



Alderman Carlos Ramirez-Rosa
Thirty-Fifth Ward, City of Chicago

MEMORANDUM

TO: Undocumented Chicagoans, community organizations
DATE: March 27, 2020
RE: COVID-19 Housing Assistance Grant

Guidance on Chicago's COVID-19 Housing Assistance Grant

As of this memo, it appears undocumented immigrants will be excluded from federal COVID-19 relief. This exclusion of undocumented immigrants from COVID-19 federal relief packages is wrongheaded and cruel.

Undocumented immigrants contribute approximately \$13 billion per year to Social Security, \$3 billion to Medicare, and \$12 billion in state and local taxes; and undocumented immigrants are on the front lines of this pandemic, working essential jobs in child care, food delivery, and cleaning. As community spread of COVID-19 has shown: Chicago is only as healthy and safe as the most vulnerable among us.

In the face of this federal policy failure, local governments can and must fill the gap. That's exactly what the City of Chicago has done with our COVID-19 Housing Assistance Grant. Utilizing \$2 million paid by developers in in-lieu fees under the City's Affordable Requirements Ordinance, the COVID-19 Housing Assistance Grant will provide a one-time cash grant of \$1,000 to Chicagoans who have lost their job or lost hours as a result of COVID-19.

Since these are local - not federal - dollars, undocumented immigrants can and should apply for the one-time Housing Assistance Grant.

How to Apply

Applications are only accepted online. **The online application, which is available in multiple languages, can be found at: www.bit.ly/chirenta.**

The application is open from 9am on Friday, March 27 to 11:59pm on Wednesday, April 1. To apply you will need proof of economic fallout due to COVID-19, such as an email or text message from your employer, and have proof of the income requirements described on the application, like a paystub.

Applications received by 11:59pm on Wednesday, April 1 will be entered into the lottery. Individuals selected via the lottery to receive a \$1,000 grant will be contacted by the Chicago Department of Housing.

The application does not ask about immigration status, and Chicago's sanctuary city policy - the Welcoming City Ordinance - ensures applicants' information will not be turned over to ICE. Since this is a one-time emergency payment it should not impact the public charge rule.

For help applying for Chicago's COVID-19 Housing Assistance Grant, you can call the Office of Alderman Carlos Ramirez-Rosa: (773) 887-3772