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**Contact Information**
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**In a few brief paragraphs, please explain:**

1. **What geographic area is served? (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served)**

   Sixty five percent of Orion clients come from Chester County – in 2019 that was 995 households and 2500 unique individuals, primarily in northern Chester County.

2. **What population is served, what has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?**

   Orion is known for serving the ‘poorest of the poor’ by addressing the unmet needs of the most vulnerable in our community, all done without government funding. This includes case management support and financial assistance to secure shelter, food, clothing, transportation and access to medical care. Ninety five percent of Orion’s clients live below the Federal Poverty Level. During the last 6 months of 2019, Orion experienced a 43% increase in clients served as compared to the previous 2 years due to job stagnation, increases in housing costs, change in partner organization mission away from case management, etc. The trend is expected to accelerate in 2020 as we collectively respond to COVID-19’s medical and economic impact.

   During the initial days of response to COVID-19, Orion has both helped community leaders understand the presenting and expected needs of our most vulnerable neighbors as well as provide direct support to those of our clients who are struggling with reduced access to services or who find themselves newly unemployed. For example, a single mom with 4 children had recently accepted a job as a substitute teacher but with schools closed, that is no longer a source of income. She was worried that they are running low on food and concerned about paying their rent. Not unusual for Orion so far. However, her rent is over $2000/month, she is behind in three car payments for herself and 2 older teen children who had been working and Mom has substantial credit card debt. The baseline is she is not working because of COVID-19 and they are hungry and scared.

   We first met this mom at our new walk up service window. Orion has a desk in the front display window for staff that includes phone, computer, intercom and outward facing monitor. On the exterior there is a table with keyboard, mouse and intercom. This way staff can meet with clients though the ‘glass’ without further virus exposure to clients or staff. We have also established an ‘open air internet café’ for neighbors to access the internet and look for work or apply for unemployment. Orion’s staff are working in rotating teams from the office or home. This way if any one individual needs to be quarantined, the whole office does not need to be quarantined.

   As we try to quantify the size of the upcoming financial crisis for those in need, we know that there will be a significant increase in neighbors who will need both case management support to connect to available resources as well as financial assistance for housing (probably for more than one month), utility bills, car payments/insurance/repairs, clothing, household needs, medical supplies, etc.
3. **How much funding is sought? How does this compare to your annual operating budget? What will the funding be used for? What is the expected timeframe for use of funds?**

The immediate challenge is scoping the upcoming crisis. Unemployment in Chester County is 3.1% (nationally it is 3.9%) - the expectation is that will go to 10-20% this spring and summer. The Federal Reserve reports that 39% of US households would need to borrow money or sell something to pay an unexpected $400 bill [https://www.federalreserve.gov/publications/2019-economic-well-being-of-us-households-in-2018-dealing-with-unexpected-expenses.htm](https://www.federalreserve.gov/publications/2019-economic-well-being-of-us-households-in-2018-dealing-with-unexpected-expenses.htm), which makes a sizeable portion of the population vulnerable to losing their home and able to afford their car, insurance, medical needs and more.

With Orion’s experience in case management, connecting clients to needed resources and experience in distributing emergency funds, Orion is already seeing an increase in clients due to the coronavirus. At this time, Orion is requesting $5,000 to help address the current and anticipated critical need for services and funds to stabilize families adversely affected by COVID-19.

Orion’s 2020 budget is $892,000 of which approximately $260,000 goes for direct aid to stabilize families in need. These funds will be needed between April and August 2020.

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Please email grants@chescocf.org

_____ This Brief COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request
_____ Copy of annual operating budget or most recent audit
_____ 501c3 determination letter

Request letters will be posted on the Community Foundation’s website, in order to share with fund advisors, donors, grant panelists, and other funding sources. Grants will be processed a few times monthly.

We estimate mini-grants will range from $500 to $5000.

Please direct general questions & inquiries about the Rapid Response Mini-Grants to grants@chescocf.org. Beth, Steph, Cierra or Kevin will answer you.