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April 10, 2020

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Growing effort to help local residents impacted by COVID-19:

Support Fund Now Totals $850,000 after Major Contribution from First 5 Riverside

*Fund is part of a public-private coordinated strategy to economically empower Coachella Valley communities during COVID-19 and beyond*

**PALM DESERT, CA** — Today Lift to Rise announced the expansion of the emergency relief fund for Coachella Valley residents financially impacted by COVID-19, after a $250,000 donation from First 5 Riverside, bringing the fund’s total to $850,000.

The fund, launched on March 27, aims to provide $200 in emergency concrete support to as many Coachella Valley households economically impacted by the outbreak of COVID-19 and the ensuing economic shutdown as possible. On Monday, the Greater Palm Springs Tourism Foundation announced it will be collecting donations through a [Hospitality Relief Fund](#) that will be added to the collective effort.

“The Riverside County Children and Families Commission unanimously approved direct emergency funding to the Lift to Rise support fund to help Coachella Valley families with children ages 0 through 5 during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Dr. Susan Rainey, Commission Chair.

“This funding comes at a critical time for families with young children,” said First 5 Executive Director Tammi Graham. “First 5 Riverside is working collaboratively with multiple agencies to help meet immediate needs. The emergency funding approved Thursday by the Commission will allow Lift to Rise...
to put concrete supports directly in the hands of families when they need it most to reduce stress and meet basic needs.”

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 Protection Plan and Support Fund 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.

To date, more than 1,200 people have sought help through the Economic Protection Plan. 60 percent of applicants report being out of work due to COVID-19 and 50 percent report incomes under $20,000. More than 70 percent of applying households identify as Latino or Hispanic and 39% of respondents indicate having children age five or under in their household. Food assistance is the most common form of support sought, with the majority of local residents indicating they have not needed to access public benefits and services until now.

The coalition behind the economic protection plan and support 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.

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@wearerally.com or (310) 855-2640.

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