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## Fairfield County Housing Alliance

May, 2020

# FCHA May Update:

Dear FCHA Partner,

It is hard to believe it has been 12 weeks since COVID so drastically altered the normal rhythms of our lives. As a region, we have learned so much in those 12 weeks about the interdependence of our communities, about what and who we recognize as “essential,” and about the remarkable connectivity and resiliency that can be found and must be elevated in a crisis.

It is my hope that in the coming months FCHA partners can lean into the lessons and experiences of the last 12 weeks, build on the momentum of our shared vision, and provide the regional housing leadership that Fairfield County will need in the wake of this pandemic.

As the trifecta of expiring eviction moratoria, sunseting mortgage forbearance periods, and the end of the \$600 per week federal unemployment supplement converge at the end of July, there is an urgent need to identify strategies NOW to provide rental relief throughout the system. [Turner Center data](#) estimate that in addition to the 35% of renter households in FC who were at risk of housing instability before COVID, a new cohort of nearly 20,000 additional renter households in FC, with an average income of \$94,000 per year, are now also at risk. That number is still rising.

As we emerge from this crisis, it is clear that a deeper, more innovative approach is needed to address the systemic imbalances in our housing market, most notably the lack of access to federal rental assistance for low-income households and the profound dearth of new affordable and/or entry-level housing in high-opportunity communities. This crisis has revealed the deep fissures that were already present in our region, and a return to business as usual housing structures would waste what may be a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reform our housing ecosystem to ensure that all FC households can attain safe and stable homes that provide the foundation for good health and equitable and sustainable economic opportunity.

This vision should remain both our compass and our guide as we embark on this journey of recovery together.

As always, thank you for your partnership. I wish you and yours safety and health.

**Christie Stewart, Director FCCHO**

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## FCHA LEARN:

### Update on Update on Affordable Housing and COVID-19 in Connecticut:

The Partnership for Strong Communities HOMEConnecticut Campaign will host an update call on **June 1st at 3:30 pm**. This call will give you a chance to hear directly from Connecticut housing leadership on state and federal response to the COVID-19 crisis.

Register [HERE](#).

### NLIHC National Calls on Coronavirus and Housing / Homelessness:

The [Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition](#) continues to lead recurring national calls on Coronavirus and Homelessness/Housing every Monday at 2:30pmET until Congress includes housing and homelessness resources in the COVID-19 stimulus package.

### Peer Resources for Tenants:

Join NLIHC's [Tenant Talk Live resident engagement webinar](#) on Monday, June 1 at 6 pm ET (5 pm CT, 4 pm MT, 3 pm PT). NLIHC has invited key HUD officials to join residents in conversation about changes in HUD programs and requirements such as income recertifications and inspections in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Register here: <https://bit.ly/2WSJR46>.

Subscribe to Tenant Talk Live [here](#).

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## FCHA READ:

### Housing Supply Constraints from before the Pandemic will Worsen Inequality as we Start

## TO RECOVER:

A closer look at 285 metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) suggests that rapid employment growth combined with increased supply constraints from zoning and other regulations contributed to disproportionate price growth for low-price homes. If left unaddressed, these same supply constraints will hamper the ability of low-income households to prosper as we emerge from the crisis and will exacerbate income inequality.

[Read more](#) from Urban Institute.

## How Covid 19 Is affecting Black and Latino Families' Employment and Financial Well-Being:

As [tens of millions](#) of Americans file for unemployment insurance, a [new nationally representative survey](#) found that, as of late March and early April, just over 4 in 10 nonelderly Black adults belong to families in which someone lost a job, was furloughed or had hours cut, or lost work-related income because of the coronavirus outbreak.

Although the employment-related losses closely followed the national average (40.7 percent of Black adults compared with 41.5 percent of adults nationally), underlying structural factors, such as occupational segregation and less relative wealth, suggest families of color will face disproportionately greater challenges as the [COVID-19 crisis](#) continues.

[Read More](#)

## Chicago to Use Developers' Fees to Protect Affordable Housing:

In the second week of April, as the curve of new cases of COVID-19 in Chicago was [just beginning to flatten](#), Chicago's Department of Housing began offering \$1,000 grants to help tenants who were losing income to pay their rent. The Department allocated enough funding for 2,000 grants, but, like many other cities', the program was no match for the need: 83,000 people applied, meaning that [less than 2.5 percent of applicants would get relief](#), and only partial relief at that, in many cases.

[Read More](#)

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## FCHA GRANTS

[DOH Opportunity Notification](#): Affordable Housing Plan Technical Assistance Grant The State of

Connecticut Department of Housing (“DOH”) invites applications for planning grant funds from small municipalities (populations below 50,000) seeking to prepare and adopt an Affordable Housing Plan under the provisions of § 8-30j of the Connecticut General Statutes (“CGS”). This grant opportunity is intended to enable eligible municipalities to undertake a proactive planning process and lay out a strategy for meeting the housing needs of existing and future residents and workers.

[Webster Bank 2020 CRA](#)-Community Development Grant

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