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For Immediate Release

PHFA Announces Launch of \$350 Million PA Homeowner Assistance Fund February 1

HARRISBURG – Relief is coming for eligible homeowners in the Commonwealth who are struggling with their mortgage payments or other housing expenses as a result of COVID-19 pandemic-related financial hardships.

The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) announced today that February 1 will mark the statewide launch of the Pennsylvania Homeowner Assistance Fund, or PAHAF, administered by PHFA. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was awarded more than \$350 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds through the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF).

“This program will be a life raft for the rising number of homeowners facing possible loss of their homes and foreclosure as a result of the financial impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on their lives,” said Governor Tom Wolf. “We are pleased to announce that the Pennsylvania Homeowner Assistance Fund is now available to assist the state’s homeowners who need it most.”

The fund supports Pennsylvania homeowners whose household income is at or below 150% of the area median income (AMI) and are facing financial hardships as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. PAHAF will use these funds to provide eligible Pennsylvania homeowners with much-needed assistance to prevent and/or ease mortgage delinquencies, defaults, foreclosures, displacement and utility disconnection.

“Across the Commonwealth, homeowners have struggled to cope with pandemic-related financial hardships,” said PHFA Executive Director and CEO Robin Wiessmann. “The launch of PAHAF ensures that eligible Pennsylvania homeowners receive the support and stability they need now more than ever. PHFA has been working diligently to launch this program, and we know it will be critical to keeping Pennsylvanians in their homes and supporting our state’s economic recovery.”

When PAHAF applications open on Feb. 1, it will be possible to complete them entirely online, eliminating the need for paper submissions and simplifying the process for applicants. For those who may need in-person assistance with their applications, housing counseling agencies and legal service providers across the state will be available to help. Homeowners will be able to apply online for PAHAF and see a list of organizations that can assist them by visiting www.pahaf.org or by calling the PAHAF call center at 888-987-2423. The call center will be open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

To qualify for this assistance, eligible Pennsylvania homeowners must have experienced a reduction of income or increase in living expenses due to the COVID-19 pandemic after January 21, 2020 (including a hardship that began before January 21, 2020 but continued after that date). They also must currently own and occupy their home in Pennsylvania as their primary residence. In addition, the program has specific income requirements to be eligible. To see the full list of eligibility requirements, visit <https://pahaf.org/am-i-eligible/>.

Available PAHAF assistance programs include mortgage reinstatement assistance, forward mortgage payment assistance, assistance related to housing property charges and utility payment assistance to avoid displacement. Funds will be distributed directly to mortgage lenders, servicers, utility providers and other authorized third parties, not to homeowners. Homeowners and other interested parties are encouraged to visit www.pahaf.org to explore PAHAF resources and information.

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 \$15.9 billion of funding for more than 186,412 single-family home mortgage loans, helped fund the construction of 138,000 rental units, distributed approximately \$191 million to support local housing initiatives, and saved the homes of more than 50,520 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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