

Coronavirus Emergency Relief Fund (CERF)

May 3, 2020 – Weekly Update



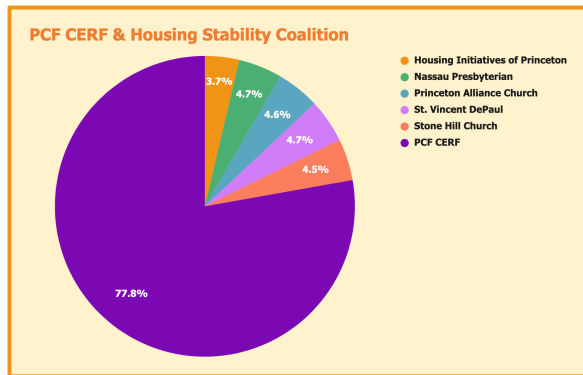
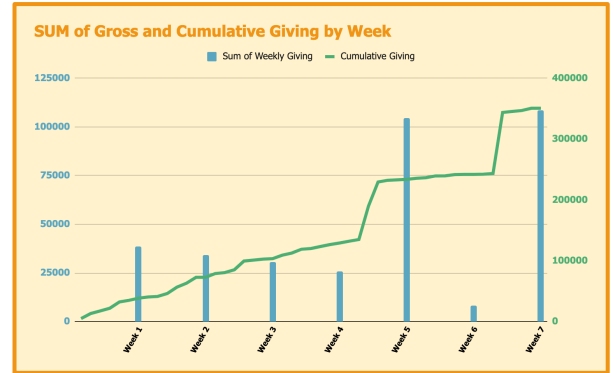
CERF ETHOS

Our goal is for residents to be able to **stay in their homes** and to maintain access to utility service that enables **students to be connected to school** to participate in distance learning and enables **all residents to be connected to food resources** and other necessities during this crisis.



FUNDRAISING – \$350,563

We had a wonderful week of fundraising – thank you to all who have given so that we may continue to help residents stay in their homes and remain connected to community resources. The CERF is supported in part with grants from the **Princeton University Relief Fund** and the Covid-19 Relief & Recovery Fund of the **Princeton Area Community Foundation**. We are grateful to the University, PACF, and to the over **710 donors** who have given their support.



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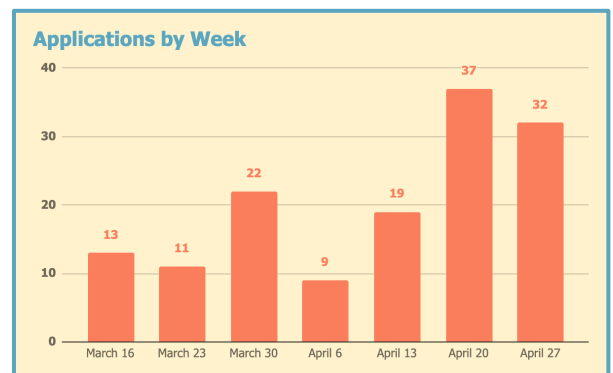
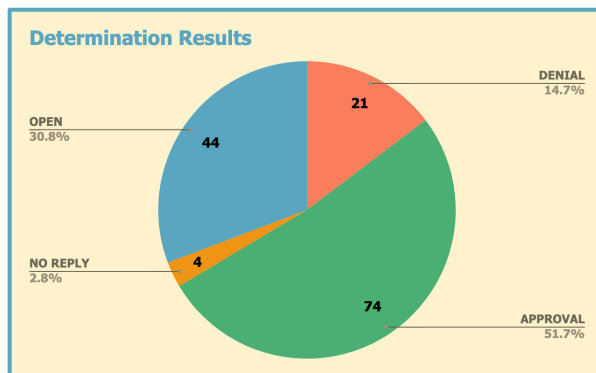
The Housing Stability Coalition remains steadfast in their support and continues to underwrite over 20% of applicant awards. Continued thanks to the HSC for their support of our efforts!



