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### **Advisory #58**

#### **Emergency Rent, Utility Assistance Now Available for Montanans Financially Impacted by COVID-19**

HELENA, Mont. – Governor Greg Gianforte today announced that the Montana Emergency Rental Assistance program is taking applications from Montanans who have lost income and are at risk of housing instability due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The last year has brought real, serious challenges to hardworking Montana families through no fault of their own,” Governor Greg Gianforte said. “Emergency rental assistance will help Montanans, who have struggled financially through this pandemic, get back on their feet and remain secure in their homes.”

Funded through the federal Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 and appropriated by the Montana Legislature, this emergency rental assistance will help an estimated 8,000 Montana renters stay in their homes.

“So many Montanans have been hit hard financially by the economic fallout of the pandemic,” said Montana Department of Commerce Director Scott Osterman. “Now, assistance is here for individuals and families who have lost income because of COVID-19 and are at risk of losing their homes.”

Renters can receive a monthly maximum of \$2,200 for past due and future rent payments, up to \$300 for past due and future utilities including gas and electric, and \$50 per month for internet. Households can access assistance dating back to April 1, 2020.

Household gross income cannot exceed 80 percent of the Area Median Income. For example, a family of four in Cascade County, the household income cannot exceed \$56,800. For a two-person household in Flathead County, income cannot exceed \$45,450.

Renters will not be required to provide a co-pay, and landlords are able to apply on behalf of their renters. Payments will be made directly to landlords and utility providers.

Montanans can check their eligibility and apply now for Emergency Rental Assistance at [HOUSING.MT.GOV](https://housing.mt.gov).