

Brooklyn Heights Together

What

The BHA is creating a short-term, dedicated fund to provide a one-time emergency cash grant to hourly-wage workers formerly employed in Brooklyn Heights. Many of these workers' livelihoods have been disrupted indefinitely by the pandemic through lay-offs and lower business volumes. In addition, many of these individuals may not be eligible for government benefits. The need for this kind of immediate, flexible assistance is very great.

The BHA is raising these funds through a dedicated "Brooklyn Heights Together" campaign.

Why

Our community is more than the people who make their home in Brooklyn Heights. It is also the people who work here.

From store clerks to delivery people, from salon workers to kitchen staff, these men and women contribute in countless ways to our quality of life. But the Covid-19 pandemic has displaced hundreds of these local workers, leaving them and their families extremely vulnerable. It is becoming clear that federal programs like the Paycheck Protection Plan are not going to be able to meet the enormous need of our small business community who can use any help they can get to support employees.

While there are numerous worthy philanthropic efforts happening across New York City and indeed the nation, the BHA is responding to the call from community members to do something *specific to our neighborhood* and the people that make it special.

How

The BHA will accept your tax-deductible contribution and deposit it into an account restricted for this purpose. If you are sending a check, we ask that you write "Brooklyn Heights Together" in the memo line. Grants to individuals will be made in the amount of \$250.00 – helping recipients to buy groceries, medicine, diapers/baby items, pay utility or other bills, etc. Contributions of any size are welcome!

The BHA is working with the Arab American Family Support Center (AAFSC) to process the grant applications and disburse the funds. Located in neighboring Cobble Hill, AAFSC is a non-profit, non-sectarian, organization established in 1994 to provide social services to immigrants and refugees. AAFSC has a staff that speaks 22 different languages, including Spanish, Albanian, Bengali, Chinese, and Arabic and has been administering an emergency cash fund for over two years.

Applicants will be asked to fill out a simple form that will include information on their former place of employment – only those who were employed in Brooklyn Heights will receive funding from this effort. In addition, we are conducting extensive outreach to local business owners asking that they make their former employees aware of the availability of this funding and/or refer them directly to AAFSC.

When

Now! The need is overwhelming and the longer it takes for people to get back to work the more difficult things will be. The BHA has piloted an initial round of grants made possible through generous donors (including BHA governors) and we will continue to seek contributions to Brooklyn Heights Together for the next 3 months, through at least July 2020. Funds will be distributed on a first-come, first-served, rolling basis.