



CITY OF TOPEKA

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For Immediate Release

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City of Topeka Announces Launch of Free Financial Navigator Service to Help Residents Tackle COVID-19 Financial Challenges

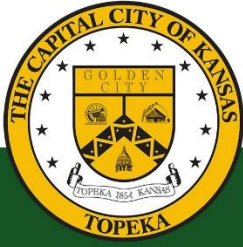
TOPEKA, KS – – In partnership with national nonprofit organization the [Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund](#) (CFE Fund), the City of Topeka announced today the launch of a free Financial Navigators program to help residents navigate critical financial issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Financial Navigators will be available remotely starting September 21st to provide guidance over the phone to help residents access available programs and services to manage income disruptions and other financial concerns. Financial Navigators help residents one-on-one to triage personal financial issues, identify immediate action steps to manage expenses and maximize income, and make referrals to other services such as meeting daily living expenses, maximizing income, managing debt, budgeting and avoiding predatory scams. The City of Topeka will offer these Financial Navigator services in partnership with Housing and Credit Counseling Inc.

“We are in unprecedented times that are greatly affecting families and their finances. The Financial Navigator program with support from Cities for Financial Empowerment and Housing and Credit Counseling, is an amazing tool that will help our families have access to great partners in our community. This support can help our citizens navigate challenges and stay self-sufficient during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Mayor Michelle De La Isla.

Residents can access these remote services by completing the web form here: <https://finnav.org/topeka> or calling (785) 670-5900 to sign up. The financial navigator will then send a short service agreement and call the client to begin their personal session. Organizations across Topeka can also refer clients directly to a financial navigator.

The City of Topeka is launching the Financial Navigators program in partnership with the CFE Fund, who provided grant funding along with significant technical assistance and training to launch the program in Topeka and other cities and counties across the nation. The Financial



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Navigators initiative is supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Citi Foundation, JPMorgan Chase & Co., and the Wells Fargo Foundation.

“Financial distress is a primary part of the COVID-19 crisis, and we’re pleased Mayor De La Isla and her team is making this a priority for Topeka residents,” said Jonathan Mintz, President and CEO of the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund. “The Financial Navigators program will help City of Topeka residents assess and prioritize their financial concerns and get connected with the right resources.”

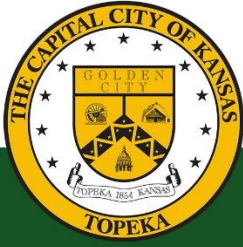
“The pandemic and resulting economic crises have hit low- and middle-income households, contingent and undocumented workers, and many others very hard,” said James Anderson, Head of Government Innovation at Bloomberg Philanthropies. “We are very pleased to help the CFE Fund expand its high quality and impactful financial empowerment services to reach many more people in more cities.”

“Sound financial health is a critical component of addressing the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on low-income and diverse communities in the U.S,” said Sarah Bainton Kahn, VP of Global Philanthropy, JPMorgan Chase & Co. “We are pleased to collaborate with the CFE Fund to help people in Topeka to access the tools and services they need to build resiliency and advance their financial health.”

“Communities across the country continue to face significant economic challenges as a result of COVID-19,” said Brandee McHale, Head of Citi Community Investing and Development and President of the Citi Foundation. “To provide residents in Topeka with the vital financial tools and support necessary to navigate the financial impacts of the pandemic, the Citi Foundation is proud to partner once again with the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund to launch the Financial Navigators program.”

“The pandemic has clearly heightened awareness around the financial hardships that so many people were already facing here in Topeka and deep disparities that exist in society,” said Darlene Goins, head of financial health philanthropy with the Wells Fargo Foundation. “We applaud the CFE Fund for bringing together the City of Topeka, philanthropists, and financial services and other industries to reimagine solutions that can help improve financial stability and resiliency for individuals and families, particularly during this economic crisis.”

About the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund (CFE Fund)



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The CFE Fund supports municipal efforts to improve the financial stability of households by leveraging opportunities unique to local government. By translating cutting edge experience with large scale programs, research, and policy in cities of all sizes, the CFE Fund assists mayors and other local leaders to identify, develop, fund, implement, and research pilots and programs that help families build assets and make the most of their financial resources. The CFE Fund is currently working in over 100 cities, and has disbursed over \$42 million to city governments and their partners to support these efforts. For more information, please visit www.cfefund.org or follow us on Twitter at @CFEFund.