

A woman with dark hair, wearing a blue shirt and a name tag that says "Zuri Babette", is holding a large red heart. The word "RESOURCES" is written in white capital letters across the heart. In the background, there are colorful circles and a person wearing a face mask.

RESOURCES

Community Action Pages



Serving our Communities for over 50 years

Volume 6, Issue 2

To our Community,

In the midst of these unprecedented times of health challenges, social, and economic uncertainty, District 7 HRDC is here to help. We are one of 10 Community Action Agencies, CAA, in Montana and one of over a thousand in the United States. This network of agencies covers 99% of America's counties. Each Community Action Agency is charged with the task of fighting poverty and helping to build better communities on a local level using local resources to reach local solutions.

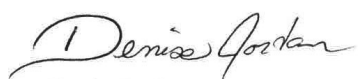
COVID-19 has taken its toll on individuals, families, and our communities in ways we could never have imagined. Many new unmet needs have surfaced for households that until COVID had always been economically independent. The loss of jobs, income, health coverage, and so much more makes these individuals and families vulnerable. If you need help contact our offices at 406-247-4732. You can also access our agency web site at www.hrdc7.org. Once on the web site, you can learn about the agency's programs and access its COVID-19 Resource pages. Eligibility requirements for various programs and services have changed and even if you were not previously eligible, you may be now. We can also provide referrals to other community providers that may also be able to help.

As HRDC continues to serve the communities of South Central Montana, our goal is simple and focused; "to assist low-income people that need help." We are steadfast in our mission of providing vital services to all vulnerable individuals and families.

While we may not know when COVID-19 will end, or life will return to some type of normal, rest assured that HRDC will be there for the long haul. Since 1967, we have helped tens of thousands of people and communities solve the complex issues associated with poverty in Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, and Yellowstone counties. As a Community Action Agency, we pledge to treat all people with respect and dignity, to provide hope, compassion, and empathy for all individuals and families. As a member of the community, we are committed to assist all people regardless of their race, religion, politics, or sexual orientation. We vow to operate our programs with complete transparency, accountability, and fiduciary responsibility.

It may be that you have never needed our services, but perhaps someone you know may, a neighbor, a friend, or someone you work with. Know that HRDC is "Here to Help!" Please let us know how we can provide you with assistance or connect you with additional community services during this uncertain time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Denise Jordan".

Denise Jordan, CEO

Our community provides many resources for people in need. The following provides a glance at some of these important programs and services.

The disruption of life caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted Montanans in ways that we could have never imagined. Families and individuals that have never before needed assistance for basic necessities such as food, rent, utilities, and a myriad of other essentials are ill equipped to identify and access the resources, programs, and services that are available to help them through these challenging times.

South Central Montana is an incredible place to live. Its towns, cities, and wide open spaces make this area the ideal setting for families to raise their children. Although COVID has currently changed our immediate daily routines of work, school, and family life, it is only a temporary situation. At some point in the not too distant future, life will return to some type of normal. Until then, it is comforting to know that help is available for those that need it.

You may not be aware of the many community resources that serve as vital assets to the region. South Central Montana provides an array of programs and services delivered by state, federal, regional, local, faith based, cause-based, non-profit, institutional, and other types of organizations.

You may not be aware of the vast community resources that serve as vital assets to the region. South Central Montana provides an array of programs and services delivered by state, federal, regional, local, faith based, cause-based, non-profit, institutional, and other types of service providers. Some provide one program to a specific targeted population while others such as HRDC offer access to 24 individual programs to a large and diverse population. In this issue we have identified some of the most widely used assistance programs. Many of them are listed in the agency's Resource Pages through our agency web site at: www.hrdc7.org. Others are identified on Montana211.org.

COVID-19 Relief Funds

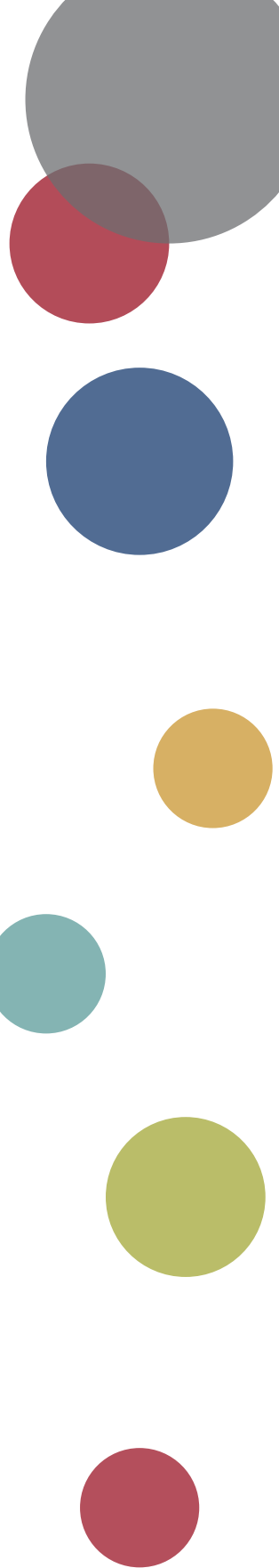
In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, people are not aware of the many assistance programs that are currently available to them. These programs are

not just for low income people. They are for individuals and families that have been impacted by COVID-19. For example, the state of Montana offers the Montana Housing's Emergency Housing Assistance program. This program provides rent, security deposits, mortgage payments, and/ or hazard insurance assistance as-needed for Montanans who have lost a job or suffered substantial income loss as a result of COVID-19. These programs are all funded by Montana's allocation of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

