Help available for local residents impacted by COVID-19:

Coalition announces new emergency cash assistance fund

*Fund part of coordinated effort to connect Coachella Valley families to available public resources to help with food, housing, medical care and financial relief*

PALM DESERT, CA — Today, a coalition of local government and community partners announced a new emergency cash assistance fund for Coachella Valley residents financially impacted by COVID-19.

The assistance fund, set to launch on Friday, March 27, will be seeded with an initial $250,000 investment with additional funds being actively raised. The immediate goal of the fund is to provide a $200 lift to households in the Coachella Valley financially impacted by the outbreak of COVID-19 and the ensuing economic shutdown.

The fund is part of a public-private coordinated strategy to connect Coachella Valley families to available forms of public assistance that they qualify for. The Coachella Valley Economic Preparation and Protection Plan provides a framework for regional coordination between local and state public agencies, nonprofits and philanthropies to address economic impacts of COVID-19. The Plan’s landing page, with resources to help with housing, food insecurity, medical care, bill paying, transportation, education and legal services is available at [www.lifttorise.org/protection](http://www.lifttorise.org/protection). The coalition behind the economic protection plan and assistance fund are coordinating to help local guide families through the process of signing-up for assistance. Financial support from the fund and many of the additional resources are available to Coachella Valley qualifying residents regardless of citizenship status.

As COVID-19 brings the nation to a near shutdown, few places are expected to be hit harder than the Coachella Valley with a large retiree population, vulnerable workforce, and an economy heavily dependent on hospitality and tourism. The impact will be felt most by families who already struggle with low wages and have neither the financial resources nor a safety net to weather an extended economic downturn.

To alleviate the immediate pain and help local families be prepared for an extended economic downturn, a wide range of stakeholders have come together in an unprecedented and coordinated public-private effort. Organizations supporting the effort include Lift to Rise, United Way of the Desert, Regional Access Project Foundation, Desert Healthcare District, Inland Empire Community Foundation, Leadership Counsel for Justice & Accountability, Desert Community Energy, and the County of Riverside Office of Supervisor Perez, Executive Office, Housing Authority, Workforce Development Centers, and Departments of Public Social Services and Public Health.

To make online interview arrangements with coalition representatives, please contact Jacob Hay at jhay@wearally.com or (310) 855-2640.

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