

August 2021 Vol. 12, Issue 3

TOP STORIES

Pennsylvania makes significant investment in housing in new state budget

PHFA thanks the state legislature, Governor Tom Wolf, and all the housing advocates who worked tirelessly to ensure that housing programs will receive substantial funding support in the new 2021-22 fiscal year budget, providing resources that are critical as recovery continues from the COVID pandemic.

The funding made available in this year's state budget will help COVID impacted homeowners and is critical in preventing homelessness. It will also support the construction of more affordable housing to meet this public need. The four areas receiving funding are the Construction Cost Relief Program, the Pennsylvania Homeowner Assistance Fund, state tax credits, and the Mixed-Use Development Tax Credit Program. For more details, please visit the [PHFA News Center](#) and read the June 30 press release.



Pandemic-related financial assistance available for Pa. homeowners, renters, and landlords

Under the American Rescue Plan, \$350 million in federal Homeowner Assistance Funds has been allocated to the commonwealth. This money is to be used to assist homeowners impacted by the coronavirus pandemic by helping them avoid mortgage delinquency, default, foreclosure, loss of utilities or home energy services, and displacement. This financial relief is intended for homeowners facing financial hardship after January 21, 2020. PHFA is currently working to develop its Pennsylvania HAF plan for submission to the U.S. Department of the Treasury for its approval. The new [PAHAF website](#) has been created as a centralized resource for the state's homeowners. Interested homeowners are asked to check this webpage often for updates and for the addition of new resources as they become available. We anticipate that applications for Pennsylvania's HAF program will be available in the fall.

Additionally, the federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has launched an online tool to help renters and landlords impacted by the pandemic to find and apply for payment assistance for rent, utilities, and other expenses. The [Rental Assistance Finder](#) connects renters and landlords with their state and local programs distributing federal assistance.

Governor Wolf announces \$44.9 million in 2021 PHARE funding



Governor Tom Wolf

Governor Tom Wolf recently announced the recipients of a new round of funding for housing programs made available through the Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHARE) fund. The governor named 23 housing and community development initiatives in 67 counties that will share a portion of the total \$44.9 million in funding for fiscal year 2021-21. The PHARE fund is managed by PHFA.

Funding for these PHARE awards comes from two main sources. Since 2012, the program has received a portion of the impact fees collected from natural gas companies operating in the state with the goal of addressing the housing shortage

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caused by the impact of drilling. That is supplemented with funding provided by a portion of the state's realty transfer tax.

This funding will assist more than 3,300 Pennsylvania households with housing. A list of the proposals receiving PHARE funding is available on [PHFA's website](#). See the bullet for "Funding Announcements."

HOUSING SERVICES

PHFA's virtual Multifamily Affordable Housing Conference is big success

PHFA held its annual Multifamily Affordable Housing Conference in late July. Due to the pandemic, the agency opted for a virtual event this year. There were 576 housing services and property management professionals in attendance. The keynote speakers and breakout sessions were very well received getting a 94% approval rating from the attendees. The agency's staff was able to run the educational sessions effectively despite the challenges that technology and a virtual setting can bring. A bonus of having the conference online is that attendees will have the ability to view all the sessions for three months, beginning in August, which will allow participants to view any sessions they may have missed.

The 2022 PHFA Multifamily Affordable Housing Conference is scheduled for June 8 -10 at the Kalahari Resort & Conference Center. It is being planned as an in-person conference. Save the date!

HOMEOWNERSHIP

PHFA's K-FIT program is helping eliminate barriers to homeownership

PHFA's Keystone Forgivable In Ten Years Loan Program (K-FIT) provides assistance towards downpayment and/or closing costs for qualified homebuyers. This program provides a small second mortgage loan which helps eliminate a major barrier to homeownership. Eligible borrowers may receive 5 percent of the lesser of the purchase price or appraised value with no maximum dollar limit in downpayment and closing cost assistance. The K-FIT loan is forgiven on an annual basis over ten years at a rate of ten percent a year. The K-FIT loan can be used with PHFA's Keystone Home Loan.



"We're extremely excited about the success of K-FIT and how quickly it has been embraced by homebuyers," said PHFA's Homeownership Director Coleen Baumert. "Many of our housing professionals are utilizing this amazing forgivable loan to qualify their buyers for secure financing to purchase the home they've been working to buy. We look forward to assisting many more families throughout Pennsylvania to achieve homeownership."

Since the launch date of K-FIT on March 1, the program has received 2,240 locks with a value of \$419.1 million. K-FIT accounts for almost 50 percent of the loan locks with PHFA. As of July 30, PHFA has purchased 36 loans paired with K-FIT with a value of nearly \$3.4 million. For more information about the K-FIT program and eligibility, please visit the [homebuyer section](#) of PHFA's website.

