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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE: November 3, 2021**

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**SARATOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES REMINDS RESIDENTS THEY CAN STILL APPLY FOR EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FUNDING**

BALLSTON SPA – The Saratoga County Department of Social Services today announced that there is still Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) funding available to Saratoga County residents who meet the program eligibility requirements.

The Emergency Rental Assistance Program assists households behind on their rent that have experienced financial hardship due to COVID-19 and are at risk of homelessness or housing instability. In addition, the program can provide temporary rental assistance and assistance with unpaid utility bills.

Eligible residents must meet the following criteria:

- Household gross income at or below 80 percent of area median income, which varies by county and household size.
- A member of the household received unemployment benefits or experienced a reduction in income, incurred significant costs or experienced financial hardship, directly or indirectly, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The applicant owes past due rent at their current residence.

This assistance can pay up to 12 months of past due rent and for some households, pay up to 3 months for future rent. The program can also pay for up to 12 months of overdue electric or gas bills. Please note, payments will always be issued directly to the landlord or utility provider.

Applications can be submitted online at [www.nysrenthelp.otda.ny.gov](http://www.nysrenthelp.otda.ny.gov).

Saratoga County Department of Social Services has partnered with Shelters of Saratoga for application assistance. Saratoga County residents who require assistance with the application process can contact Shelters of Saratoga at 518-602-3004 or online at [www.sheltersofsaratoga.org](http://www.sheltersofsaratoga.org).

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