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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 13, 2020

## City of Miami Beach Creates Rental Assistance Fund

– For Residents Affected by COVID-19–

**Miami Beach, FL** – Today, the Miami Beach Mayor & Commission unanimously approved the creation of a rent relief fund for qualifying residents adversely impacted by COVID-19. A total of \$549,111.54 will be available through state and federal funds for those residents who have fallen behind in payments as a result of job loss.

“We understand the economic hardship faced by so many residents who have been furloughed or laid off because of COVID-19,” said Mayor Dan Gelber. “Many are facing anxiety and worry for the first time in their lives about whether or not they can feed and house their families. We are committed to doing all that we can to allay these fears and help our residents.”

The city will be harnessing resources from three entitlement programs: Community Development Block Grant Program & CARES Act CDBG-CV, HOME Investment Partnership Program, and State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP).

Starting Monday, May 18, 2020, interested residents should call the Office of Housing and Community Services to schedule an appointment at 305.673.7491. Staff will inform callers of the required documentation to bring to the appointment. Once staff has a complete application with all required documentation, the application will be reviewed for eligibility. Applicants will be provided with correspondence to provide to their respective landlord that an application for rent assistance has been filed with the City of Miami Beach. Once the file is approved, a check will be mailed to the landlord within 7-10 business days.

The City will provide assistance to households earning no more than 80% AMI until funds are exhausted. Below are details on each program, including eligibility requirements. [Click here](#) for a checklist of documents needed to apply for tenant-based rental assistance.

For the latest information related to COVID-19 in the City of Miami Beach, visit [www.miamibeachfl.gov/coronavirus](http://www.miamibeachfl.gov/coronavirus).

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### **Community Development Block Grant Program & CARES Act CDBG-CV**

The *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act* (CARES Act) will enable the city to offer \$218,235 in CDBG-CV and CDBG for rent assistance.

This program will provide assistance to qualifying Miami Beach residents earning up to 80% Area Median Income who are in danger of becoming homeless for failing to pay their monthly rent. Under program guidelines, assistance will be payable directly to the landlord upon verification of eligibility and financial position. An estimated 136 households may be assisted with these funds.

#### ***Eligibility***

- Must be U.S. citizen or permanent resident;
- Must be a resident of the City of Miami Beach;
- Must demonstrate need due to job loss as a result of COVID-19;
- Household income must be less than 80% area median income (AMI); and
- Rent must have been current as of March 2020.

#### ***Required Documentation***

- Proof of legal residency;
- Copy of paystubs for all household members;
- Copy of most recent unemployment payment, if applicable;
- Copy of bank statement(s), annuity statements or any other documentation showing personal assets;
- Notice from employer relating to reduction of work hours/employment/business closure due to COVID-19;
- Copy of current lease;
- Proof applicant was current on rent as of March 2020; and
- W-9 form completed by landlord.

### **HOME Investment Partnership Program**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is allowing use of their HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) funds for tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA) to households affected by COVID-19. Funds allocated to TBRA are designated to: 1) provide immediate rental assistance to individuals and families seeking housing; 2) assist households that have housing but face reduced or lost wages that jeopardize maintaining their housing; and 3) assist existing TBRA families that need additional assistance due to reduced or lost wages.

The City of Miami Beach TBRA program is designed to provide rental and utility assistance to low-income households earning at or below 60 percent of Area Median Income and experiencing financial hardship during the COVID-19 pandemic. Applicants must have experienced job loss or difficulty paying rent or utilities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As per HUD regulations, the majority of households who receive HOME TBRA assistance must be very-low income (earning 60% percent or less of AMI) and no household served may have income in excess of 80% AMI. Funding for this program is \$310,369.

#### ***Eligibility Requirements***

- Applicants must have U.S. Citizenship, permanent residency or granted legal status;
- Qualifying utility costs to be paid include: electricity, water and natural gas;

- Program funds are only available to renters that live or plan to relocate within City limits;
- Maximum household income must be at or below 80% of Area Median Income;
- Tenants served must be income-eligible and remain income-eligible while receiving TBRA;
- TBRA shall be for a maximum of six (6) months, contingent upon tenant(s) remaining eligible and having an active lease; and
- Rent must have been current as of March 2020.

***TBRA Funds May Cover the Cost of the Following***

- Monthly rent;
- Security deposit in conjunction with rent at the same address;
- Utility cost in conjunction with rent at the same address; and
- Utility deposit in conjunction with rent at the same address.

***Ineligible Uses of TBRA Funds***

The following situations are **not** eligible uses of TBRA funds:

- Use of TBRA funds for utility or security deposit without rental assistance.
- Payment of rental fees for a tenant that is also an owner of the housing unit.
- Tenants receiving subsidy from public housing or Section 8 program.
- TBRA funds cannot be used for overnight or temporary shelter for homeless persons.
- TBRA funds cannot be used to reduce the tenant's rent payment to 30% of income. For example, if the household is already receiving assistance under the Section 8 program, the household may not also receive assistance under a HOME TBRA program.

***Landlord Forms***

- Landlords must agree to the execution of a landlord participation agreement. If the landlord terminates the lease with the tenant, the City will suspend all payments until a new lease is executed.
- Applicants can provide applications and documents on an appointment basis only. Electronic submissions of supporting documents are acceptable, however, client consent and an authorization to collect information must be signed in person to verify identity in conjunction with government-issued identification and Social Security card.

**State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP)**

The Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) has approved state entitlement communities to request waivers to reallocate existing funds to be utilized for rental and mortgage assistance/foreclosure prevention to income-eligible households affected by COVID-19. Available funds that the city can commit to rent and mortgage assistance for income-eligible household is \$20,506.54.

SHIP funds may be used to provide utility and rental assistance for up to three months to income-eligible households. All applicants must follow income limits and rent limits issued by FHFC. Income certification guidelines follow the same criteria as HOME and CDBG.

*To request this material in alternate format, sign language interpreter (five-day notice required), information on access for persons with disabilities, and/or any accommodation to review any document or participate in any city-sponsored proceedings, call 305.604.2489 and select 1 for English or 2 for Spanish, then option 6; TTY users may call via 711 (Florida Relay Service).*