

For Immediate Release

**Jane & Jack Fitzpatrick Trust grant \$50,000.00
to expand COVID-19 rental assistance in south Berkshire**

Stockbridge, MA The Jane & Jack Fitzpatrick Trust is partnering with Construct, Inc. to provide emergency rental assistance to south Berkshire tenants who find themselves struggling financially as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. The application is available in Spanish and English at www.constructinc.org. Construct has interpretive services as needed. To qualify, tenants need to earn less than 100% of the Area Median Income (AMI) and will be asked to pay 35% of their monthly income toward rent. This partnership also ensures that residents will get connected to existing resources as needed.

On behalf of the Jane & Jack Fitzpatrick Trust, Tammy Stevens states,

“During this health crisis, the Fitzpatrick Trust has been seeking ways to help our community deal with the unprecedented consequences. The trustees feel that keeping a roof over one's head is absolutely essential. When Construct advised us that they would like to start a COVID-19 rental assistance program for the southern Berkshires, we were pleased to offer our support. We have supported Construct in the past and are confident in their ability to effectively administer this program to help those most in need.”

“Before the Coronavirus pandemic, Berkshire renters already paid a higher percentage of their income for housing and transportation than anywhere in the region: 54% according to Berkshire Regional Planning Board statistics”, reports Jane Ralph, Construct Executive Director. “No one can sustainably pay that much in good times much less now. If you’ve lost your job or your hours have been cut, we’ll help with the resources we have.” Says Courtney Kimball, Construct’s Project Home Coordinator, “We’ll help our neighbors navigate all available supports and provide direct assistance as long as we can and the need exists. It’s what Construct has always done.”

Applications have been accepted since April 15th and apply to rent in May and subsequent months as need and resources allow.

For rental assistance, Courtney Kimball (ckimball@constructberkshire.org) or 413.429.4143

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