PHFA AROUND THE STATE

The coronavirus hasn't stopped great progress on affordable housing construction that's going on around the state. Here are a few examples of the multifamily developments that were recently in the news with their ribbon cutting and groundbreaking ceremonies. They all received funding from PHFA.

Hudson Companies celebrated the opening of Adam's Place in Cochran, Crawford County, in August. Adams Place includes 39 affordable housing units for seniors. Its farmhouse style compliments the agricultural heritage of the local community, and the many amenities offered focus on a "farm-to-table" lifestyle.



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Bensalem Veterans Residences officially opened in early June in Bensalem. This new rental community offers affordable housing for seniors and veterans 62 and older. The development features 40 high-quality, one-bedroom apartment homes. It's also close to shopping, dining, entertainment, and is walkable to a SEPTA bus stop. PHFA Executive Director & CEO Robin Wiessmann attended the ribbon cutting ceremony (bottom photo, fourth from left). *Photos courtesy of Pennrose.*



Grace Inspired Ministries celebrated the beginning of construction for Sellersville Senior Apartments with a groundbreaking ceremony in late June. The planned community will provide 50 units of affordable housing for adults aged 55 and over. Sellersville Senior Apartments will bring much needed affordable and supportive housing to an area with a rising cost of living and a limited supply of high-quality, cost-effective rental housing for seniors.

Celebrating National Financial Awareness Day in August

National Financial Awareness Day was August 14. In celebration, here are seven things people can do to heighten their financial awareness.

1. What comes in and where does it go? Income is the foundation of any decisions we make about money. Review your income sources including employment, side gigs, investments (interest, dividends), etc., along with employee benefits and other non-cash resources you may have. Next, keep track of where it goes – not only living expenses but savings and long-term investments.
2. How is your stash? Speaking of saving, how are you doing? Do you have a regular habit of saving? Do you have an emergency or rainy-day fund? Experts say that we should have at least three to six months of expenses saved for emergencies. The best time to start saving for an emergency is today.
3. Dissect your debt. Know what you owe, including types of debt, account balances, interest rates, monthly payments, and consequences if these debts aren't paid. Don't forget to order your free credit reports and monitor where you stand from a lender's perspective.
4. Review your insurance policies. Protect your financial future by having the right types of policies and ensuring they are adequate. Make sure you minimize losses to income, health or property.



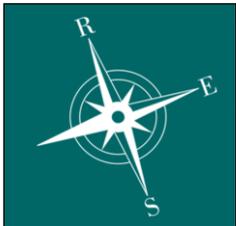
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It is also possible to be over insured. For example, your life insurance needs could decrease as your children grow and leave the nest. Could you be using those dollars to cover other expenses or save for the long-term?

5. Look to the future. Set goals to build your wealth over the long haul. Slow and steady investing can win the race of having enough resources to send kids to college or live comfortably in retirement.
6. Calculate your net worth. What you own less what you owe is a key indicator of our financial health. Track it at least once a year to see if you're moving in the right direction and building wealth.
7. Bring it all together with a money map or budget. Set the plan in place to reach your goals with the simple process of planning your income and expenses. Make your money go places.

**For more great financial management tips, check out PHFA's
"Master Your Money" podcast
Listen on [iTunes](#), [Spotify](#) or [PHFA's website](#)**

MINORITY BUSINESS RECOGNITION



We appreciate the expertise of Real Estate Strategies in Philadelphia

PHFA accomplishes its mission – providing quality, affordable housing for all Pennsylvanians – in large part due to our business partners, including those owned by women and people of color. We couldn't ask for a better partner than [Real Estate Strategies](#), a woman-owned, full-service real estate advisory services firm based in Philadelphia. Since 1991, RES has specialized in market analysis for real estate, fiscal and economic impact analysis, and economic-development strategic planning. The expertise found at RES is second-to-none, and we're proud they're one of our most valued partners.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Please check our job board frequently for open positions with the agency. If you're looking for a job that provides personal satisfaction, offers a supportive work environment, and can change people's lives, PHFA may be a perfect fit for you. Recent job postings have included Business Analyst, Insurance Specialist, and Senior Policy Advisor. The agency is a terrific place to work with competitive pay and excellent benefits. Visit our website to learn about our current [job openings](#).



Tom Wolf, Governor • Robin Wiessmann, Executive Director & CEO

To receive an email notice when a new issue of PHFA Developments is posted, or for comments and questions, please write Renae Hyson at rhyson@phfa.org.

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