**Essex County COVID-19 Response Fund Priorities**

The Fund will provide incremental financial resources to nonprofit organizations working with communities that are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and the economic consequences of the outbreak. The Fund is designed to complement the efforts of public health officials and federal and state resources, and to expand local capacity to address all aspects of the outbreak as efficiently as possible.

Financial resources from the fund will be provided to nonprofits serving the underserved and most insecure populations in our county and are therefore being asked to do more than ever during this health crisis.

The first phase of funding will provide **one-time rapid-response grants to organizations that serve priority populations** such as:

- Underserved communities and insecure populations needing social service and public health infrastructure to meet the needs that COVID19 presents;
- Residents with limited access to safe, reliable food sources;
- Communities with a significant percentage of economically vulnerable residents.

In order to move resources quickly and not further burden organizations on the front lines of the pandemic, **ECCF will not host a formal application process during Phase 1 rapid-response grants.** Funds will be released on a rolling basis as fundraising continues throughout the outbreak and recovery phases of the crisis. This strategy will make it possible to move resources quickly and adapt to evolving needs in subsequent funding phases. As we determine the nonprofit community’s collective needs, we will begin making grants in the next few weeks, moving as quickly as possible.

**Additional Information & Guidance**

**What will NOT be included in the first phase of funding?**

We anticipate multiple phases of funding to address both the acute needs now and the longer-term impacts of the outbreak and recovery. In this first phase, we are prioritizing community-based organizations that are serving communities and individuals who are immediately and disproportionately suffering from this crisis. In this first round, we are not able to prioritize organizations that have lost revenue or are likely to lose future revenue due to canceled events or programs. We recognize these challenges, and as the crisis and its long-term impacts continue to unfold, we will continue to work with nonprofit leaders, institutional and corporate funders and public health officials to assess and evolve our funding strategies.

Based upon the charitable structure of the Essex County COVID-19 Response Fund, our grants are limited to 501c3 nonprofit organizations, groups fiscally sponsored by a 501c3 nonprofit organization, or other charitable organizations able to receive a tax-
deductible contribution, such as schools, faith-based organizations, and other public entities. We are not able to fund individuals or businesses directly, labor unions, or other 501c4, 501c5, and 501c6 organizations.

In addition, grants will **not** be awarded:

- To individuals
- For sectarian or religious purposes. COVID-19 Fund grants to faith-based organizations may only be used for non-conditional relief work and available to all qualified applicants without obligation.
- For political purposes
- For debt or deficit reduction
- For capital campaigns for buildings, land acquisition or endowment
- To support academic research

**Fund Oversight**

ECCF will convene a panel of Fund Advisors from its board and the community to advise on funding needs and to approve grants, ensuring that grants address a broad representation of community, public health and nonprofit sectors. ECCF staff and Fund Advisors will assess community needs together, identifying potential grant recipients and recommending final awards for countywide impact.