support for 189 adults and 192 children since last March when the pandemic struck. In addition, to the partnership with the town, HIP has raised additional private funding to support those living outside of the Town of Princeton as well as those whose inability to pay their rent is not related to COVID-19 (sickness, reduced hours, car repairs, etc.).

To Apply for CDBG-Funded Rental Assistance

Tenants living in Princeton who are unable to pay their rent due to the economic impact of COVID-19 and who are interested in applying for assistance should call 609-921-2328 or visit the HIP website: www.housinginitiativesofprinceton.org to submit an application in English or Spanish. CDBG regulations require that tenants be on a signed, valid lease to receive these funds.

Applications are being accepted on a rolling basis and HIP will review the applications to determine:

- Eligibility for the program
- Level of need