

Please see below for a special announcement from Couleecap.

Couleecap Launches New Program for La Crosse and Vernon County Residents Unemployed Due to COVID-19

Couleecap is launching the COVID-19 Financial Assistance Program for low-to-moderate wage workers whose employment has been ended or reduced due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The program, which is funded by the Great Rivers United Way, La Crosse Community Foundation, Viroqua Area Foundation, and an Anonymous Donor, will provide limited financial assistance for critical expenses, emergency budgeting help, and referrals to programs available to people in need.

A simple, online application process will determine recent unemployment, income eligibility, and critical needs of the household so appropriate assistance can be determined. All participants will be provided referrals to the Wisconsin Unemployment Office, other government programs for which participants can apply, and local resources, such as food pantries. Program participants will also receive information on emergency and unemployment budgeting, including tips for reducing or eliminating expenses during a crisis.

“We are getting calls every day from people in our area asking for assistance because their jobs have been terminated or their hours have been cut. They don't know how they are going to pay their bills until unemployment benefits kick in,” says Ashley Lacenski, Community Development Director for Couleecap. “As a community action and financial counseling agency, we are able to help.”

“We truly appreciate the responsiveness of the donors who are making this program available,” says Hetti Brown, Executive Director of Couleecap. “When I reached out to them for help, they didn't hesitate.”

Residents seeking assistance can complete an application at www.Couleecap.org. General household information, recent pay statements, and documentation of reduced or terminated employment will be required. For phone assistance, residents may contact Sara Berger at 608-632-6512 but given the volume of calls Couleecap is receiving, online assistance will be faster. Funding is limited and, therefore, the highest needs will be determined through the application process.

Couleecap is seeking donations to maintain this program. People can donate to this effort at www.Couleecap.org or by mailing a donation to Couleecap, 201 Melby Street, Westby, WI 54667.

The agency is also seeking funding to launch programs in Monroe and Crawford Counties. Residents in those areas should check the Couleecap website for updates.

Other Couleecap resources are available to help people impacted by the current emergency. Agency food pantries in Sparta and Prairie du Chien have expanded hours, Monday-Friday from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, with curbside pick up and limited home delivery. To find details, visit the Couleecap website. Other services may also be found on the site.

About Couleecap, Inc.

Couleecap, Inc. is a private non-profit 501c3 charitable organization. Couleecap helps people in need with housing, food, transportation, and more. Created in 1966, we are a community action program that fights poverty and promotes self-sufficiency in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon counties. Learn more at couleecap.org, [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).