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For Immediate Release

## **Pa's Homeowner Assistance Fund provides guidance to help homeowners quicken the processing of applications**

*A simple access point setup by PAHAF applicants will ensure the accurate and timely distribution of financial assistance*

**HARRISBURG, PA** - Earlier this year, day-to-day operation of Pennsylvania's Homeowner Assistance Fund transitioned from a third-party vendor to the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency. This pandemic-relief fund provides financial assistance to qualified homeowners for mortgage and housing-related expenses to address delinquency and help homeowners avoid default, foreclosure, or displacement from their homes.

PHFA recognizes the urgent need for many Pennsylvanians to receive financial assistance from PAHAF and is working diligently and methodically to ensure that federal funds are appropriately distributed. The program's top priority is outreach to all current applicants to ensure they are properly set up in the system in order to quicken the processing of their application.

To ensure timely attention to their application for assistance, all homeowners who have previously registered for the PAHAF program are asked to do an access point setup by visiting <https://pahaf.org/register> or by calling toll-free 888-987-2423.

The access point setup is the most critical next step to initiate processing of all remaining applications and is important for three key reasons:

1. This access point setup in PAHAF's new system allows applicants to review the information originally submitted and confirm or update it if necessary to reflect their current level of need.
2. By signing a new third-party authorization (TPA), applicants give PHFA the authority to communicate with the applicant's servicer to obtain verification of debt data, which is an important and necessary legal requirement, and
3. Finally, this will provide applicants with the ability to view the most current status of their application via an improved online dashboard.

PHFA has a comprehensive strategy in place to facilitate effective communications with applicants who have submitted applications and are awaiting a determination or payment.

At the end of May, PAHAF's call center staff began phoning applicants to encourage and assist with this brief process. Nearly 450 customers have already been set up through this campaign, which will continue as needed. This month, every applicant that has not yet done their access point setup will receive both an email and a letter via the U.S. Postal Service from PAHAF with the same information about how to do so.

The setup process is simple and estimated to require less than 30 minutes. Current applicants do not need to resubmit documents. Clear instructions are provided on the access point website to guide applicants past this step to directly confirm the information that already exists within the system. Once applicants are set up, PAHAF will contact applicants should there be any additional information required.

Applicants who no longer need assistance should still register or contact the PAHAF call center to withdraw their applications. This allows for funds to be distributed to others who are in need of assistance.

PHFA is finalizing details for a community-based tour in July during which the agency's staff will be on-site in neighborhoods across the state where there are large numbers of applicants in need of assistance. The final schedule, including dates, locations, and times, will be promoted on the PAHAF website by the end of June. During these events, the agency's staff will provide access point setup assistance, financial education resources, Wi-Fi connectivity, and any other technical assistance required.

"We understand that people are anxious about possibly losing their home, and we are leading several efforts to get homeowners set up in our software so we can get their cases moving forward," said PHFA Executive Director and CEO Robin Wiessmann.

"I want to encourage current PAHAF applicants to do their access point setup with the program as soon as they can. They should call our PAHAF call center if they are having trouble with that step. This setup with PAHAF takes little time and helps them immensely by giving us the information we need to continue processing their application, plus they will gain access to a dashboard providing accurate status updates on their request for assistance."

The decision by PHFA to administer the program is better leveraging the agency's deep knowledge of Pennsylvania's housing market and its broad network of mortgage lenders, community partners, and housing counseling agencies on behalf of eligible applicants. For more than 50 years, PHFA has been dedicated to providing Pennsylvanians with the consumer education and home loans they need for decent, safe and affordable housing.

For questions or for more information, individuals can contact the PAHAF call center by phone toll-free at 888-987-2423, or by email at: [AskPAHAF@PAHAF.org](mailto:AskPAHAF@PAHAF.org)

#### 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 \$17.1 billion of funding for more than 192,816 single-family home mortgage loans, helped fund the construction of 103,328 rental units, distributed approximately \$239 million to support local housing initiatives, and saved the homes of more than 50,660 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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