



Emergency Cash Assistance Program For New York City

This Charitable Initiative

This deadly virus and the subsequent lockdown have suddenly thrown hundreds of thousands of low income NYC residents out of work. Indeed, never in American history have so many lost their jobs in such a short period. Restaurant workers, hospitality workers and domestic workers have been particularly victimized. Most have no savings and are in truly desperate straits. This crisis is unprecedented, and the need is urgent.

The goal is to raise at least \$20 million on a 501(c)(3) basis from individual New Yorkers who have been fortunate, and, through a small group of non-profits (“NPs”), get emergency cash assistance distributed to stricken NYC residents as quickly as possible. We have chosen NPs which have the capacity and technology for such distribution. Approximately \$3 million has already been committed from a very small group.

Yes, a \$2 trillion federal stimulus bill just became law. It includes an expansion of unemployment insurance (UI), including a \$600 weekly “pandemic premium” extending over four months, and provides one-time \$1,200 grants to individuals under an income threshold. However, countless vulnerable individuals are not covered at all by this legislation, and another large group is neither fully covered nor will receive assistance soon. As such, it is not nearly enough.

In particular, the below groups are excluded or only partially covered:

- More than 500,000 undocumented residents in NYC who do not qualify for UI, the new federal one-time grants or even SNAP benefits (food stamps)
- Workers whose main income was cash tips who will only receive half of the pandemic premium
- Individuals who do not have direct deposit accounts who will wait many weeks for the one-time grants
- The many low income New Yorkers who, historically, do not know how to apply for UI or otherwise don't do so

How This Emergency Cash Assistance Effort Will Work

Donations will be made to The New York Community Trust (“The Trust”), which has agreed to serve in this capacity and is deeply experienced in similar charitable initiatives. The Trust will immediately distribute the funds to a small group of carefully vetted non-profits. This group will, in turn, make immediate grants to unemployed individuals, harmonizing around ~\$500 per recipient (the precise

amount subject to modest variations). Fortunately, the Ford Foundation has generously agreed to pay ECAP NYC's expenses for this effort.

To achieve a fast and broad distribution, we have evaluated more than 20 NPs. Relatively few have the technology and overall ability to determine eligibility and then get the funds out correctly and quickly.

We screened for those with deep expertise in the needs of local and vulnerable New York City communities, experience operating in crisis situations, logistical and technological capacity to determine eligibility and distribute cash widely and quickly, and ability to rapidly target the hardest to reach and hardest hit economically by COVID-19 with the cash assistance relief and objectives of this effort.

Initially, this is the intended group of six NPs which have these abilities and will serve this effort. The good news is that the organizations, for the most part, know each other, will be assisting each other and will minimize overlap.

Catholic Charities of New York is one of the city's most experienced providers of support to New Yorkers in need. Through a broad network of administered, sponsored and affiliated agencies, Catholic Charities delivers a wide range of human services, including financial and cash assistance in times of crisis. Catholic Charities will draw on its well of experience in emergency response (9/11, Superstorm Sandy, etc) to reach some of the most vulnerable low income and low wage New Yorkers hardest hit in this current crisis.

Give Directly provides cash to the very poor. For purposes of COVID relief, it has partnered with Propel, whose technology permits one-time cash grants to SNAP recipients with low balances and particularly acute need. This technology also allows for targeting by NYC zip code, which will facilitate distributions to individuals in the very hardest hit communities. Recently, 80% of the recipients of Give Directly cash have been women who do not have enough cash or goods to last more than 3 days.

National Domestic Workers Alliance works to protect housekeepers, home health aides, nannies and cleaning personnel across the country. These occupations have been decimated by this crisis. As a result, NDWA has already established a Coronavirus Care Fund, using its existing benefits distribution technology to support domestic workers. NDWA will work with us to target unemployed domestic workers in the city.

New York City Immigration Coalition is an umbrella organization advocating for more than 200 immigrant organizations in New York State. NYCIC has also just established a cash grants program for stricken immigrants, so many of whom are retail, delivery, ride-share and restaurant workers who will not receive the new federal assistance, either because they are undocumented or because they are fearful of interaction with the federal government.

One Fair Wage is a national organization that advocates on behalf of tipped workers, particularly restaurant workers and other service workers. One Fair Wage believes that more than 300,000 restaurant workers have just been laid off in NYC alone. They recently set up their own small emergency fund to financially assist such workers, using PayPal as the dispensing mechanism. And, working with us, they can target our cash assistance to NYC restaurant workers.

UJA Federation of New York represents a network of community-based organizations in New York City and around the world. For this effort, we are working with UJA to target the most vulnerable New

Yorkers impacted by COVID-19 via their member social service agencies and community centers across the city that can provide emergency cash assistance.

Conclusion

It is already evident that the response from donors will be a generous one. We do not intend any publicity for this effort until it has been completed. At which point, with donors' permission, we would simply publish the list of donors in alphabetical order.

We have been working closely with a number of the City's philanthropic and civic leaders on this initiative. We particularly want to thank Lorie Slutsky of the New York Community Trust, Darren Walker, Maria Torres-Springer and Sarita Gupta of the Ford Foundation and Kathy Wylde of Partnership for New York City, among other organizations, for their guidance.

Finally, this is a temporary initiative only. The plan is to disband it, once the funds have been raised, distributed and informally audited.

Wiring Instructions

Please ask your bank to make a transfer to:

JPMorgan Chase Bank
270 Park Avenue, 43rd Floor, New York, NY 10017

ABA Number: 021 000 021

Account Name: Community Funds, Inc.

Account Number: 134 757 998

Fund Name: ECAP NYC

Fund Number: 5068

Please reference the fund name and fund number.

Please notify Janette Andaluz (jan@nyct-cfi.org) of your gift so that she can make sure it is received and properly credited and please copy Stephanie Tomasson (stephanie.tomasson@gmail.com).

If you have any additional questions please contact Stephanie Tomasson (ECAP NYC) via email or at 646-784-2129 or Janette Andaluz (NYCT) via email or at 212-686-0010 x429.