

NEWS RELEASE

Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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County Executive Shapiro reflects on \$94 million community investments

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—In the 22 months since the COVID-19 pandemic first reached Summit County in March 2020, County Executive Ilene Shapiro, in collaboration with other officeholders and several public and private organizations, has distributed millions of dollars in federal aid to Summit County residents, businesses, nonprofits, schools and others.

Summit County first received federal aid in the form of Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds in April 2020. As a large county of over 500,000 residents, the County was eligible to receive direct allocation of \$94 million. These funds were originally required to be spent or allocated by the end of 2020, and Summit County was one of few counties on track to meet that deadline. Legislation later extended the deadline to December 31, 2021.

“When the pandemic began, we had no idea what the future held, but we knew we had to act fast and help those hurting in our community, especially our families and small businesses. I never imagined we would receive millions of dollars in aid,” said Executive Shapiro. “We are incredibly grateful to our federal partners for providing these funds, and forever indebted to our many local partners for stepping up to support our efforts to distribute aid.”

Though the County’s response to COVID-19 had begun in advance of receiving funds, the federal aid enabled Executive Shapiro and her partners to greatly expand and accelerate efforts to help those affected by COVID-19 shutdowns and other economic consequences. The County first prioritized aid to those hardest hit by the pandemic, providing grants to small businesses and nonprofits, and making rent, mortgage and utility payments for residents and families. Executive Shapiro and her team later focused on using the federal funds to create programs that would protect the health and safety of staff and residents, like the virtual courtroom, the Division of COVID-19 Response and grants to all public school districts in the County. Below is a complete listing of all programs and initiatives that received CARES Act funding (in some instances, programs received funding from additional sources):

- \$43 million to our 31 local communities for police, fire, EMS and dispatch services
- \$15 million for rent, mortgage and utility assistance
- \$12.4 million in grants to over 3,000 local small businesses
- \$9.7 million for a virtual courtroom platform and jail case management software
- \$7.3 million to our 17 public school districts for PPE and technology supplies

- \$7.2 million to create the Division of COVID Response and purchase PPE supplies
- \$3.7 million for non-profits that provide basic need services, and arts and culture organizations
- \$1.4 million to for community COVID-19 testing
- \$628,000 to Direction Home Akron Canton for the purchase of devices and wireless internet hotspots for older adults, the development of nursing facility support resources and for meals and wellness kits.
- \$250,000 for the Akron Summit Convention and Visitors Bureau Re-Opening Grant

In addition to receiving CARES Act funding, Summit County received federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA). The funds have allowed Summit County and its partners at United Way to continue to offer rent and utility assistance to residents in need. The program has provided over \$16 million in ERA assistance in 2021. Residents in need of housing assistance should visit <http://www.summitcountycares.org/> or call 2-1-1.

Summit County is also set to receive \$105 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Every municipality in the County is also receiving their own allocation of ARPA funds. These funds will help local governments continue to respond to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and help local economies recover. Eligible uses for these funds include: supporting public health; addressing negative economic impacts; replacing revenue loss; providing premium pay; water, sewer and broadband infrastructure. Executive Shapiro and her team are investigating uses for these funds and are focusing in on broadband infrastructure, storm water improvements, sewer and water improvements; public safety initiatives, business support and job training, and housing aid.

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