



Funds Distribution Report

Recipient Organization:
Hopelink

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Organization's General Goals:

Since 1971, Hopelink has served homeless and low-income families, children, seniors and people with disabilities in King and Snohomish counties; providing stability and helping people gain the skills and knowledge they need to exit poverty for good.

Date of Award:	Level:
2020 Q4	\$2,501 to \$5,000

For more information, please read the attached report from Hopelink.

8802 27th Ave NE
Tulalip, WA 98271
TulalipCares.org

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TDS-37305

Report to the Tulalip Tribes Charitable Contributions Fund on Hopelink's Community Services Program for Fiscal Year 2021

On April 1, 2021, Hopelink received your generous grant of [REDACTED] (Q4 2020 14.2) to support our Community Services program. This interim report is an update on Hopelink's accomplishments, in part as a result of your gift. In the continuing face of COVID-19, together, we are helping to stabilize lives.

Program Metrics

In a year like no other, there has been an enormous increased need for both food and emergency financial assistance.

In fiscal year 2021, we distributed an estimated 6,430,352 pounds of food. Compare that to Hopelink's distributing 5,065,199 pounds in fiscal year 2020!

Our Financial Resiliency program distributed \$1,779,780 in total financial assistance. For context, in fiscal year 2020, Hopelink distributed \$1,152,004.

The average rental assistance payment was \$2,100.

Hopelink administers both the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Puget Sound Energy Home Energy Lifeline Program (PSE HELP) grants in our service area.

- 10,287 individuals from 4,602 households stayed warm with \$5,819,417 in energy assistance.
- The average energy assistance amount was \$1,265.

Our Impact

Carol contacted Hopelink for assistance with her family's rent. She and her family had moved out of a shelter and into their

own apartment just days before she and her partner were both laid off due to

COVID-19. Hopelink's Financial Resiliency program was able to cover their rent and part of the utility bills, plus connect the family to Hopelink's prepacked grocery support program through our Food Assistance program, as well as to other community resources. Both Carol and her partner expect to be returning to their jobs, but in case they want or need to find additional or replacement work, they were also referred to Hopelink's Employment program for either a one-time resume review session, or to talk about working with a coach on a more sustained basis.

Financial Resiliency Program Updates

We want to share some anecdotal trends we are seeing. Childcare is a barrier for financial stability and for many clients to be able to accept employment.



Even if there is a job offer, many schools are not meeting in-person full-time or there are few to no after school care programs. Summer is beginning with traditional school closures but there are still limited summer camps or childcare options.

There is still a high volume of need for financial assistance of all types. Some 90% of requests are for rental assistance. Many clients who were able to make it financially to this point in the pandemic are now out of resources. They went through their limited savings months ago. They have borrowed all that they can from friends and family. They have maxed out their credit cards. One family sold the first car to survive for a while. Then sold the second car. Now they are out of both options and transportation. This is where Hopelink's holistic approach can be effective. We can support clients, not only with rental assistance to keep them stably housed, but also with food banks, financial literacy programs, and employment counseling.

Washington's Eviction Moratorium is currently slated to end. We are preparing for the potential of high-need clients coming to us as they face eviction and potential homelessness. We are planning the next steps with cautious anticipation.

Food Assistance Program Updates

We are extremely proud that Hopelink food banks have remained open in the face of the pandemic, providing much needed food to north and east King County. We have closed only for planned closures for activities such as strategy meetings or deep cleanings. This is all reflected in the strength and resiliency of our staff and volunteers. People show up on-site every day. They

continue to work with grace, contributing to the team effort of serving our clients.

During the first months of COVID-19, our challenges revolved around disruptions in the food distribution system. At one point, approximately three months elapsed from when we placed a food order until we received the pallets. We also had issues purchasing the cardboard boxes that we were pre-packing with shelf stable food for our clients. Thankfully, the food and box supply issues have been resolved. Our **current challenge** is not having our food banks open in the grocery store model. Pre-COVID, our clients could shop in our food banks selecting items they preferred, just like customers of grocery stores do. For the safety of our clients, staff, and volunteers, we switched over to providing pre-packaged boxes of shelf stable food along with bags of fresh produce and perishable meat and dairy items.



Now the challenge is that clients have been receiving essentially the same food in these boxes since the pandemic began. The food choices are becoming repetitious for some. We are limited in how we can respond to this. We must purchase food that is best for the majority of our clients. In response, we

have set up return racks at each food bank. Clients can remove unwanted items from their boxes and leave them on these racks for others to take. They can also take items others have left. We are trying to provide variety via the fresh produce and other items we have. We are constantly replanning and reevaluating our food purchases.

Energy Assistance Program Updates



In past years, the PSE HELPs energy grant calculation included the previous year's energy usage to determine this year's grant. This doesn't always make sense, especially if a new tenant, with different circumstances, moves into an apartment. Why would their energy support be gated by the usage of the previous tenant? PSE HELPs removed this restriction this year so Hopelink may calculate the maximum grant possible for each client.

Thank You!

As we continue to navigate through this pandemic, we thank you for your support of Hopelink programs. The confidence you show in our services is inspiring. Thank you once more.