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News Release

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Durham Emergency Rental Assistance Program Accepting Applications May 10

DURHAM, N.C. – Durham residents who are behind on their rents and facing evictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic will soon be able to apply for financial help to stay in their homes from the new Durham Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP).

The Durham ERAP, a partnership between the City of Durham and Durham County governments, is being funded with \$9.6 million in federal funds from the U.S. Department of Treasury. Managed by the Durham County Department of Social Services, residents can apply to the program beginning on Monday, May 10 at 12:01 p.m. by visiting DurhamERAP.dconc.gov. Once this new website goes live on Monday, residents will find eligibility requirements, frequently asked questions, and the online application in English and Spanish.

“I’m thrilled about the launch of this great City-County-community partnership that will help so many Durham residents facing a crisis with their housing,” said Durham County Board of Commissioners Vice Chair Wendy Jacobs. “Our Social Services team has worked tirelessly to create a very user-friendly website for the Durham ERAP.”

Upon acceptance into the program, residents can receive assistance for a period of up to 12 months, which includes both arrears and forward rent and utilities. Under special circumstances, grantees may be eligible for assistance for an additional three months beyond the 12-month limit. Forward rent and utilities assistance can only be applied for three months at a time.

Public housing residents and tenants who receive housing subsidies are eligible for rental assistance to cover any portion of rent and utilities that the tenant pays for themselves. Utilities include electricity, gas, water, sewer, wastewater, trash removal, and fuel oil. Internet expenses may also be covered.

“The City of Durham is pleased to commit \$8.4 million in funding received from the federal government to support the Durham ERAP,” said Mayor Steve Schewel. “This program will provide critical financial support for Durham renters who are struggling as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

To be eligible to receive Durham ERAP assistance, applicants must be a current resident of Durham County; must be renting a room, apartment, or home in Durham County; and at least one person in the household must qualify for unemployment or has experienced financial hardship due to COVID-19 or is at risk of homelessness or housing instability; and have a household income at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI). According to the regulations provided by the U.S. Department of Treasury, priority must be given to households with incomes less than 50% of AMI. Those residents in this category will be served first.

The Durham ERAP is also being assisted by five community partners that have been contracted to assist residents who do not have Internet access, or who simply require additional assistance with completing the online application. The community partners, which are El Centro Hispano, CAARE, Centre for Home Ownership, Community Empowerment Fund, and The Church World Service, will offer assistance to residents in applying to the program. Residents visiting the Durham County Human Services Building, located at 414 E. Main St., can also expect to be greeted by Social Services staff who will answer basic questions about program requirements and provide residents with a QR code to start the online application process.

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