



Inland SoCal United Way

LIFT TO RISE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Application window for United Lift rental assistance program to re-open on July 15**

*Rental assistance payments totaling \$3.7 million already in progress for 2,467 eligible Riverside County households*

**Riverside, CA** — The application window for the United Lift rental assistance program for Riverside County residents will reopen for ten days beginning on July 15.

The United Lift rental assistance program is believed to be the largest per capita dedication of CARES Act funding for direct rental assistance by any County in the United States. The program is providing \$33, approved by Riverside County, with the goal of keeping 10,000 residents housed between the months of June and November.

Residents may apply at [UnitedLift.org](http://UnitedLift.org) or by calling 2-1-1. The application portal will be live and available in English and Spanish beginning July 15 for 10 days and close on July 25. Applications will reopen every month for a period of 10 days.

“At a time of great need, Riverside County is coming together with an unrivaled effort to keep people in their homes through the United Lift rental assistance program,” said Riverside County Supervisor V. Manuel Perez. “This effort demonstrates our shared belief that affordable housing is essential to thriving communities in Riverside County.”

A total of 3,854 unique applications were received during the ten-day window in June. Lift to Rise and Inland SoCal United Way are administering the program, and have so far processed payments totalling \$3.7 million for 2,467 eligible households.

“We want to thank all of the staff, volunteers and partner organizations who are dedicating resources, working one-on-one to assist our neighbors through the application process, and helping to spread the word about the available rental assistance,” said Lisa Wright, President of Inland SoCal United Way.

Data from applications received during the first open window in June revealed the extent of the economic pain COVID-19 is inflicting on local families and the need for longer-term solutions for housing affordability in the region.

According to application data, the pandemic left 52.1% of applicants unemployed. 90.6% report being paid an annual income that is at or below 80% of the area median. 66% indicate being currently behind on rent with more than half of residents reporting they are between two and three months behind. The average unpaid rents have accumulated to \$2,519.91 a household. Nearly all applicants report being worried about their ability to pay next month's rent.

Of the applicants that are currently behind on rent, 45% are workers in major industries most impacted by COVID-19-related unemployment including food, service, hotel, hospitality, cleaning, maintenance, sales and retail profession.

45% applicants are from the east end of Riverside County including all Coachella Valley cities and unincorporated communities, Calimesa Blythe, Banning, and Beaumont. 55% to date are from the west and southwestern portion of Riverside County.

The average applicant household size is 3.6 and 45% of households indicate having children between the ages 0 to 5. 69% of the applications are coming from female heads of households, half of which are from single female heads of households.

“The data we are seeing from the applications points to a severe need to help people pay the rent in the short-term, but also shows the longer term urgency to make living in Riverside County more affordable, said Heather Vaikona, President and CEO of Lift to Rise. “We hope the same collaborative spirit that brought our communities together for this unprecedented rental assistance effort will remain strong as we address the systemic challenges of rent burden over time.”

Eligibility for the rental assistance program is limited to renters in Riverside County with a current lease agreement who are either individuals or families earning 80 percent or below of the area's median income, or who can document a loss of income due to COVID-19 economic impacts, leaving them unable to make their rent.

Households meeting the initial eligibility requirements, will be selected by a random selection system and will be required to provide documentation showing their economic hardship. Payments will be made directly to landlords. Households not selected for rental assistance may re-apply in subsequent application windows. Rental assistance is intended to cover past due rent from March to November 2020, up to \$3,500 per household.

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### **About Inland Southern California United Way**

Inland Southern California United Way is committed to investing and advocating for the local communities in the areas of Education, Housing, and Financial Stability. United Way of the Inland Valleys strives to improve the lives of children and families through public policy, as well as providing much needed resources. By partnering with a network of local nonprofit organizations, Inland SoCal United

Way delivers critical services to our community, and connects individuals in crisis with needed resources 24/7 through 2-1-1.

**About Lift to Rise**

Lift to Rise is a cross-sector, community-driven movement to improve life in Southern California’s Coachella Valley for the majority of residents who do not experience the opulence and luxury for which the area is known. With input from more than 50 collaborative partners and countless community members Lift to Rise created a 2020-2022 Action Plan—a roadmap to radically increase housing stability and advance economic opportunity for all Coachella Valley residents. We envision a future where all Coachella Valley families are healthy, stable, and thriving.