



For Immediate Release

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Couleecap Rental Assistance Program Provides over \$1.7M in Assistance; Other Programs Continue

(Westby, WI) The Wisconsin Rental Assistance Program (WRAP), an eviction prevention program administered by Couleecap in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon Counties, has ended after serving 865 households with over \$1.717M in rental and security deposit assistance. Governor Evers announced the program in June which continued through November 24.

Funding for the program came from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Securities (CARES) Act. Community Action Agencies like Couleecap worked closely with the WI Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources to deliver assistance to every county in the state, serving over 14,000 households. In total, over \$28M was expended throughout the 5-month long program.

“We are glad we had the opportunity to help people through a very difficult time and landlords maintain their businesses,” says Hetti Brown, Executive Director. “However, many of our clients are not back to full employment and we were still receiving a high volume of applications from newly unemployed residents through the last day of the program. We hope this will be an indicator to lawmakers that more help is desperately needed.”

In addition to rental assistance, each household was registered for energy assistance, a lasting benefit that can result in weatherization, monthly bill assistance, and emergency furnace support. The Couleecap team also distributed over \$125,000 in financial aid to help rental program clients pay other bills, which was funded by the La Crosse Community Foundation, Great Rivers United Way, and private donors. All clients received financial counseling, referrals, and help with landlord negotiations.

Kim Cable, Housing and Community Services Director says, “It’s not just about paying rent, but about helping people navigate financial insecurity that may last for many more months. By linking people to other programs in our community, we are providing more than emergency relief.”

Couleecap continues to help people avoid eviction and homelessness through programs funded by the State of Wisconsin Bureau of Supportive Housing and City of La Crosse. Assistance varies by county and details can be viewed at <https://www.couleecap.org/homeless-prevention.html>.

Couleecap is fundraising to continue programs for those impacted by COVID-19. Those wishing to support these efforts can donate at www.couleecap.org or by mailing contributions to 201 Melby Street, Westby, WI 54667.

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About Couleecap

Couleecap, Inc. is a private non-profit 501c3 charitable organization. Couleecap helps people in need with housing, food, transportation, and more. Created in 1966, we are a community action program that fights poverty and promotes self-sufficiency in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon counties. Learn more at www.couleecap.org.