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## **NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AND FAMILY INDEPENDENCE INITIATIVE TO AWARD \$2.2 MILLION IN DIRECT CASH ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES**

*Cash assistance provides fast relief to families facing financial crises during the COVID-19 pandemic*

**DENVER, COLO.** (Jan. 26, 2021) — [Nurse-Family Partnership](#)® (NFP), a national program serving first-time moms and their children living in poverty, has partnered with Family Independence Initiative (FII) to provide \$2.2 million in direct cash assistance to 4,400 NFP families. This cash assistance – \$500 to each NFP mom – provides immediate support to families facing financial crises during this unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic.

“Nurse-Family Partnership families have been hit hard by the pandemic. Many have lost jobs and are trying to pay rent and provide food for their families,” said Frank Daidone, president and CEO of the National Service Office for Nurse-Family Partnership and Child First. “We are thrilled to be able to partner with Family Independence Initiative to get cash in the hands of families who need it most. We recognize their strengths and hard work and support these families in making their own decisions on how to cover their expenses during a time of crises.”

The cash assistance awards support short-term financial stability, which can improve longer-term financial security.

Through their trusted relationships with new moms, Nurse-Family Partnership nurses have been able to quickly identify their clients who were most impacted by the pandemic to be awarded \$500 in cash assistance. Black, Hispanic or Latinx families have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Over 68% of the dollars from the current round of awards have been given directly to Black, Hispanic or Latinx families in NFP communities.

Direct cash assistance supports new parents' own decision making. After receiving the \$500 cash award, each NFP mom chooses how she will spend the money to meet her family's most pressing needs. Many NFP parents have lost jobs or have been unable to work due to COVID-19 restrictions. The direct cash awards to NFP moms, have been crucial to helping make ends meet, before government benefits are available, and parents are able to find another job, while keeping their family safe from COVID-19. Many NFP moms are using the cash awards to cover their utilities, housing, food and other basic needs.

Nelsa Swann enrolled in Nurse-Family Partnership in South Carolina at the start of her pregnancy. Swann, a cosmetologist, received cash assistance in the spring as part of the initial pilot program. When salons and other personal care businesses closed at the beginning of the pandemic, Swann was out of work and having to care for her 1-year-old son, Nolan.

"I have a great village behind me, but I didn't want to keep asking people for help. I thought, 'I'm 26. I shouldn't be asking people for money. I should be doing this on my own,'" said Swann. "I had enough saved for three months of bills, but my car needed repairs and I was still paying for daycare to hold Nolan's spot. I was eating up that savings."

Reliable transportation was important for Swann to be able to continue doing odd jobs until she could return to work at the salon. She was running out of money and time.

“My Nurse-Family Partnership nurse, Denita, called to tell me she had nominated me for financial assistance. The night before I had been crying, ‘Where is this money going to come from?’ It was so hard, and Denita was like an angel with that call,” remembered Swann. “That money got me through until we could work again. I took Nolan out of daycare knowing I’d figure something out when I could go back work. I fixed my car. We got through.”

Nurse-Family Partnership pairs each first-time mom, like Swann, with her very own personal nurse who provides her with trusted advice and medical information throughout pregnancy until her child’s second birthday. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Nurse-Family Partnership nurses have been essential at providing support to expectant and new moms. NFP nurses, now operating by telehealth during the pandemic, have been providing expert information to new moms on everything from how to stay healthy during pregnancy to what to do if their baby gets sick. Nurse-Family Partnership also connects new moms facing financial turmoil to community resources, such as food banks and rent assistance. The cash assistance awards have offered another key resource to support their financial stability.

As part of its COVID-19 emergency response, Blue Meridian Partners, a national philanthropic group, provided the \$2.2 million to FII to give directly to NFP families. FII has 20 years of experience providing direct cash investments to families living with low incomes.

“Of the more than 200 community organizations and nonprofits we’ve partnered with for COVID-19 relief, Nurse-Family Partnership is among those at the top of the list for the number of families they were able to reach. Many of the new moms they work with were able to receive their cash investment in as few as three days,” said FII CEO Jesús Gerena.

Cash awards are currently being distributed to 4,100 NFP families in six states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, South Carolina and Tennessee. These states were selected because they have shown the lowest access to federal unemployment benefits and received the fewest amount of federal stimulus spending. Last spring, a pilot program provided cash awards to nearly 300 NFP families in rural states: Oklahoma, South Carolina and Colorado.

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### **About Nurse-Family Partnership**

[Nurse-Family Partnership](#)® changes the future for the most vulnerable babies born into poverty by giving a first-time mom trusted support from her own personal nurse throughout the first 1,000 days, from pregnancy until her child's second birthday. The program currently has over 40,000 families enrolled in 40 states, the U.S. Virgin Islands and many Tribal communities. Nurse-Family Partnership is headquartered at the National Service Office for Nurse-Family Partnership and [Child First](#), based in Denver, Colorado. Both programs work together to ensure that health care, early childhood development and the mental health of the entire family are delivered in proven ways to achieve long-term positive outcomes. Follow NFP on Twitter [@NFP\\_nursefamily](#), Facebook at [facebook.com/nursefamilypartnership](https://www.facebook.com/nursefamilypartnership) and Instagram at [www.instagram.com/nursefamilypartnership/](https://www.instagram.com/nursefamilypartnership/).

### **About Family Independence Initiative**

[Family Independence Initiative](#) (FII) trusts and invests directly in people living with low incomes so they can work individually and collectively to achieve prosperity. Through our technology platform, UpTogether, people experiencing poverty can build and strengthen their social networks and access unrestricted cash transfers so they can support each other in accomplishing their goals. Learn more at [fii.org](http://fii.org).