

Pritzker Administration Announces \$742 Million In Covid-19 Relief Now Available To Illinois Small Local Governments

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SPRINGFIELD – Governor JB Pritzker announced that beginning today more than 1,250 small cities, towns and villages across Illinois that have not already received aid from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) can apply for their share of more than \$742 million in federal funds.

The money can be used to cover expenses incurred while responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The first payments are expected to be made in August.

“From the beginning of the pandemic, Illinois has taken action to quickly and equitably address the needs facing our local communities,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “I’m thrilled that thanks to the Biden-Harris administration and Democrats in Congress, the American Rescue Plan Act is providing residents and small businesses in Illinois with critical funding so communities can start to heal. I encourage every eligible community to apply for this available funding as we continue to build a strong recovery for all of our families.”

To assist local governments as they claim their allotments, the State of Illinois has established a website portal at <https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/CURENEU/Pages/default.aspx>. Authorized community representatives can access the portal now to certify and request their allotment within minutes. Municipalities completing the portal submission, including all of the documentation required by U.S. Treasury, can expect to receive half of their funding in approximately 30 days with the remaining half roughly a year later. The deadline for municipalities to apply for funding is September 30, 2021 and there will be no other opportunity for municipalities to apply for later distributions.

ARPA, approved by Congress and the Biden administration earlier this year, established the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund to provide a critical source of relief for local governments, including smaller governments which have not received direct fiscal assistance from the federal government since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. States, including Illinois, are receiving funding from the U.S. Treasury Department to distribute to smaller local governments on a per-capita basis. Larger cities and counties already have received funding directly from the federal government.

Eligible local governments include cities, towns and villages serving populations of less than 50,000, that did not receive direct aid from ARPA. These smaller, so-called non-entitlement units of local government (NEUs), are being allocated funds they can use to cover revenue losses and the costs of responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency or to its negative economic impacts on households, small businesses, impacted industries, essential workers, and the communities hardest-hit by the crisis. These funds can also be used to invest in building, maintaining, or upgrading water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure.

"Local officials are eager to put these funds to use in their communities. The economic impact will be both immediate, due to job creation, and long term, because of the investment in critical infrastructure," said Brad Cole, Executive Director of the Illinois Municipal League. "We appreciate Governor Pritzker's partnership with us to strengthen the cities, villages and towns of Illinois."

Eligible communities will receive a letter detailing their preliminary allotments and instructions about how to access the portal. To maximize visibility of the program, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) will conduct additional outreach to communities. For more information about the program, please visit the website at <https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/CURENEU/Pages/default.aspx>. Local governments can obtain technical assistance at the site and can register for a webinar scheduled for July 26 at 10 a.m. CST.

"Under Governor Pritzker's leadership, the State of Illinois is leveraging every available resource to provide support needed for our communities, businesses and residents to recover from the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic," said DCEO Acting Director Sylvia Garcia. "While the State has assisted with hundreds of millions of dollars in relief provided to communities in every county statewide – we know that more support is needed to help our cities and towns get back on track. That's why we strongly encourage local governments to visit the NEU portal to apply and qualify for automatic payments through this program – so that together we can ensure that none of the federal dollars designated for Illinois are left on the table."

Each local government receiving funds will be required to provide a project expenditure report to the U.S. Treasury by the end of October, then annually thereafter. Each must follow all federal compliance and reporting responsibilities. DCEO will help local governments navigate the reporting requirements.

"Formally requesting funding from ARPA for communities across the state is a critical step forward in helping the state recover from COVID-19," said State Representative Anthony DeLuca, Chairman of the House Cities and Villages Committee. "As a strong advocate for ARPA funding, I thank Governor Pritzker for his commitment to securing these funds and investing the resources needed for Illinois to heal."

These allocations, from ARPA's Coronavirus Fiscal Recovery Fund, supplement funding provided by the Pritzker administration last year to implement emergency relief for local communities which did not receive a direct allocation of funds through the CARES Act. Through the Local CURE program, launched last year, the State has deployed nearly \$220 million in federal funds to over 930 local governments across the state. Overall, the State of Illinois is home to 1,252 local governments eligible for the NEU allotments from the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund.

