



Media Contacts:

Michael Burnette, Franklin County
Economic Development Director
Michael.Burnette@franklincountyva.gov
540.483.3030

Pam Chitwood, United Way of Roanoke Valley
Assoc. Dir., Community Impact, Franklin County
pamela@uwrv.org
540.483.4949

For Immediate Release: 8.21.20

Franklin County Creates Pool to Assist Residents Impacted by COVID County and Area Organizations Work to Distribute CARES Act Funds

The Franklin County Board of Supervisors has set aside \$300,000 in CARES Act funding to assist local residents financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Franklin County citizens that have been laid-off, furloughed, or experienced a reduction in hours due to COVID-19 may be eligible to apply for funds to assist with past due rent, mortgage, and/or utility payments.

The Franklin County Safety Net Program is funded through a grant received from the United States Treasury through the Commonwealth of Virginia and will be used in conjunction with other resources made available by the state. The County has partnered with United Way of Roanoke Valley, the Franklin County Department of Social Services, and STEP, Inc. to manage and distribute these funds.

“It is important for the County to expand access to this important safety net funding for local families hard hit by the current pandemic and we are proud to provide funding that will help keep families in their homes and keep the lights on and water running. As a community, we must work together to help our neighbors impacted by this outbreak and its effects,” said Leland Mitchell, Chairman of the Franklin County Board of Supervisors. “We’re grateful to have partners who are well-positioned to work alongside us in these efforts.”

Individuals and families that have been financially impacted by the pandemic may qualify for assistance. The County has set aside \$225,000 to assist with utility bills, specifically water, sewer, and electric. An additional \$75,000 is reserved to assist those with past due rent or mortgage obligations and will be used in conjunction with similar funding from the Commonwealth.

The Franklin County Department of Social Services will screen applicants for funds related to utility bills while STEP, Inc. will be responsible for funds related to past due rent and mortgage

payments. United Way of Roanoke Valley will act as the program manager of the fund and will administer the overall Franklin County Safety Net program on behalf of the County.

“Many of our neighbors are suffering after losing their jobs or having their hours cut. We know that securing basic needs is critical to family financial stability and our community’s overall recovery,” said Pamela Chitwood of United Way of Roanoke Valley.

Applicants must be residents of Franklin County, have been laid-off, furloughed, or experienced a reduction in hours due to COVID-19, and must provide a late notice related to their rent/mortgage or utility bills.

Funds are available on a first-come, first-serve basis with applications being taken until December 15, 2020, or until funds are exhausted, whichever occurs first.

Franklin County residents seeking information about utility assistance can call the **Department of Social Services at 540.238.4697.**

For information about rent or mortgage assistance, residents can contact **STEP, Inc. at 540-483-5142.**

Find out more information [here](#), including a link to the [Eligibility Information](#).

###