



# COUNTY OF LEHIGH

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## *Press Release*

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **Emergency Rental Assistance Program available to Lehigh County residents**

**Lehigh County, PA-** On Wednesday, March 24, 2021, Lehigh County Executive Phil Armstrong held a press conference to announce the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) in Lehigh County. Partnering with Catholic Charities and CACLV, the program will be available to all eligible Lehigh County residents seeking relief funding for emergency rental assistance. Catholic Charities will be administering the program directly through their website for all applications.

Lehigh County was awarded \$24 million in funding for the Emergency Rental Assistance program. Lehigh County will be providing its own program via Catholic Charities and is not affiliated with the PA Department of Human Service's program, Compass. Please note Lehigh County residents must apply for emergency rental assistance through Catholic Charities and will not be eligible for the Compass program.

Qualified applicants are eligible to receive costs of up to 12 months of rental and utility debts, including stabilizing costs for households. This also includes related funds directly or indirectly accrued due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To apply, applicants can:

- Complete the application online and upload the necessary income documents and proof of identity.
- Download the application and submit, complete with the necessary income documents and proof of identity, to [ERAP@allentowndiocese.org](mailto:ERAP@allentowndiocese.org).
- Print out the application from the website and mail to Catholic Charities at 900 South Woodward Street, Allentown, PA 18103.

When the application is received, a staff member from Catholic Charities will contact them. A full list of details and qualifications can be found on their website at <https://www.catholiccharitiesad.org/rent-assistance/>.

Multiple members from federal, state and local offices were in attendance at the press conference. The list includes Congresswoman Susan Wild, Senator Pat Browne's Chief of Staff Ellen Kern, Kurt Derr on behalf of Senator Lisa Boscola's office, Sheila Alvarado on behalf of Representative Peter Schweyer, Catholic Charities Executive Director Rob Nicoletta, Catholic Charities Community Support Supervisor Tom Miller, CACLV Executive Director Alan Jennings, CACLV Deputy Financial Executive Director Bethany DiMatteo, Lehigh County Board of Commissioner Chairperson Geoff Brace, and Community and Economic Development Director Frank Kane.

"In this era of COVID-19, there are so many uncertainties and worrying about losing the roof over your head should not be one of them. The Emergency Rental Assistance Program will provide that peace of mind for

so many residents and families who are struggling during this pandemic.” Said Lehigh County Executive Phil Armstrong. “As County Executive, I am proud of our Community and Economic Development team for partnering with Catholic Charities and CACLV for establishing a program that will help our communities get back on their feet. “

“Through no fault of their own, the financial hardships brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic have greatly affected the financial security of families and individuals who are in rental agreements,” Senator Browne said. “By providing this critical lifeline, those in desperate need of relief will have the ability to remain in their homes and prevent further disruption. I applaud Lehigh County and Catholic Charities for working to get these funds out to the public in an expedited manner.”

“Covid-19 has strained so many families. This program will provide much needed relief to renters and property owners.” said Board of Commissioner Chairperson, Geoff Brace. “I encourage anybody who needs help to apply. Thank you so much to Catholic Charities and CACLV for lending their expertise in making these efforts possible.

Applicants can now apply for the Emergency Rental Relief program directly through the Catholic Charities’ website at [www.catholiccharitiesad.org/](http://www.catholiccharitiesad.org/). Applicants should call the ERAP dedicated phone number with questions about Lehigh County’s program and/or application at 610-541-2191. All questions will be routed to Diocese of Allentown—Catholic Charities.

A livestream of the press conference will be available on the Lehigh County website at <https://www.lehighcounty.org/Departments/Public-Information/Videos>.

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