



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 20, 2021

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Government funds available to help renters and landlords pay their bills

St. Paul, MN (April 20, 2021) – A new rental assistance program, RentHelpMN, has opened for applications, making it possible for low- and moderate-income renters to get caught up on overdue rent and utilities dating back to March 13, 2020. It also makes provisions for those at risk of falling behind on rent payments due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

With federal funding through the stimulus bill passed in December 2020, Minnesota received about \$375 million for emergency rental assistance, with \$289 million coming to the state and approximately \$85 million to localities in the Twin Cities metro area. The funds are available to help prevent eviction and homelessness and to maintain housing stability for low- to moderate-income renters. It is a critical resource and lifeline for Minnesota renters struggling with their payments.

“During the COVID-19 pandemic, we asked Minnesotans to stay home to slow the spread of the virus and save lives, and that’s why Lieutenant Governor Flanagan and I put an evictions moratorium in place within two weeks of declaring a state of emergency due to COVID-19,”said Governor Tim Walz. **“RentHelpMN will give both renters and property owners time to get caught up on their bills, while making it possible for our partners in the Minnesota Legislature to provide a safe, effective end to the eviction moratorium.”**

“We know many families are still in and out of work, have reduced hours, or have had to quit jobs to care for their children and loved ones. RentHelpMN will help those who have been impacted by COVID-19 and will help landlords cover their costs,” said Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. **“As we launch this program, I encourage the legislature to work together to provide a comprehensive end to the eviction moratorium that gives people time to receive**

assistance and, just as importantly, the peace of mind that they will not be evicted for non-payment of rent while we have these significant resources available.”

With one statewide portal to access the assistance, the state is coordinating with the participating local governments to distribute the rental assistance, which include the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul and the counties of Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington. The state’s effort includes an extensive network of community organizations across the state helping renters navigate the application process or guiding them toward other resources. Property managers and landlords are encouraged to let their tenants know about RentHelpMN and help them be prepared to apply.

“Emergency rental assistance has been a priority of mine since the beginning of this pandemic, because we know that without a safe, affordable place to live, it’s nearly impossible to stay healthy and financially stable. We also know that COVID-19 has exacerbated the challenges that many low-income communities and communities of color already face,” said Senator Tina Smith. **“That’s why, in December of 2020, I helped pass the bipartisan relief package that secured funding for RentHelpMN to deliver rental assistance to low-income families and households across the state.”**

Renters can apply directly or learn more about the application process by visiting renthelpmn.org or calling Greater Twin Cities United Way’s 211 Resource Helpline (Toll Free: 1.800.543.7709; Local: 651.291.0211). The 211 helpline has dedicated multilingual staff available to answer questions about RentHelpMN COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance, 8:00 a.m. – 8 :00 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

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Minnesota Housing collaborates with individuals, communities and partners to create, preserve and finance housing that is affordable. Learn more at www.mnhousing.gov. Follow us at www.facebook.com/minnesotahousing and on Twitter @mnhousing.

Greater Twin Cities United Way’s mission is to unite changemakers, advocate for social good and develop solutions to address the challenges no one can solve alone with a vision of a community where all people thrive, regardless of income, race or place.

Learn more at www.gtcuw.org.