

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:** Morghan Williams Boydston | [williamsm@washtenaw.org](mailto:williamsm@washtenaw.org) | 734.544.6762  
Katie Hoffman | [hoffmank@washtenaw.org](mailto:hoffmank@washtenaw.org) | 734.476.0950

## **Rental, Utility, and Internet Assistance Available for Tenants as Eviction Moratorium Nears Expiration**

WASHTENAW COUNTY, MI., July 22, 2021 – The Federal CDC Eviction Moratorium will end on July 31, but federal funds are available to help tenants facing pandemic hardships avoid eviction, while also ensuring landlords can recoup owed rent through the COVID Emergency Rental Assistance (CERA) program. CERA is available for income eligible households who have fallen behind on costs associated with rent, utilities, and/or internet bills during the pandemic.

CERA is administered locally through a partnership between the Washtenaw County Office of Community & Economic Development, Housing Access for Washtenaw County (HAWC), and SOS Community Services, in close coordination with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA).

A total of 1,334 households have been served through the CERA program county-wide since the spring. Local agencies have approved 215 cases and issued \$1,714,315 in payments to date.

“OCED, HAWC, and SOS look forward to continuing to provide this crucial resource to Washtenaw County residents as we all continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact,” said Morghan Williams Boydston, OCED’s Human Services Manager. “While the eviction moratorium is ending on July 31, support for rental assistance, eviction prevention, and utility assistance will be ongoing and available through 2022.”

CERA serves renter households that have incomes less than 80% of Area Median Income (AMI) who meet the following conditions:

- Individual(s) in the household has qualified for unemployment benefits or has experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or has experienced other financial hardship due directly or indirectly to the coronavirus outbreak; and
- Individual(s) in the household can demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability evidenced by a past due utility or rent notice.

Tenants up to 50% AMI can receive up to 12 months of rental assistance, up to 10 months of rental assistance at up to 50-80% AMI (with 3 out of 10 months for the allocation of future rent assistance), and may apply for an additional 3 months of rental assistance for housing stability.

Eligible households can receive utility assistance for tenant supplied electricity, home heating (any type of fuel), water, sewer, and trash (if billed along with another utility). Tenants up to 50% AMI are eligible for an additional \$500 if needed to fully pay utility arrears. Additionally, a flat \$300 internet stipend is

available for households that have home internet and include a recent internet bill or statement in their application package.

The CERA application can be completed at <http://www.michigan.gov/cera>. For those who are unable to or do not wish to use the online application, paper applications can also be found at [michigan.gov/cera](http://michigan.gov/cera) or by contacting HAWC at (734) 961-1999. Paper applications must be emailed to [hawc.washtenaw@usc.salvationarmy.org](mailto:hawc.washtenaw@usc.salvationarmy.org) or mailed or dropped off at: Housing Access for Washtenaw County, 100 Arbana Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48103.

If you need help applying for CERA assistance, please contact HAWC at (734) 961-1999. A user guide is available in English and Spanish for tenants that need assistance with the application process at [www.washtenaw.org/3421/CERA](http://www.washtenaw.org/3421/CERA).

*¿Habla español y necesita ayuda en ese idioma? Llame a Buenos Vecinos al 734-210-0112 para recibir asistencia de renta, servicios públicos y/o internet a través del Programa de Asistencia de Alquiler de Emergencia por COVID (CERA).*

###

Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) is a government agency committed to stepping out of the traditional government roles to drive long-term system changes that increase equity and opportunity for all residents. For more information, please visit [www.washtenaw.org/oced](http://www.washtenaw.org/oced) or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter at [@washtenawOCED](https://www.facebook.com/washtenawOCED).