APPLICATIONS – 143

There have been **no DENIALS since week 4** and we attribute this to refining the application cover letter to better reflect the eligibility criteria. As a matter of process, any denials are referred to other programs and continue to receive case manager support through the application process to those programs (Unemployment, Welfare, Pandemic Unemployment, etc.). Renewal applications represent 17 of the 143 total applications. The renewal application, an abbreviated version of the initial application, is enabling faster processing for applicants. **The current average award per applicant rose slightly this week to \$710.40.** With our current funding, we will be able to help approximately 495 people or times.

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REASONS TO H.O.P.E. (Help One Person Everyday)

There are a few local groups making extra efforts that we wanted to share about this week. In addition to providing literally thousands of masks, gloves and other PPE for medical and essential employees, **The Princeton Chinese Community** are also supporting their neighbors' housing stability through a donation to PCF. When news of COVID-19 first started making headlines in China, these dedicated Princetonians



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sprang into action. They placed orders for PPE and other supplies long before the United States even began to acknowledge that we had a potential problem. Luckily for us, their smart thinking and quick action made a difference for Princeton. We are grateful for their support and applaud their speedy coordination of this tremendous effort!

They were not the only local group to inspire us this week. In addition to studying how babies and young children learn to talk, see, and understand the world, thirty-eight staff and researchers at the **Princeton Baby Lab** organized a fundraiser to support our efforts. Every week, we see the best in our neighbors and it reminds us what a wonderful community Princeton is. What will you do this week to **H.O.P.E.?**



PROCESS

Applicants submit a request through the municipality's privacy-compliant system or an intake coordinator completes the request with the applicant over the phone. The initial review is conducted by the Director of Human Services who ensures that: the applicant is a resident of Princeton; the request is COVID-related; and the applicant's income falls under the COAH region 4 income limit for family size. If those 3 criteria are met, Human Services assigns the application to one of the case managers who comprise the Steering Committee. **The case managers are all volunteer social service professionals.**



The assigned case manager conducts an intake interview, collects any outstanding documentation, and then uses the CERF determination rubric to assess the application. Guidance and supervision for intakes is provided by the Director of Human Services and the President of Princeton Children's Fund (PCF). For all applications, PCF contacts the landlord to ask if they are willing to share in the effort to keep tenants housed by forgiving a portion of the rent. Landlords who agree send a sharing letter to PCF.

The Steering Committee meets on Zoom (Mondays and Thursdays) and discusses determination recommendations. Cases that are approved by the Steering Committee are then presented to the Housing Stability Coalition where, upon approval, the HSC contributes 30% of the applicant's rental request.



For approved applications, PCF receives Housing Stability Coalition checks, adds a PCF check for the remaining 70% of rent and sends payment to the landlord. PCF also contacts the utilities, monthly cell plan, etc. to make payments. Human Services sends the determination response letter to the applicant and includes copies of the landlord sharing letter, checks, and utility payment confirmation information for applicant to retain in their records.

CERF TEAM

Intake Coordinators – this team answers the Human Services phone number, returns messages, and helps potential applicants navigate the application process.

- Kimberly Figueroa-Martinez* – Human Services
- Sindy Sandoval* – Corner House
- Community leaders
- Neighborhood captains



Steering Committee – in addition to processing intakes, members check to see if applicants have access to reliable sources of food and refer them to available resources when appropriate.

- Zoe D'Eugenio-Pinel* – YMCA
- Andrea Dinan* – Princeton High School
- Jordan Goodwin – Princeton Community Village
- Sharon Hurley – PSRC
- Diane Paulsell* – Solidaridad Princeton
- Nicole Paulucci/Katherine Cardona* – PRD
- Trinidad Rodriguez* – JW Middle School
- Angie Vargas*/Cecilia Avila* – Arm in Arm

* = dual-language speaker

