

NEWS RELEASE

Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Date: August 18, 2021

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\$28.5 million in housing aid distributed by County Executive and community partners since start of COVID-19 pandemic

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—Since receiving a direct allocation of federal CARES Act funding in 2020, followed by an allocation of Emergency Rental Assistance funds in 2021, Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro, working with several community partners, has distributed over \$28.5 million in housing aid to thousands of Summit County residents in need. According to U.S. Treasury reports, Summit County leads all other counties in the state that received Emergency Rental Assistance funds in both percentage of money distributed and total households assisted.

“From the first day we received federal funds to help our community, our priority has been to act as quickly as we can and help as many residents as we can,” said Executive Shapiro. “I am so proud of my staff and our many community partners who have worked tirelessly to get this money to those that need it most. There is still a need for housing assistance in Summit County and we will continue to work as quickly and efficiently as we can to meet that need.”

As part of the federal government’s early response to COVID-19 in 2020, Summit County received over \$94 million in CARES Act funding. Recognizing the growing need for housing stability in the county, Executive Shapiro earmarked several million dollars to provide rent, mortgage and utility assistance to residents negatively affected by the pandemic. In June 2020, Executive Shapiro’s Office worked with United Way of Summit and Medina Counties, Community Action Akron Summit and several other community organizations to launch the Summit County Cares program. By the end of 2020, payments totaling \$15.5 million, including \$3 million in federal TANF funds, were issued to landlords and utility providers on behalf of Summit County residents.

Upon the passage of legislation authorizing additional federal rent and utility assistance in early 2021, the Executive’s Office re-opened applications for Summit County Cares in March. In just one month, 5,335 applications were submitted. Since restarting the program, the Executive’s Office and its partners have worked diligently to process thousands of applications and provide desperately needed assistance. As of August 6, 2021, Summit County had distributed nearly \$13 million, over 85% of its \$14.5 million Emergency Rental Assistance funds allocated for direct payments of rent and utility bills, far out pacing other counties in the state. This aid has been provided to over 3,400 households in Summit County.

“Since the start of the pandemic, United Way has worked to help Summit County residents access much needed assistance,” said Jim Mullen, president and CEO of United Way of Summit & Medina Counties. “We launched the Summit County Cares program in partnership with the County to get aid to residents as quickly as possible. To date, we have helped thousands of households pay their rent, mortgage and utilities, and we are committed to providing assistance for as long as funding is available.”

Applications for the Summit County Cares program temporarily closed on Friday, August 13 at 5 p.m. for system maintenance. Applications will reopen on Wednesday, September 8. Applications received prior to August 13 at 5 p.m. will continue to be processed. Residents in need of immediate rental or utility assistance due to a court-ordered eviction or utility that has been shut off should call 2-1-1 and select the prompts for Cares assistance or email summitcountycares@uwsummit.org.

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