

NORTHERN VIRGINIA AFFORDABLE HOUSING ALLIANCE

ADVOCACY ACTION ALERT

Arlington and VA General Assembly Special Session Housing August 2020

Rental Assistance Funding [Arlington County Housing Resources](#) continue to provide rental assistance for COVID-impacted residents administered through the [Housing Grants program](#). Applications are available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

- Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (VDHCD) requirements for the [Rent and Mortgage Relief Program](#) have been modified to expand the number of residents who qualify. However, as of early August, only approximately \$3 million of the \$50 million in funding had been disbursed statewide. Getting rental assistance funds to landlords in a timely fashion is critical to eviction prevention efforts. Want to know what practitioners and local government agencies are doing in Northern Virginia to prevent evictions and stabilize housing for COVID-impacted residents? Check out our new [Eviction Prevention & Housing Stability Toolkit](#) on our [COVID-19 Regional Response](#) page.

[Missing Middle Housing Research](#) Plan to attend this event to expand your background knowledge about missing middle housing before the study begins. Learn more about research available including Arlington-specific data and existing conditions. Ask your questions and hear from the authors of the [Missing Middle Housing Study Research Compendium](#). This online meeting will be held on Wednesday, Sept 2, 7 PM, and is hosted by the [Alliance for Housing Solutions](#) and [Arlington County's Missing Middle Study Housing Team](#). You can register [here](#).

[The Digital Divide and Community Broadband in Arlington](#) Aug 19 (today), 6:30 PM, register [here](#). Attend this panel discussion sponsored by [ArlFiber](#) to hear about the percentage of households in Arlington who cannot afford broadband access, and learn about forming a broadband authority in Arlington. In addition, many families have neither the devices nor the digital literacy for online learning, access to information about assistance programs or telehealth access. A statewide working group, coordinated through Governor Northam's office, has been meeting throughout the summer to address broadband issues of affordability, accessibility and appropriate devices. As a member of that working group, NVAHA has raised the concern of broadband affordability in urban areas for lower income households, causing many to go without access. The goal of this group is to provide recommendations to the Governor that would form

the basis for legislation at the 2021 General Assembly session. We will keep you apprised of any updates.

[Governor Ralph Northam's Priorities for the General Assembly Special Session](#) The Governor's priorities, presented at the Special Session on August 18, include a one-time investment over the biennium of \$85 million in the Virginia Housing Trust Fund, which will complement federal CARES Act funding to expand access to affordable housing, reduce homelessness, and protect Virginians from eviction, and \$3.3 million in funding to establish an Eviction Prevention and Diversion Pilot Program to reduce evictions in communities across the Commonwealth.

[General Assembly Special Session Housing Legislation](#) Just introduced today, with legislation from Senators Ebbin and John Bell from NoVA. Look for modification and substitute language that may align with the [Governor's budget priorities](#) (Section #8). You can view all the legislation introduced in this Special Session [here](#).

[Voter Registration](#) Whether we take action on our own, or work with a community organization like the [League of Women Voters Arlington](#) or [Spread the Vote](#), we all need to commit to registering new voters, disseminating voter registration information, helping those in need get to the polls, and VOTE - either by mail or in-person. The change we seek will not happen if we don't raise our voices at the ballot box!

[NVAHA 2020 Regional Housing Leaders Awards and 15th Anniversary Celebration](#). Please join us for this free, online ceremony on Thursday, September 17, 5 PM, as we celebrate 15 years of our collective housing advocacy for more just, equitable communities in Northern Virginia, and honor our 2020 Regional Housing Leaders. This year, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) will be honored as a 2020 Regional Housing Leader, and Arlington County Board member Christian Dorsey will receive the award on behalf of the organization as a member of COG Board of Directors. This event promises to be the most exciting happy hour in town, so plan to join us and register [here](#)!