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**Human Service Provider Call**

**7/23/2020**

**Zoom Meeting**

This call is to help streamline communication and support and encourage collaboration to make the most of resources during this COVID 19 pandemic. It also provides the opportunity for updates on local needs from the nonprofit sector. United Way streams accurate local information to 211 so residents calling in have the most up-to-date information. Please refer to United Way website for previous notes and resources-<https://dbqunitedway.org/covid-19-nonprofit-support>

This call has created great opportunities to build partnerships and for our system to work together to coordinate and broaden our impact. There has been a great deal of collaboration with the city, nonprofits, philanthropists, legislators, and more. THANK YOU!

**United Way Updates:**

The staff has been transitioning back into their offices full time. Also, the United Way office is looking to hire a Manager of Finance and Administration. The opening can be found at <https://dbqunitedway.org/employment-opportunities>.

They are also looking at how United Way campaigns will look like this year, given that so many things will have to be done virtually. They are doing lots of planning with their board of directors and volunteers to make sure the campaign can be successful and to get people engaged. She hopes that this group can be good stewards in sharing information about the campaign because it helps us generate revenue which we can then invest in our community.

September 10 is the date for their virtual kickoff. Stay tuned for more information.

Danielle reminded everyone that their Over the Edge event is still planned for Friday, September 4. If you are interested in learning more visit <https://dbqunitedway.org/over-the-edge>

**Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque Updates:**

Paul Duster reported that the Disaster Relief Fund awarded two grants this week. One was for the Boy Scouts, who are working on restarting their Scouting for Food program and approaching the program differently since they cannot go door-to-door. They will be partnering with Hy-Vee and the Disaster Relief Fund awarded them $2500 for that program.

Holy Family Catholic Schools requested funding that would address the barriers of feeding children and setting up barriers in the lunchroom. Their request was partially approved for $30,000.

Paul said that discussions are happening that down the road, there will be a need to look at the problems more broadly. Right now, the focus is on providing food and safety to those in need. In the future, they are evaluating the need for case management, especially for immigrant populations.

Applications are still being accepted for the Disaster Relief Fund. Information can be found at <https://www.dbqfoundation.org/disaster-recovery-fund-covid-19-response-fund-support-your-neighbors-and-friends>

**City of Dubuque Updates:**

Jerelyn O’Connor reported that last week, the City started sending out delinquent notices on utility bills that had balances in excess of $125. A letter was also sent explaining that they are going to work with people on repayment plans through the City’s Housing Program. They are trying to make sure that delinquent payers have utilized the City assistance programs that are available. Also, as of last week, the management of the isolation shelter has transferred over to the county.

Hollie Ohnesorge shared that for Short-Term rental assistance, they are seeing an uptick in the last few weeks of more people being impacted by COVID and seeking assistance. The loss of jobs seems to be more recent as well.

**Rental/Utility/Housing Assistance:**

Stacy Sherman from Catholic Charities said they are continuing to coordinate with all of the housing providers in regards to meeting unmet needs and gaps in assistance. Once households apply for general relief and the City rental assistance program and are not eligible for those programs, they are receiving referrals directly from those programs to try to assist clients. They also receive referrals from Operation New View.

Amanda Hohmann from Community Solutions of Eastern Iowa said they historically haven't seen a lot of ppl seeking homeless prevention assistance because that's something they haven't offered in the past. They did just received contracts from additional funds through HUD for homeless prevention funds and rapid rehousing funds and are putting that together within the next week. They are contracting with HACAP for some of these services. Anyone looking for some rental assistance- short term and medium-term and arrears, please send them to the hotline 1.833.587.8322.

They continue to work with local providers for some of the households who may just need one-time assistance and will refer to Catholic Charities, PATH, Salvation Army, General Relief, etc

Heather Harney from HACAP reported that they are still helping with the Iowa Finance Authority Eviction Prevention program. She mentioned that they haven’t seen the influx of applications in Dubuque that they have seen in Cedar Rapids and Iowa City, but she will double-check those numbers. They still have extra Energy Assitance funds which they are using for disconnections once they start. They are working with Resources Unite and Catholic Charities to put together a package for someone since HACAP can’t pay off a whole bill.

They are also working on homeless prevention with some funds they have and are hoping to launch it within the next two weeks. They will be working with Community Solutions of Eastern Iowa to get that off the ground.

**Dubuque County Updates:**

Ann McDonough said that she had spoken with Todd Schmidt from Iowa Legal Aid and he informed her that they had not been overrun with applications for assistance in eviction prevention and were surprised by that. However, they have been overrun with claims related to unemployment, which Iowa Legal Aid is addressing.

She also wanted to mention that the Governor released $30 million for brain health services. Locally, we will receive a $5 million grant for our mental health region, which is nine counties. They are working on one-time type services, infrastructure, and more.

Ann also shared some statistics: 50% of people in Dubuque are cost-burdened (spending more than 30% on your income) when it comes to housing. 25% in Dubuque are severely cost-burdened (spending more than 40% of your income) on housing.

**Child Care Needs Coalition:**

Danielle talked about the importance of brain health with children, especially their sense of safety and security. She encouraged the group to support those in the community who are working to meet the needs of children’s brain health issues.

