



NEWS RELEASE

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House Wake! Increases Financial Support for Residents and Landlords Facing Financial Difficulties

Great news for applicants of the [House Wake! COVID-19 Eviction Prevention Program](#) – you may now qualify for even more financial assistance. With the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency announcing the rollout of a statewide program that will bring an additional \$5.9 million in financial support to the renters of Wake County, the House Wake! program will now pay 100% of approved tenants' late rent for up to six months.

“When we launched the House Wake! program, we offered to pay landlords 50% of the late rent tenants owed, because we had thousands of renters that needed support, and that’s what we could afford to provide at the time,” said Wake County Commissioner Dr. James West. “But, with nearly \$6 million more coming to our community from the state, we can now double the amount of relief we can offer, which is good for tenants and landlords in Wake County.”

Today, the state launched the NC HOPE program, which allocates funding to counties across North Carolina to address the wave of evictions that will come when the eviction moratorium expires.

Because Wake County was proactive and had already developed its own eviction prevention program, the additional state funding will simply allow the county to do more.

Upon receiving notice of these additional funds, the county updated step one of the three-step House Wake! program, which now pays 100% of up to six months of approved tenants' back rent owed from March through December 2020.

In return, the landlords must:

- Agree to forgive any remaining rent owed within this timeframe;
- Offer to discount rent by 25% for January through March 2021; and
- Agree to not pursue eviction for 90 days after assistance ends.

Tenants who cannot reach an agreement with their landlords in step one will be referred to step two in the program. The steps are:

1. **Eviction Prevention**
Through a partnership with the Telamon Corporation, the county will help tenants and landlords cover rent shortfalls, resulting from a loss of income due to COVID-19.
2. **Eviction Mediation Services**
Through a partnership with Legal Aid of North Carolina, the county will provide free legal support for tenants who need legal counsel for mediation services or to negotiate filed evictions with landlords; and
3. **Relocation Assistance**
The county will help relocate residents whose housing situation could not be stabilized through steps 1 or 2.

Since launching House Wake! on Sept. 29, the county has received more than 300 applications for assistance, with hundreds more in queue. Any applicants who were approved for the previous 50% rental support will automatically qualify for the new payout.

“Over the past two weeks, we’ve seen strong interest in House Wake! from renters who are barely hanging on in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis and from landlords struggling to retain their investments,” said Lorena McDowell, Wake County Housing Affordability and Community Revitalization Department Director. “We’re proud to provide this additional support to keep residents safely housed into the new year.”

Residents can visit wakegov.com/housing or call 919-899-9911 to learn more and apply.

About House Wake!

House Wake! is a strategic plan to minimize the effects of COVID-19 on homeless and precariously housed Wake County residents, while maximizing opportunities for positive long-term outcomes.

This plan uses and coordinates federal, state and local funding to address the COVID-19 crisis within our homeless and precariously housed populations and aims to move the maximum number of people possible to housing stability.

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