



Update on Wave One of the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund

May 6, 2020

To our donors,

We hope that this update finds you and your family healthy and well. Thank you for your incredible support of the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund (“MA COVID-19 Relief Fund”) and for your trust in us to launch this important relief effort. To date, the Fund has raised over \$25 mm to support the most vulnerable in our state. Your major gift has been complemented by donations from citizens across the Commonwealth. To date, we have secured 63 major donors and over 12,153 online donations.

We have recruited an advisory committee to provide oversight, insight, review and approval of grants. The advisory committee is comprised of a diverse group of professionals representing regions across the Commonwealth and we are incredibly appreciative of their time and expertise. The list of advisory committee members appears at the end of this letter.

In order to efficiently and effectively distribute funds to those in need, we have partnered with regional community foundations who are collaborating with local direct service non-profit organizations. We are thankful for the community foundations and other organizations for their responsiveness, insights and leadership. In addition to identifying local needs of their community during this unprecedented crisis and the local non-profits that can best service these needs, community foundation partners will provide reports in two-week increments to inform progress and provide insights to learn and adjust as necessary.

The MA COVID-19 Relief Fund has completed its first wave of funding totaling \$3.1mm. As a result of this funding our community foundation partners have made grants to 146 charitable organizations throughout the Commonwealth. Grants were made throughout the state with a focus on urgent needs and emergency relief to hotspot areas like Chelsea.

The needs are extensive and deep throughout the Commonwealth. Across all regions, food insecurity is the most common and urgent issue. The MA COVID-19 Relief Fund supported multiple grants within each community foundation’s catchment area so local non-profits could significantly increase the purchase and distribution of food. Not only has the demand for food surged because people are unable to work, but the costs of distributing and purchasing food has increased. The food pantries which rely on volunteers to distribute food, many of whom are elderly, have had to hire essential workers in their place in order to assist their local community with food distribution. The MA COVID-19 Relief Fund made a statewide grant to Project Bread to expand the coverage of their Food Source Hotline in more cities and towns and build awareness so families will know where food is available locally. Project Bread will also provide other responsive services including assistance with SNAP applications.

In the healthcare arena, the MA COVID-19 Relief Fund provided grants through our community foundation partners to assist community healthcare in order to expand urgent care services, by making necessary changes to their spaces to better protect staff and patients, as well as setting up drive through COVID-19 testing sites. Additional grants by the MA COVID-19 Relief Fund also provided frontline workers with PPE and other equipment to allow them to safely do their jobs.



The MA COVID-19 Relief Fund also issued grants through our community foundation partners in several regions to provide distribution of financial relief to immigrants and vulnerable populations for financial support, food and rental assistance. Some community foundations also made grants to charitable organizations serving the disabled, providing PPE and altering spaces for safe service provision.

The impact of COVID-19 is taking a toll on families with increases in domestic violence and homelessness. Increased needs for shelters have necessitated expanding shelter options, while simultaneously retrofitting and cleaning spaces to achieve proper distancing to prevent the contagion from spreading. Our funding also supported the creation of isolation spaces in shelters for the sick.

Our team is currently working with partners to identify the second wave of grants as we learn alongside one another. Please know how grateful everyone is for your tremendous philanthropic support. Non-profits committed to serve the most vulnerable are able, through your generosity, to fulfil their missions.

With gratitude and best wishes,

Lauren Baker, First Lady of Massachusetts, Advisory Committee

Joanna Jacobson, One8 Foundation Trustee & President, Advisory Committee

Jonathan Raymond, Executive Director, MA COVID-19 Relief Fund