



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HelpLine Receives \$225,000 Homeless Assistance Grant through Ohio Department of Development

Delaware, OH – HelpLine of Delaware and Morrow Counties, Inc. (HelpLine) announced today that it received a \$225,000 homeless assistance prevention grant administered by the Ohio Department of Development's Community Development Division. Awarded to 87 communities, the grant will assist approximately 81,000 Ohioans and is expected to leverage more than \$61 million in private and public dollars.

The two-year grant provides emergency rent, mortgage and utility payments to residents in Delaware and Morrow Counties. The grant will assist applicants with past due rent, mortgage payments or utility shutoffs one-time during the grant. Applicants must fall under the income guidelines of 35 percent of the area median income for utilities and rent, and 50 percent of the area median income for mortgages. Proof of income is required.

"Many families across Ohio are facing the challenge of homelessness," said Lieutenant Governor Lee Fisher, who also serves as Director of the Ohio Department of Development. "We are committed to tackling and solving problems associated with these challenges through programs like the Homeless Assistance Grant Program which plays a key role in improving the quality of life for Ohioans."

According to Sue Hanson, Executive Director of HelpLine, HelpLine received the grant during the previous fiscal year and were able to assist 575 families throughout Delaware and Morrow Counties.

"The homeless prevention grant gives us the resources needed to intervene and keep the issues of foreclosure, eviction and utility shutoffs at bay."

In spite of recent declines in foreclosure filings because of new legislation, Ohio is ranked 10th in the nation for the number of foreclosed properties. Hanson believes that the recent economic slowdown forecasted well into 2009 will introduce an increase in those who will rely on social services for the first-time.

"We anticipate servicing a broader range of people from various income levels, as people are not only contending with foreclosure, but other issues including the rise in fuel and food costs," said Hanson. "We will work to raise the awareness within our new populations while continuing our efforts to help all people maintain their current housing situation."

The Homeless Assistance Grant Program is funded with Emergency Shelter Grant Program and Ohio Housing Trust Fund dollars.

HelpLine will accept calls regarding eligibility and scheduling on Tuesday, January 20, 2009. Distribution of the grant is scheduled to begin on Monday, January 26, 2009 at the Delaware and Morrow County office sites. For more information contact the HelpLine 24-hour support and information line at 211 or 1.800.684.2324.

About HelpLine of Delaware and Morrow Counties, Inc.

HelpLine of Delaware and Morrow Counties, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization that provides a 24-hour information and support line, information and referral to direct services and advocacy, prevention education, and serves as the area's only volunteer center. Committed to empowering people through knowledge, support and resources, HelpLine facilitates the stability and self-sufficiency of the emotional and financial needs of the Delaware and Morrow County communities. HelpLine is a contract provider of the Delaware-Morrow Mental Health & Recovery Services Board and partially funded by the Council for Older Adults. A United Way Agency, HelpLine is accredited by the American Association of Suicidology, National Alliance of Information & Referral Systems and certified by the Ohio Department of Mental Health. For more information, please visit: www.HelpLinedelmor.org.

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