There is a survey up to gather information about Dubuque Area Family Needs. So far, there are about 270 responses that have been submitted so far in English. The links to the survey are:

English: <https://bit.ly/3f8rbTQ>

Spanish: <https://bit.ly/39uNnX0>

Marshallese: <https://bit.ly/3hAH8ni>

There is another meeting for Childcare Consortium for School-Age Kids on July 30 from 11:30-1:00. If you would like information on how to attend this meeting email Danielle at [danielle.peterson@dbqunitedway.org](mailto:danielle.peterson@dbqunitedway.org)

**Workforce Development Updates:**

Ron Axtell shared that the extra $600 in unemployment assistance is scheduled to end on Friday, July 24.

He also shared that the layoffs that occurred during March that were temporary are becoming permanent layoffs. Their office has a mailing going out to all of the Diamond Jo workers that are going to be officially laid off. Normally, they would be issuing a Rapid Response and set up a worker’s information meeting to talk to the employees in person. Unfortunately, now they are unable to meet with employees in person. For Flexsteel, they had 206 mailings that went out and 93 mailings went out to the Diamond Jo employees.

They have also had some initial conversations with IBM ahead of their closure in November.

The number for the Unemployment Service Center at 1-866-239-0843. The website is: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/COVID-19>

Some other resources Ron shared are:

Layoff Resources <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/ive-lost-my-job>

IowaWORKS Resources after a layoff video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Z7ji9uz-2s&t=4s>

Cossera Online Learning Opportunities: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeB9m0xubytHnnisplfQZNVfOLv1t-Kg556r14iJITgNUP9qw/viewform>

Ann McDonough asked Ron about the reorganization that the state was doing to his office. Ron said the realignment is still occurring and has been going on for the last three years. The main goal of the realignment is to condense the workforce development regions in the state into local workforce development areas. Region 1 (Dubuque and Decorah), Region 2 (Mason City) and Region 7 (Waterloo) have all voted to merge into one workforce development area. That will go into effect on January 1, 2021.

They have always had request for proposal for them to continue to be the Rapid Response service provider. There will be an RFP that will come out this fall to determine who will be the service provider in this new, much larger workforce development region. If the RFP allows a consortium of service providers, then Ron thinks they would be interested in pursuing that opportunity. However, the state has indicated that the consortium of service providers will not be allowed and if that is the case, the ECIA council has already voted not to pursue the RFP.

**Greater Dubuque Development Corporation:**

Anna Roling from the Greater Dubuque Development Corporation shared that with the recent announcement of schools going to a hybrid model, there are going to be parents that will need to be home for a couple of days a week. Their office is making sure employers and their employees know that there is the Families First Coronavirus Response Act available to employees of companies with less than 500 employees. This act provides up to 12 weeks of medical and family leave and can also be utilized if someone needs to quarantine. This can apply to parents who need to be out of the office while school is closed during the hybrid model.

**Eviction Updates:**

Alex Baum from the Community Foundation mentioned that he read in the Telegraph Herald that there were over 70 eviction cases that were coming forward in the county this month. He was wondering if this group had an idea of how many of those cases were known to us in our system and if people would be able to qualify for rental assistance services.

Danielle answered his question by stating that this topic was discussed in the Disaster Relief Long Range Planning Committee. Stacy Sherman jumped in and said that Catholic Charities are working closely with landlords to try and work through those evictions if at all possible. Heather Harney from HACAP said that they are seeing the majority of evictions being from renters who have not paid rent so far in 2020 and a lot of the landlords they are seeing are working really well with their clients to try to get rent paid.

Cindy Kohlmann from the Salvation Army said that so far in the month of July, they have worked with 30 new families, which is a large increase.

Hollie Ohnesorge from the City said that they have spoken to about a dozen people or so for evictions. They are not people who were ineligible for our program who then faced eviction, they are individuals who only applied once facing eviction. Landlords mostly seem to be patient once they apply for services but the City is not a guarantee due to eligibility requirements and they are not an emergency service so they mostly refer out, meaning that they are not able to act as fast as required to avoid an impending court date.

She also added that if you are evicted for failure to make a payment, you do face loss of your voucher but you would be eligible to reapply for the program. There is no "strike" ineligibility period for this sort of loss of voucher. An ineligibility period is most likely for criminal charges. In this time the City is unlikely to terminate a voucher due to COVID. Those who are experiencing a loss of income are eligible to request a rent adjustment and they will pay more accordingly.

**Misc:**

Community Solutions of Eastern Iowa is still taking calls from their Homeless Hotline at 1-833-587-8322. The Homeless Hotline is also being used to coordinate drop-offs of groceries with Dubuque Area Labor Harvest.

John Bellini from Hillcrest Family Services updated the group on their efforts with brain health. At the end of August, they will open up a certified community behavioral health center to serve Dubuque and Jackson counties. This will serve the uninsured and underserved populations. He stated that the Dubuque Community School District has been very proactive in contracting for social behavioral health issues. Hillcrest and LSI will be partnering with the school district to serve the brain health needs of their students both during the school day and through telehealth options.

**This group will start to meet every other week. The next meeting will be on August 6th at 9:00 AM**