



For Immediate Release

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**WISCONSIN EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
SCHEDULED TO END JANUARY 31.**

The program has helped over 5,000 households in the Coulee Region.

The State Department of Administration announced on Friday that the Wisconsin Emergency Rental Assistance Program, or WERA, will no longer accept applications after January 31 due to low remaining funds. The program, locally administered by Couleecap, was launched in February 2021 to help households experiencing a financial hardship and housing insecurity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since that time, Couleecap has aided more than 5,193 households in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon Counties with \$22,604,157.00 in rent, utilities, and related household expenses.

Couleecap is currently serving 3,634 households through the WERA program. Hetti Brown, the organization’s Executive Director, explains that their priority is to ensure a smooth transition for their clients. “WERA has been critical in providing housing stability for people during the pandemic. Thousands of evictions have been prevented and landlords have been able to maintain their income. Now we are focused on making sure that success continues as WERA phases out.”

If people have fallen behind on their rent and need assistance through WERA or are current WERA clients and eligible for renewal benefits, Couleecap will continue to accept applications through January 31. Those requests will be processed to the extent that funding remains available.

Once WERA benefits end, Couleecap will provide housing stability services to clients who may need assistance with the transition. Housing stability services are client-driven and focused on finding and keeping stable housing. Services include housing navigation, budgeting, resource or benefit referrals, and landlord mediation.

“Couleecap is working to help those most in need while being good stewards of remaining limited funds,” says Brown.

Current program parameters and the application can be accessed by visiting www.Couleecap.org or by calling 844-267-0033. Due to the high volume of requests, applicants should expect their applications to be reviewed 6-8 weeks after submission.

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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. Couleecap is a member of the Community Action Network, originally created in 1964. Learn more at couleecap.org.