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 For Immediate Release

***PHFA provides latest data about CARES relief to Pa. renters and homeowners
 Insights confirm July data showing changes are needed to streamline both CARES
 assistance programs; two weeks remaining to apply unless CARES Act is amended***

HARRISBURG – After two months of administering CARES financial assistance for renters and homeowners, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency is providing an update on the progress of both programs, which have been accepting applications since July 6.

Renters’ Relief

For the CARES Rent Relief Program (RRP), all 67 participating county organizations are asked to provide monthly data summaries, and the data from August are now available. The data for July has also been updated. A summary of key points taken from that data provides these insights:

	July	August	Totals
Applications from Renters	10,104	16,846	26,950
Applications from Landlords	5,866	7,102	12,968
Renters Assisted	895	1,927	2,822*
Landlords Assisted	216	1,345	1,561*
CARES RRP Assistance Requested	\$37,866,773	\$32,331,483	\$70,198,256
CARES RRP Assistance Disbursed	\$478,042	\$3,577,034	\$4,055,076
CARES Funding Distributed to Counties by PHFA			\$50,000,000

*The counties oversee the evaluation of all renters’ applications

County data for the CARES RRP are available in the [tables provided for July](#) and [August](#). Of the \$50 million in CARES aid that has been provided by PHFA to county organizations so far, \$4,055,076 has been distributed by them to renters approved for relief.

Homeowners’ Relief

PHFA is overseeing the processing of all homeowner applications. The Pandemic Mortgage Assistance Program (PMAP) has received 2,213 applications, and PHFA is providing a [county-by-county breakdown](#) of that data, as well as a [county-by-county map](#). (The total for the counties’ data does not match the official total of 2,213 because some mailed applications are not yet in the database.) The total assistance requested is \$7.9 million, and the total approved assistance so far is \$1.7 million. As of Sept. 15, the agency has disbursed \$153,500 in PMAP relief to distressed homeowners. Of the application review decisions made to date, the approval percentage is 52.2%. A 30-day delinquency requirement was recently eliminated from the PMAP guidelines. Prior applicants who did not qualify for assistance

are being reviewed again.

“This data show a continuation of the trends we saw in July – mainly that the application process has to be simplified and the deadline for applying should be extended if we want to help more homeowners and renters,” said PHFA Executive Director and CEO Robin Wiessmann. “We’re pleased the legislature has been keenly interested in the progress of both these statewide programs and is considering changes to make them work better. Our goal remains to use as much of the federal CARES dollars as possible to help Pennsylvanians stay in their homes.”

Background Information

The federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, passed in March, provided \$3.9 billion for Pennsylvania. In late May, the General Assembly directed \$175 million of these CARES dollars to PHFA to provide assistance for struggling renters and homeowners. The portion for rent assistance is at least \$150 million, and \$25 million was set aside for mortgage assistance.

During June, PHFA quickly developed two detailed, statewide programs for distributing this financial assistance expeditiously to renters and homeowners in need, following legislative requirements. This effort included extensive coordination with the organizations in all 67 counties that are processing the renters’ applications. The CARES Rent Relief Program and the Pandemic Mortgage Assistance Program were both launched on schedule on June 29, as was required in the state CARES Act.

Resources for Applicants

Applicants with questions about the CARES Rent Relief Program should reach out to the organization in their county that is processing applications. A county contact list with phone numbers, emails and street addresses is available on the RRP webpage at: <https://www.phfa.org/pacares/rent.aspx>. Some of the county organizations to which CARES applications are submitted also have webpages offering useful information. Philadelphia and Allegheny counties have online applications so renters can apply electronically.

Questions from homeowners about PMAP should be directed to PHFA. The agency’s webpage for PMAP is available at: <https://www.phfa.org/pacares/mortgage.aspx>. The agency’s call center is available weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. to assist the public and help with questions about the program. The toll-free number is 1-855-U-Are-Home (827-3466). Callers should listen for the prompt mentioning CARES assistance for homeowners. Of course, PHFA is also getting calls from renters and is assisting them, too.

In accordance with the state CARES Act, this funding for renters and homeowners must be completely distributed by Nov. 30, 2020.

About PHFA

The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency works to provide affordable homeownership and rental housing options for older adults, low- and moderate-income families, and people with special housing needs. Through its carefully managed mortgage programs and investments in multifamily housing developments, PHFA also promotes economic development across the state. Since its creation by the legislature in 1972, it has generated more than \$14.8 billion of funding for more than 179,850 single-family home mortgage loans, helped fund the construction of 138,000 rental units, distributed more than \$121 million to support local housing initiatives, and saved the homes of nearly 50,400 families from foreclosure. PHFA programs and operations are funded primarily by the sale of securities and from fees paid by program users, not by public tax dollars. The agency is governed by a 14-member board.

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