



PRESS RELEASE CORRECTION

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Community Action Helps People Keep their Homes

Community Action of Skagit County has several emergency funding sources to help people who are at risk of eviction. The Eviction Prevention Program will be active Sept. 2 and will run as long as funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis. The intention of this emergency funding is to prevent eviction for households who have been financially impacted by the COVID pandemic.

The direct message line for Eviction Prevention Assistance at Community Action is (360) 399-3006. Leave a voicemail with: *Head of Household Name, Contact #, Household size, Household income, # of months past due and if they reside in the Mt. Vernon City limits.* English and Spanish can be accommodated. Basic eligibility requirements are that a renter household is lower income and behind on or unable to pay current rent. There are specific funds earmarked for Mount Vernon residents, and other funds are available for other Skagit residents.

Like three other local nonprofit agencies, Community Action received federal ERAP funding (Emergency Rental Assistance Program) from Skagit County, and has several other state and federal sources. In total, Community Action will help pay Skagit County landlords \$994,000 and help hundreds of households avoid homelessness.

“Unfortunately, we anticipate that we will not be able to meet the demand and offer all inquiries financial assistance,” said Elizabeth Jennings, Community Engagement Manager. According to the US Census Bureau’s Household Pulse surveys, as of July 17% of Washington renter households were unable to pay their rent, and 35% of renters making less than \$25,000 per year weren’t able to make rent or paid late in July. “The affordable housing crisis is making the COVID crisis worse, and these emergency funding sources can’t keep up with the need,” Jennings said. Over half of renters in Skagit County are housing cost burdened, meaning they pay over 30% of their income on housing.

For those who are struggling but not behind in rent, and for those who are unable to access the eviction prevention funding, Community Action has many other resources including help paying energy bills, nutrition and diapers through WIC, legal assistance, help for seniors and disabled adults, Skagit Vets Connect, and information and referral to many other local agencies and sources of help. For more information, go to www.CommunityActionSkagit.org, or call 360 416-7585.

Other providers that will have access to ERAP funds are listed:

- Catholic Community Services: Target population: Indigenous and Latino farmworkers. Contact: (360) 424-8655
- Housing Authority of Skagit County: Target Population: Farmworkers, Section 8 Voucher Holders, and tenants of Housing Authority owned properties. Contact: 360-428-1959 ex. 200 (Spanish), Alice Marshall (360) 428-1959 ex. 202 (English)
- Samish Indian Nation: Target Population: Samish Indian Nation Tribal members. Contact: (360) 726-3366

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