



Waukesha County

Office of the County Executive

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WAUKESHA COUNTY PARTNERS WITH COMMUNITY ADVOCATES, INC. TO LAUNCH EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(Waukesha, WI) – Waukesha County, in partnership with Community Advocates, Inc., is launching an Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) to help people experiencing financial hardship to stay in their homes because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The program, which will provide \$12 million in direct rental and utility costs, is now accepting applications. More information about how to apply is available at <https://communityadvocates.net>.

For individuals who qualify, ERAP pays for:

- Up to three months of rent at a time
- Up to twelve months of rent in arrears (back-rent) occurring after March 13, 2020.
- Cost of electricity and other home energy costs.
- Cost of utilities in arrears (back-utilities) occurring after March 13, 2020.

ERAP payments are made directly to the landlord or utility company, NOT to the renter. Payments are made to the landlord or utility provider within about 10 days.

Waukesha County residents may qualify for help with rent or utilities who:

- Qualify for unemployment insurance benefits; or have experienced financial hardship due to COVID-19.
- Are at risk of becoming homeless; or are experiencing housing instability.
- Have a household income at or below 80% of the median in Waukesha County. Unemployment benefits count as household income.
- Are 18 years old or older.
- Are a Wisconsin resident that is named on a current residential rental lease.
- Receive a federal housing subsidy, such as a Housing Choice Voucher, Public Housing, Project-Based Rental Assistance or Tenant-Based Rental Assistance – and their rent is NOT adjusted as income changes.

Individuals are not eligible if:

- They want reimbursement for mortgage payments. Only rental housing costs are covered.
- They already receive additional rent or utility assistance. ERAP cannot be used to cover expenses that are already being subsidized.
- Their rent is adjusted as their income changes and they receive a federal housing subsidy, such as a Housing Choice Voucher, Public Housing, Project-Based Rental Assistance or Tenant-Based Rental Assistance.

(Continued)

Residents who qualify for ERAP may also receive additional housing security. Landlords who agree to accept ERAP rent payments must agree to take no action to evict individuals for late or past due rent during the coronavirus eviction moratorium issued by the federal Centers of Disease Control (CDC).

How to Apply:

The universal application for Rent Assistance can be found at the Community Advocates website: <https://webportalapp.com/sp/communityadvocates-application>.

Waukesha County residents who have questions on the application process can call Rent Help Line at 414-270-4646 or email at renthelp@communityadvocates.net

Hard copy applications can also be picked up and dropped off at Community Advocates, 728 N. James Lovell Street Monday-Friday between 9AM-5PM. Hard copy applications will be entered into the application software (Zengine) for processing within 24 hours of receipt.

Landlords may also submit rent assistance for tenants who are behind or at risk of becoming behind through this link: <https://webportalapp.com/sp/communityadvocates-applicationlandlords>
Following submission of a landlord inquiry, tenants will receive a link to apply for assistance as approval is based on their household information, income and income loss. Landlords can upload tenant documents with tenant consent.

About Community Advocates Inc.

Since 1976, the Milwaukee-based Community Advocates has provided a spectrum of programs and services to thousands of people experiencing housing insecurity every year. Its Public Policy Institute targets poverty through nonpartisan changes to relevant public policies and laws; preventing its effects through public health efforts; and increasing opportunity and wellness for low-income people by fostering factors related to success, resilience, and well-being.

About Waukesha County's Emergency Rental Assistance Program

Waukesha County's Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) is funded through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act passed in December. Waukesha County will receive a \$12 million allocation from the US Treasury Department to provide direct financial assistance for rent and utility costs for individuals who qualify. The funds will be administered through Community Advocates, Inc.

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