

December 19, 2020

Dear Governor Holcomb,

We are writing you on behalf of housing providers in our region and state who have residents who cannot pay rent because of the impacts of Covid-19. New legislation just passed by Congress has allocated \$25 billion for rent relief. **These funds will be coming to the state in 2021 and it is essential that they reach hard hit households fast.**

We ask that you convene representatives of housing providers of all sizes and locations to get advice on how to design a distribution program. The program should,

1. Pay the full amount of unpaid rent for affected households;
2. Consider current (not pre-Covid) income for households to qualify;
3. Pay any and all unpaid utility bills for the unit;
4. Not spend any less than the required 90 percent on direct rent relief to housing providers;
5. Limit the number of third parties in the transaction;
6. Use lenders that have existing relationships with housing providers;
7. Use direct electronic transfers to pay rent directly to providers;
8. Allow payments for ongoing and future rent and utility obligations if Covid-19 impacts continue; and
9. End or modify state and local bans on eviction to allow eviction for people who can pay but aren't.

Remember the law is requiring payment to housing providers not tenants or third parties. For this program to be successful state and local government needs to work with property owners and fast to be sure resources go where they are needed the most. We are ready to work with you and other groups to design this program.

Sincerely,
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