

News Release

Commissioner Marcia Gershenson resolution establishes program to assist individuals, working families and early childhood education centers

June 26, 2020, OAKLAND COUNTY, MI. – At its meeting on June 25, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners authorized \$17 million to establish the Oakland Together Emergency Financial Assistance and Working Families Support Program. Introduced by Vice Chairwoman **Marcia Gershenson** (D-Bloomfield Hills), the funding will be used to create grants that provide direct financial assistance to Oakland County residents negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and early childhood education centers that support working families.

“Until this point, we have not provided a way for individuals and families to receive direct assistance,” Gershenson said. “This program will give Oakland County residents additional support as we navigate life during this time.”

The program will use microgrants to help individuals and families in need of emergency assistance with payments including overdue utility bills, services needed for employment in a work from home setting, childcare assistance, funeral expenses and food assistance.

Should coronavirus response funding provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development be inadequate in meeting the needs of Oakland County families, this program could provide additional support for rental and mortgage assistance. In addition, the program may provide support through grants to early childhood education organizations so they may safely reopen.

“The pandemic has affected nearly every aspect of life for Oakland County working families and those who were already financially vulnerable,” Gershenson said. “With this financial assistance program, we look forward to providing support to residents who are dealing with unprecedented challenges.”

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, 20 to 22 percent of Oakland County workers have filed for unemployment. The \$17 million program will be established from the nearly \$220 million the county received from the federal CARES Act.

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