

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**United Way Houses offer application help for LeeCARES Individual Assistance
*Application window reopens Monday, July 27***

Fort Myers, FL, July 22, 2020 – United Way is partnering with Lee County to offer application sites for Lee residents seeking help with rent, mortgage or utility payments through the Individual Assistance Program.

Lee County residents can apply for assistance at Lee County United Way Houses in collaboration with United Way Partner Agencies.

The participating United Way Houses are:

- Charleston Park, inside Goodwill Industries of Southwest Florida, 2541 Charleston Park Drive, Alva, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday. No appointment necessary.
- East United Way House, led by Children’s Advocacy Center of Southwest Florida, 4040 Palm Beach Blvd., 8 a.m. to noon, Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Call Hannah Arteaga at 239-313-7720 for an appointment.
- Sanibel/Captiva United Way House, led by F.I.S.H. of Sanibel/Captiva, 2430-B Periwinkle Way, Sanibel, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Call Nitza Lopez for an appointment at 239-472-4775.
- Harlem Heights United Way Houses, within The Heights Center, 15570 Hagie Drive, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday and Friday. Call Nancy Sanchez for an appointment at 239-482-7706.
- Lehigh United Way House, inside Lehigh Community Services, 201 Plaza Drive, Suite 103, 1:30 to 4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Call 239-369-5818 to schedule an appointment.
- MLK United Way House, inside Community Cooperative, 3420 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Fort Myers, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., no appointment necessary.

Please note that most locations require an appointment while the location inside Community Cooperative on Martin Luther King Boulevard and the location on Charleston Park Drive accept walk-ins. Social distancing and safety measures will be in effect at each location.

The documents applicants will need to file an application:

- Photo ID for head of household
- Income documentation
- Proof of loss of income
- Lease or most recent mortgage statement
- Most recent utility bills (water and electric only)

The application window for the Individual Assistance Program will reopen Monday, July 27. The application link at www.LeeFLCares will not be live until that date.

Lee County Commissioners dedicated \$22 million to the initial phase of the Individual Assistance Program; payments began being disbursed in June.

Under the program, assistance with rent, mortgage or utilities (water and electric) may be provided if an individual has an unexpected loss of income due to Gov. Ron DeSantis’ Safer at Home Order, including loss of job or reduced work hours. Payment for those who qualify are made directly to the landlord, mortgage company and/or utility company. Household income must be less than \$55,100 a year for a

household of four, or up to \$72,750 for a household of eight at the time of application. Assistance is limited to only one-time per household and assistance cannot exceed \$2,000.

The Individual Assistance Program is one of five that commissioners approved for using funds from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Lee County is investing \$57.5 million in Human & Business Services to provide immediate assistance for individuals, families and businesses.

Visit www.LeeFLcares.com for additional information. Application instructions are available in Spanish by calling 239-533-2273 (or 239-LEE-CARES); applicants without internet access can also call the number. Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

Updates about the county's response to coronavirus can be found at www.leegov.com/COVID-19.