

# **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 1, 2023

## **Rural Housing Repair Program Now Accepting Applications from Monroe County Homeowners in Need**

*Low- and moderate-income residents in owner-occupied households are encouraged to apply with their township trustee*

**Monroe County, IN**—Low- and moderate-income Monroe County residents living outside the city of Bloomington may qualify for up to \$20,000 in home repairs thanks to a new Rural Housing Repair Program. “Monroe County government has made \$400,000 from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) available to help homeowners pay for necessary repairs like window installations, roofing, or plumbing,” says Penny Githens, president of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners.

Structural repairs to homes such as roofing, interior plumbing, floors and foundations, electrical updates, and HVAC also qualify for the Rural Housing Repair Program funding presuming the homeowner meets the income qualifications. To be eligible, applicants must be up to date on all property tax payments to Monroe County and must meet the required federal income levels. “According to the federal guidelines, those who qualify for these funds are in low- or moderate-income households at or below 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or at or below 65 percent of the area median income for the county,” explains Julie Thomas, vice president of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners.

As part of the application process, Monroe County residents must provide proof of their financial status. This may be federal income tax statements, food support vouchers, school lunch program cards, or other items that show that they fall at or below the 300% poverty guideline level.

“The Rural Housing Repair Program not only will help to ensure that residents have safe, stable homes, but it also will protect the current housing stock in Monroe County,” Monroe County Commissioner Lee Jones says. “Failing to maintain homes—and allowing them to become uninhabitable—reduces housing stock. That’s something we want to avoid.”

Homeowners should contact their township trustee to apply for the program. (Trustees will assist with the initial paperwork and confirm the resident’s eligibility.) Although Perry Township has elected not to participate in the program, residents of Perry Township who live outside the city limits may contact the Monroe County Board of Commissioners directly for assistance with their applications. “If homeowners aren’t sure which township they live in or how they can get in touch with their township trustee, they can call our office at (812) 349-2550 or email us at [commissionersoffice@co.monroe.in.us](mailto:commissionersoffice@co.monroe.in.us) and put 'Rural Repair' in the subject line,” Jones notes.

The Monroe County Commissioners will formally announce the establishment of the Rural Housing Repair Program during their December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting to be held at 10 a.m. online via Zoom and in the Nat U. Hill room of the Monroe County Courthouse located at 100 W. Kirkwood Ave.

Applications for the Rural Housing Repair Program will be accepted on a first-come-first-served basis from now through December 1, 2024.

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