



NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact:

Erin Dowland Kabwe, Chief Development Officer
ekabwe@cedaorg.net (312) 914-9129

Nick Mathiowdis, Press Secretary

Nicholas.mathiowdis@cookcountyil.gov (773) 505-7612

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cook County and CEDA Announce Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program

[COOK COUNTY, IL] - Today, the Office of Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle and the Community and Economic Development Association of Cook County (CEDA) announced a new program to assist low-income residents with water utility bills. Funded with dollars provided by the American Rescue Plan Act, the Low-income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) provides funds to assist low-income households with water and wastewater bills.

“We understand that during difficult times, the government needs to assist those who need it most,” said President Preckwinkle. “This partnership will make sure that households in Cook County stay safe and connected to the resources they need to provide for their families.”

LIHWAP provides up to \$1,500 for reconnection assistance, disconnection prevention, past-due balances, disconnection fees, and late fees. Both homeowners and renters can access the program to ease financial stress caused by water bills. The goal of the program is to help families avoid arrearages and late fees, prevent disconnection when possible and restore services in case of disconnection.

“We are thrilled to partner with Cook County on this critical initiative to ensure access to water, advance equity, and close the racial wealth gap,” said Harold Rice, President and Chief Executive Officer of CEDA. “Our organization is partnering with the County to ensure high-quality services are delivered to residents, leveraging our more than 55 years of experience, education, and local engagement.”

CEDA is accepting applications year-round for LIHWAP. To qualify, families must be income-eligible and live in Cook County. They also must be disconnected, facing disconnection, or have a past-due balance of at least \$250. Families can call CEDA or visit a partner in-take site to check eligibility. To apply for the program or to learn more, residents can call 1 (800) 571-2332 or visit www.cedaorg.net/

Residents interested in learning more about LIHWAP are also encouraged to tune in to WCPT 820 AM at 7am and/or WVON 1690 AM at 7pm on Sunday, February 20. President Preckwinkle and CEDA representatives will be featured guests on the radio programs to share details on LIHWAP and answer caller questions. To participate and ask a question, residents can call WCPT at (773) 763-9278 and/or WVON at (773) 591-1690 during regularly scheduled programming.

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