For additional information on this and other programs go to Montana Department of Commerce home page at: <https://housing.mt.gov/Rental-Housing/CovidHousingAssist>

Also on the Montana.Gov Department of Commerce website, one can find additional COVID assistance programs for out of work individuals, families with limited resources, small businesses, non-profits and more. You can apply for financial relief in addition to rental and mortgage assistance. There are other grants to serve seniors and those living with a disability, for food banks, and local food producers. Additional Grant categories include Emergency Housing Assistance, Public Health grants, Safeguard Access grants, Stay Connected grants, Foodbank and Food Assistance, social service & nonprofit grants, Behavioral Health grants, School Funding for COVID-19 Impact grants, Business Stabilization grants, Business Adaptability grants, and even a Live Entertainment grant. Each of these grants are easy to apply for online and are funded quickly. All categories provide a detailed description of how the grant funds can be used. These are not loans and do not have to be repaid as long as the funds are expended according to the requirements of the grant. For more detailed information go to: <https://www.covidreliefmt.org/submit>.

We highly encourage you to refer to other emergency and community programs that are listed in the HRDC Community Resources Pages.



COVID-19 Special Circumstance Scholarship for Families Requiring In-Home Child Care

Did you know that children who are unable to return to childcare or school during the pandemic may be eligible for a \$4000 in-home care scholarship? The Governor's CARES Act funding includes the COVID-19 Special Circumstance Scholarship. These funds are earmarked for families requiring in-home child care for immune-compromised or special needs children and/or family members.

The Scholarship can be used to help parents offset the costs of specialized child care, respite, increased food, in-home cleaning, supplies, and support for remote learning. The Special Circumstance Scholarship is available to families with children 0-18. The scholarship provides alternative child care to families with special health and safety needs requiring in-home care.

The \$4,000 may be used for child care in the recipient's home or in the home of another provider. It can be a family member, a friend, or a neighbor. Scholarships must be awarded and spent by December 31, 2020, contingent on funding availability. The Child Care Resource and Referral Agency may ask for additional information to document the special circumstances.

Note, the suspension of in-person school attendance is not considered a special circumstance. The intent of the program is to provide a solution for families with special circumstances that cannot be served under the school or traditional care model. If you don't qualify for the Special Circumstances Scholarship there are other CARES Act funded grants to maintain and expand care for school-age children during out of school time. Outreach and administration for these programs are provided by Child Care Resource and Referral agencies across the state, HRDC being one of them.

Some things to know about the Special Circumstances Grant:

These grant funds may be taxed as income. You will receive a W-9 if you applied early. The W-9 and your social security number will be required before we can issue a payment.

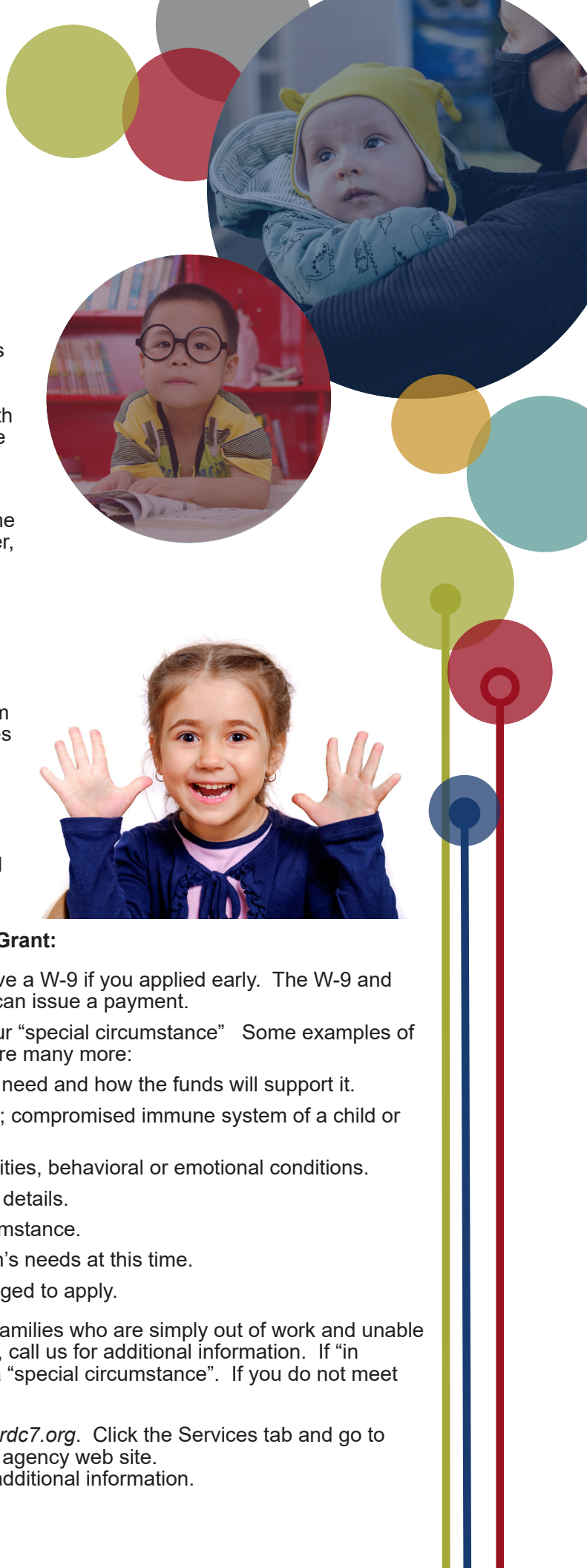
Applicants must provide detailed information regarding your "special circumstance" Some examples of special circumstances include the following, but there are many more:

1. Funds used for remote learning. Explain why there is a need and how the funds will support it.
2. Funds for health or safety needs, identify what they are; compromised immune system of a child or household member. Be specific.
3. Funds for Children with developmental, physical disabilities, behavioral or emotional conditions.
4. Foster or kinship care, and the need of respite, provide details.
5. Work hours or work schedule that make a special circumstance.
6. Circumstance that prevents you from caring for children's needs at this time.

Even if you are unsure of your eligibility you are still encouraged to apply.

Parents or guardians must be employed. Funding is not for families who are simply out of work and unable to pay bills. We offer other programs to assist in other ways, call us for additional information. If "in person school" has been suspended, it does not constitute a "special circumstance". If you do not meet eligibility standards you will be notified by mail.

The application and program details may be found at www.hrdc7.org. Click the Services tab and go to Child Care. You can also access our other programs on the agency web site. Email us at childcare@hrdc7.org, or call 406-247-4700, for additional information.



HRDC Energy Assistance Programs

HRDC offers Energy Assistance Programs to low income individuals and families in Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, and Yellowstone Counties.

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program, (LIEAP) begins September 1 for Propane users and October 1 for other heat sources. This program provides assistance to households with their main heat source. Income guidelines have changed and you may now be eligible for this program, even if you weren't before. LIEAP pays a portion of the eligible applicant's heating bill directly to the utility provider during the heating season of October 1st through April 30th of each year. However, if your heat is included in your rent or the account is not in a household member's name, payments will be made directly to you. LIEAP is not a loan program.

Energy Share is a year-round, one-time emergency assistance loan program for eligible low-income individuals facing an energy emergency (furnace repair/replacement, utility disconnect, etc.). Energy Share loans must be repaid and is available only when all other resources have been exhausted. Energy Share applicants must have a disconnect notice or past due bill to be eligible.

You can find out more about both Energy Share and LIEAP on the HRDC web site at www.hrdc7.org. Click the services tab and go to energy services. You can download forms on our site. If you need assistance completing the application, staff is available to assist you. For more information about LIEAP or Energy Share contact HRDC at 406-247-4778 or info@hrdc7.org.

Flexible Rapid Rehousing for Youth & Young Adults

Did you know that HRDC is rolling out a new Flexible Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) program, providing low barrier flexible housing with rental assistance, intensive case management, and bundled support services for homeless youth and young adults ages 18-24.

Occupational training, alternative education, health care, child care, and financial education are examples of opportunities extended to participants of youth programs. Youth choice allows each youth or young adult to choose their roommate, identify needed services, select paths, and establish goals. Coupled to intensive case management and client centered advocacy, personal service plans are developed and monitored as participants work toward goals.

HRDC works with a network of community organizations to ensure effective delivery of innovative programs which target youth & young adults. Referrals can be made and accepted to and from other community partners such as Riverstone Health, Tumbleweed, Mental Health Center, and many others. HRDC has 24 individual programs that can be bundled to help youth and young adults meet their goals. There are also parenting and pregnancy programs available as part of this flexible rapid rehousing initiative.

If you or someone you know is a homeless youth or young adult between the ages of 18-24, the Flexible Rapid Rehousing program may be for you. For more information about this upcoming program contact Kelly Marquardt, Program Director for Youth Services, 406.247.4788 or go to www.hrdc7.org under Homeless Services.



What is Montana 211?

If you can't find what you're looking for on the HRDC COVID-19 Resource page at www.hrdc7.org, try Montana 211. It was established to provide easy, single point access to health and human service resources for Montana citizens, and to provide coordination and information in times of disaster. Montana 211 is a free, anonymous service available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Website: Montana211.org is a mobile friendly website that can be easily searched for your city's non-profit and government services. Search by organization name or keyword, based on the services you need.

By Phone: The 2-1-1 phone number works in some areas of Montana at this time. When dialing 2-1-1 in those areas a trained resource specialist will help you navigate the services in your area.