COVID-19 Financial Assistance Program: Phase 2
Frequently Asked Questions

Program Eligibility
- I meet most, but not all, of the eligibility criteria. Can I still qualify for financial assistance?
- How did you come up with this eligibility criteria?
- How do you define the number of people in your household?
- What documentation will I need to submit to prove my eligibility?

Financial Assistance
- I don’t have a bank account that I want to use, how else can I receive the funds?
- If I am approved for financial assistance, will these funds be considered taxable income?

Interest List/Application Process
- Will you have enough funding to serve every eligible household? How will you prioritize applications?
- How do I apply for assistance?
- Do I need to have an email address of internet access to apply?
- I’ve signed up on the Interest List and still haven’t heard from anybody. When and how will I be contacted?
- How will you secure my personal data?

Partner Organizations
- I received a call from an organization who said they were a partner on this initiative. Is this legit?

Relation to Other Assistance Programs
- Is this program related to the Catholic Charities / State Disaster Relief Assistance for Immigrants or the East San Jose PEACE Partnership Fund?
- Will receiving funds from this program put my family at risk for the Public Charge Rule?
- I am not eligible, where else can I get help?
PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

I meet most, but not all, of the eligibility criteria. Can I still qualify for financial assistance? Unfortunately, due to the limited funding available, we’re only in a position to provide assistance to households who meet all of the eligibility criteria.

How did you come up with this eligibility criteria?
Our goal is to ensure that the limited dollars available go to those with the greatest need. And we consulted with dozens of partner organizations (who also helped us survey hundreds of their constituents) to identify the populations within our community who are facing the most severe impacts and are most in-need of assistance. This input helped inform the development of our eligibility criteria for this round of assistance.

How do you define the number of people in your household?
A household includes all members of the family who live in the same residence, depend on the same income and share the same food. If they are multiple family members living in the same house/apartment but don’t share their income or food, they are considered a separate household.

What documentation will I need to submit to prove my eligibility?
Households will need to submit basic documentation, such as a photo ID, income verification (i.e. paystubs) and proof of the COVID-19 related loss of income. We also will accept alternate documentation for those who are paid in cash or have other non-traditional sources of income.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

I don’t have a bank account that I want to use. How else can I receive the funds?
Approved applicants can receive payments via electronic payment or gift card. In most instances, payments will be processed through our partner organization, the Family Independence Initiative (for more information on how FII works, please visit their site here).

If I am approved for financial assistance, will these funds be considered taxable income?
Internal Revenue Code section 139 provides that qualified disaster relief payments from any source, including employers, reimbursing or paying individuals’ specified expenses in connection with qualified disasters are NOT taxable as income and are not subject to employment taxes or withholding.

INTEREST LIST / APPLICATION PROCESS

Will you have enough funding to serve every eligible household? How will you prioritize applications?
We know that the need is enormous and continues to grow, but our hope is to be able to serve every eligible household who applies during this round of assistance. We developed this eligibility criteria to ensure we are prioritizing our limited funds on those with the greatest need in the community and we’ll be reviewing applications as they come in order to get money out to people as quickly as possible.

How do I apply for assistance?
We have created a two-step process to help us process applications and get money into eligible families’ hands as quickly as possible.
The first step is to add your name to the Interest List at https://sacredhearts.org/covid19/ and enter basic information on your household, which you can do online or by phone.

Our team will then contact people on the Interest List and provide personalized instructions for submitting an application (given the enormous demand for assistance, please know that it may take up to 20 days to reach every household on the Interest List).

**Do I need to have an email address of internet access to apply?**
No. While we encourage people to add their name to the Interest List and submit an application through our online portal, folks can also call sign-up / apply via phone, by calling 408-780-9134.

**I’ve signed up on the Interest List and still haven’t heard from anybody. When and how will I be contacted?**
Please know that we are working quickly as we can; however given the enormous demand for assistance, it may take up to 20 days to reach everybody on the Interest List. We appreciate your patience as we work through the Interest List. We’ll primarily be contacting folks via email, but for those who did not submit an email address, we’ll reach out via phone or text.

**How will you secure my personal data?**
Our centralized application and database features advanced technology that will help keep your information secure. In addition, we’ve set up internal procedures to ensure that each applicant’s data is kept confidential - and we will not share any individual’s personal data with any government offices under any circumstance.

**PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

I received a call from an organization who said they were a partner on this initiative. Is this legit?
We are partnering with a wide range of non-profit organizations throughout the community (you can find a list of our partners on the bottom of Sacred Heart's COVID 19 Financial Assistance Program webpage) who will be helping us contact and assist individuals on the Interest List and individuals who’ve submitted applications. This will allow us to serve households as quickly as possible.

**RELATION TO OTHER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

Is this program related to the Catholic Charities / State Disaster Relief Assistance for Immigrants (DRAI) or the East San Jose PEACE Partnership Fund?
No, this is a separate program with its own eligibility criteria and its own separate application process. We encourage folks to seek out and apply for as many different assistance programs as they qualify for.

Will receiving funds from this program put my family at risk for the Public Charge Rule?
No. This is not a public benefit, general assistance, or income maintenance program. This is temporary disaster aid administered by a private nonprofit from a combination of private and public donations. Assistance will be provided, regardless of immigration status.
I am not eligible, where else can I get help?
While this current round of funding is focused on serving those most in need of assistance, we will continue doing everything we can to help more families and individuals impacted by this pandemic and we will be in touch with those on the Interest List should more funding become available.

In the meantime, we encourage all households in need to learn about and apply for the various other forms of assistance available to our community. You can find more information at: http://www.211bayarea.org. If you are looking for a resource organization in your area, please find your local Emergency Assistance Network partner here.