

Pritzker Administration Announces Up To \$30,000 In Housing Relief Per Eligible Homeowners

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CHICAGO – Building on Illinois' COVID-19 emergency housing assistance response, the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) announced today applications for homeowners financially impacted by the pandemic will be accepted beginning in April through the Illinois Emergency Homeowner Assistance Fund (ILHAF) program. ILHAF will provide up to \$30,000 in free assistance per homeowner paid directly to the servicer, taxing body or other approved entity on behalf of Illinois homeowners

impacted by COVID-19 to prevent mortgage delinquencies, defaults and foreclosures to keep families safe and secure while they regain their financial footing. Program information and updates can be found at illinoishousinghelp.org.

“My administration worked more quickly than any other state in the country to distribute over \$1 billion to prevent renters and homeowners from losing their housing in the pandemic, and this next phase will provide hundreds of millions more in 2022,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “Come April, residents struggling to keep a roof over their heads will be able to access up to \$30,000 in mortgage relief. This funding marks another step forward in our work to ensure all our residents have what they need for themselves and their families.”

“When we say housing is a right, that means we go full force to ensure families have a roof over their heads. We responded quickly and equitably to the economic instability caused by the pandemic when it threatened that right,” said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton. “We continue to stand up for homeowners and renters. We see them. We are fighting for them. This relief is a critical tool that will support Illinois families, enabling them to remain in their homes while strengthening communities.”

The U.S. Department of the Treasury requires this assistance be used as a “last resort,” therefore struggling homeowners are federally required to seek other relief options prior to being eligible to apply for assistance through ILHAF in April. Potential applicants must demonstrate they have either communicated with their mortgage provider about their inability to pay or sought counseling with a HUD-approved counseling organization. Interested homeowners are strongly encouraged attend an information session hosted by IHDA or one of our housing partners. The session schedule is posted online at illinoishousinghelp.org, for those without access to a computer or the internet, please contact the ILHAF hotline at 1-866-IL-HELP (866-454-3571).

“After allocating over a billion dollars to assist renters and landlords avoid eviction and foreclosure, it is now time to help Illinois homeowners and their neighborhoods in their recovery from the pandemic,” said IHDA Executive Director Kristin Faust. “IHDA has a proven track record over the past decade in providing help to homeowners struggling to pay their housing expenses in the midst of economic strife.”

To qualify for ILHAF assistance, Illinois homeowners must have experienced a financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic after Jan. 21, 2020 (including a hardship that began before Jan. 21, 2020, but continued after that date). They also must currently own and occupy their home in Illinois as their primary residence, be at least 30 days late on their monthly housing payments and have a household income at or below 150% of the area median income.

“With the ending of the nationwide moratorium on foreclosures, many are still struggling to catch up to missed payments incurred due to the pandemic, “ said Illinois State Senator Robert Peters (D-Chicago). “This vital assistance will give families an opportunity to regain their financial footing while staying in their communities.”

Homeowners may apply for ILHAF assistance even if they received emergency mortgage assistance in the past through IHDA. However, if a homeowner received emergency mortgage assistance to cover mortgage payments in 2020, they may only receive ILHAF assistance for costs incurred in 2021.

“Chicago is seeing an influx in foreclosure filings as many households impacted by the pandemic are still struggling to make their mortgage payments or catch up from missed payments,” Assistant Majority Leader Delia Ramirez (D-Chicago) said. “As we did with rental assistance, the Illinois General Assembly is partnering with IHDA to ensure those most at risk of foreclosure receive mortgage assistance. The Illinois Homeowner Assistance Fund will keep families from losing their homes by prioritizing aid to the hardest-hit communities and those with the lowest incomes.”

ILHAF is funded through an appropriation in the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2), which was signed into law by President Joe Biden in March 2021. The \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus relief designed to speed up recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic included \$9.96 billion allocated for state territories, tribes and the Department of Hawaiian Homelands. The state of Illinois was allocated \$386.9 million which was appropriated to IHDA by the Illinois General Assembly (P.A. 102-0017).

“I implore homeowners behind on their mortgage to take the necessary steps to ensure they are eligible to apply for help through ILHAF,” said Illinois State Representative Lindsey LaPointe (D-Chicago). “Attend an information session or contact a counseling agency on the IHDA website to educate yourselves about the program so you are ready to apply when the portal is open.”

For more information and updates on the program, please visit illinoishousinghelp.org.

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.