



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 11, 2022

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

CHICAGO RESILIENT COMMUNITIES PILOT DISTRIBUTES FIRST SET OF \$500 MONTHLY CASH PAYMENTS TO OVER 3,500 HOUSEHOLDS

The Pilot is a commitment from Mayor Lightfoot and the Department of Family and Support Services to end poverty and put residents at the center of the City's economic recovery

CHICAGO — Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) Commissioner Brandie Knazze announced today that the first cash payments have been distributed to Chicago households through the Chicago Resilient Communities Pilot (CRCP), the \$31.5 million monthly cash assistance program to benefit low-income Chicago residents and families who have faced disproportionate economic hardships during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CRCP is one of the largest monthly cash assistance programs in the nation, supporting 5,000 low-income households with \$500 a month for 12 months to provide greater financial stability and support an equitable economic recovery. During the 3-week application window this spring, the City received more than 176,000 applications with at least 300 applications from all of Chicago's 77 communities.

The pilot's selection lottery prioritized households living in poverty and those in communities with preexisting economic hardship. Five-thousand households that applied were selected through the lottery and invited to enroll in the pilot.

"In order to recover fully from the economic impacts of COVID-19, we must develop solutions that equitably and inclusively address the challenges facing our residents," said Chicago Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot. "Through this cash assistance program, we are able to serve those who have borne the brunt of COVID-19. Direct cash payments have the potential to be truly transformative for communities that need it most, which is why I remain so proud to be able to provide this vital programming for residents."

Selected participants met numerous eligibility requirements focused on supporting an equitable recovery from COVID-19, including having household income at or



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

below 250% of the Federal Poverty Line and having experienced a negative economic hardship due to COVID-19.

Selected participants will receive \$500 cash payments every month for the next 12 months via direct deposit into their bank account or through a prepaid debit card. In order to ensure selected participants can use the monthly cash assistance to best support their household needs, the City of Chicago strategically designed the pilot to provide flexibility and choice for households through unrestricted payments.

“People know what they need to move forward in their lives,” said DFSS Commissioner Brandie Knazze. “We know the need is great and many Chicagoans need help to meet their basic needs. Whether that is paying for childcare, groceries, baby formula or utility bills — we want participants to have the choice and flexibility necessary to thrive on their terms.”

The application, selection, and administration of the program is being administered by GiveDirectly, a nonprofit partner with expertise in administering cash transfer programs around the world.

“Being able to put cash directly in the hands of so many families who are struggling and fulfill the promise of this program for so many — this is why we do this work,” says GiveDirectly’s U.S. Director, Sarah Moran.

Analysis of the preliminary demographics and household characteristics of the residents selected by lottery for the pilot shows:

- 61% live below the poverty line (100% FPL) and 38% live in deep poverty (at or below 50%)
- 67% identified as Black or African American
- 23% identified as Latino or Hispanic
- 16% identified as white
- 3% identified as Asian

Other demographic datapoints include:

- 70% identified as a woman
- 61% identified as a parent or caregiver
- 17% identified as having a disability

The city and the nonprofit administrator, Give Directly, are finalizing enrollment and first payments for the remaining 1,500 households now. All applicants were notified



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



of their application status by the first week of June. If you applied and are uncertain about the status of your application, visit chicagocashpilot.org. Applicants who received an email, text, or phone message about being selected should also visit chicagocashpilot.org to confirm their selection and respond to GiveDirectly to complete enrollment.

All participants were also invited to participate in the pilot's optional research study run by the Inclusive Economy Lab, which includes a stipend for participation. The research will study how the Chicago Resilient Communities Pilot affects residents' financial and overall well-being and will generate learnings to strengthen existing and future City programs and similar pilots nationwide. For more information on the CRCP, visit chicago.gov/cashpilot.

The Chicago Resilient Communities Pilot is just one initiative within the broader \$1.2 billion Chicago Recovery Plan to promote safe and thriving communities and an equitable economic recovery from COVID-19. Learn more at chicago.gov/recoveryplan.

###