

# NORTHERN VIRGINIA AFFORDABLE HOUSING ALLIANCE

## ADVOCACY ACTION ALERT

### Arlington County Housing Activities December 2020

**State Rental Assistance for Eviction Prevention** Through the Virginia Rent and Mortgage Relief Program (RMRP), [Virginia Housing](#) is administering financial assistance for renters experiencing financial difficulties due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible landlords and property managers can apply on behalf of their tenants to receive financial assistance for past-due rental payments dating back to April 1, 2020. Funding for RMRP comes from federal resources (\$62 million in CARES Act funding) and state resources (\$42.5 million in combined CDBG and VA Housing Trust Funds). Applications are taken on a rolling basis. The application process begins at [VirginiaHousing.com/RMRP](#). If you have questions, please email [rmp@virginiahousing.com](mailto:rmp@virginiahousing.com). **Please share this information broadly with your networks and contacts.**

**New Housing Laws Related to Eviction Prevention** On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9am-10am, **Legal Services of Northern Virginia** will provide training on important new changes in landlord-tenant laws for service providers, county/city staff, non-profits and other community partners. Register in advance for this meeting: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAtfuyrpi0pE9XOJKxEQnEAycXjQkg2Mf3j>

**Broadband and Digital Justice** Holly Hartell, Assistant CIO for Strategic Initiatives in Arlington, participated in a panel discussion on "Digital Equity: Availability, Affordability and Accessibility" at the Virginia Governor's Housing Conference last week. Holly's presentation demonstrated what the pandemic has made so painfully clear - that broadband is essential to everyone for online learning, information about assistance programs, access to telehealth and remote work. Unfortunately 10% of Arlington households do not have access to a fixed broadband connection, and as her slides show, the digital divide is most prevalent in Arlington's low and moderate income neighborhoods. Holly's ppt presentation is attached below. As a member of the Governor workgroup on broadband, NVAHA is pleased that this has become a priority issue for the Northam administration, we and look forward to the possibility of legislation in the coming General Assembly session to address broadband affordability. We will continue to make the case for affordability for low income households in connected urban areas. You can learn more about the vision of *Broadband for America Now* [here](#).

**Budget Guidance to the County Manager for Housing from the County Board of Supervisors** "The Proposed Budget should include options to fund affordable housing, with a primary focus on preventing evictions and providing housing grants, while maintaining the FY 2021 level of \$8.3 million in funding for the Arlington Housing Investment Fund, the County's chief financing tool for creating and preserving affordable housing."

**[A New Narrative for Housing: Playbook for the Greater Washington Region](#)**

Building upon the [2019 Regional Housing Initiative targets](#) adopted by 11 COG jurisdictions, Dr. Tiffany Manuel of **The CaseMade** has developed a powerful guidebook for area practitioners and advocates to help strengthen our messaging strategies and mobilize people to action to address our region's unmet housing needs. Based on the findings from community listening sessions of residents across the DMV, Dr. T helps us understand what messages backfire (and why), and offers important guidance on how we can build a more robust coalition of advocates for housing. A worthwhile read!