COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund
Homelessness and Housing Working Group

The Homelessness and Housing Working Group is focused on the needs of people experiencing homelessness and housing instability and the frontline nonprofit organizations and individuals who are providing essential services and advocacy. Our immediate funding priorities are:

- Helping people maintain housing stability to mitigate risk of increased homelessness as result of the crisis.
- Ensuring people experiencing homelessness have access to basic needs such as shelter/housing, medical care, and a place to quarantine.
- Providing support to frontline organizations that are serving people experiencing homelessness’ immediate needs.
- Providing support for advocacy to increase public and private funding and strengthen policies.

Initial feedback from our partners regarding critical needs – including nonprofit organizations that provide essential services, like street outreach, healthcare, meals, case management, and housing assistance – reveals a desperate need for support. Some of the immediate needs cannot currently be addressed with financial resources. These include the need for personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies which impact service delivery and staff capacity. We will continue to monitor these situations and look for strategic investment opportunities.

Other challenges include:

- The need for space to separate both people experiencing homelessness who are displaying symptoms and those who are at high risk if they contract the virus.
- The need for medical staff to monitor people who are quarantined and who may contract the virus but do not need hospitalization.
- The lack of administrative capacity and ability for nonprofits to complete proposals for emergency funding opportunities.
- Revenue challenges for service providers related to fee for service billing shortages and cost of additional services.
- Staff and volunteer shortages for nonprofit service providers working with people experiencing homelessness.

Our immediate goal is to provide rapid support for critical service organizations and advocacy during this initial phase of the pandemic. As the situation unfolds, we expect priorities to evolve. In addition to our work outlined above, we are monitoring the federal, county, and local government response in order to complement and align our efforts. We are also working with our advocacy partners to ensure that these efforts address the needs of our neighbors experiencing homelessness and housing instability during the COVID-19 crisis.