

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Betsy Clayton, APR/CPRC
Communications Director
Lee County Government
239-826-4606
bclayton@leegov.com

Deadline approaching for Lee County Emergency Rental Assistance

Fort Myers, FL, May 3, 2022 – Existing clients and prospective applicants to the county’s LeeCARES Emergency Rental Assistance Program have two weeks to finalize and submit their applications before the county’s program begins winding down. The state’s Emergency Rental Assistance Program remains available for applicants.

The Lee Board of County Commissioners on Feb. 16, 2021, launched the Emergency Rental Assistance Program under the umbrella of LeeCares. The program provided access to more than \$41 million in federal grant funds to help households that are unable to pay rent and utilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Of that, \$28 million has been paid out. The remainder will continue to be dispersed between May and the end of the county’s fiscal year in September.

The county is asking anyone who has not completed their application – or anyone who intends to complete one – to do so by 5 p.m. May 16. Applicants still will be able to apply directly to the state after May 16.

Throughout the program’s existence, ongoing rent and utilities assistance has existed for those who have ongoing need. The May 16 deadline does not impact this; the recertification process for additional funding for rent and utilities of existing clients will continue until July 31 with payments processed through the end of September.

To complete an application or begin a new one before the deadline, visit www.LeeFLCares.com or to apply through the state program, visit <https://era.ourflorida.com/>. City of Fort Myers residents should visit <https://portal.neighborlysoftware.com/erap-fortmyers/participant> to complete applications by May 16.

In accordance with federal guidelines, the program is only for those who rent, not homeowners. Questions can be directed to era@leegov.com. The email address is monitored continuously; questions must be submitted via email.

U.S. Treasury guidelines require that applicants fall at or below 80% of Area Median Income and demonstrate a significant loss of income due to or during the COVID-19 pandemic to qualify.

With the phasing-out of the local Emergency Rental Assistance Program, other opportunities may exist with limited funding availability through the Lee County Department of Human Services. Visit the website and clicking on “Get Assistance Now.” Visit www.leegov.com/hvs.

Prior to the 2021 launch of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, the Lee Board of County Commissioners had distributed more than \$60 million of direct community aid through COVID-19 pandemic relief.

To receive updates from Lee County Government, sign up for the newsletter here: www.leegov.com/resources/newsletters.