



Contact:

Christina M. Hardin-Dirksen

Chief of Community Relations, DSHA

Phone: (302) 739-4263

Email: Christina@destatehousing.com

**DELAWARE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY, UNITED WAY OF DELAWARE
AND CITY OF WILMINGTON LAUNCH PROGRAM
TO HELP WILMINGTON SENIORS AVOID FORECLOSURE**

January 25, 2012 – (WILMINGTON, DE) – The Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA), United Way of Delaware (UWD) and the City of Wilmington announced today the launch of a program that will assist qualified homeowners in Wilmington who are 62 years of age or older and facing imminent foreclosure. The Wilmington Senior Property Tax Assistance Program targets seniors who have paid off their mortgages, but who are facing foreclosure due to delinquent City property taxes or sewer/water bills. The maximum grant amount is \$3,000.

“In today’s tough economic times, programs like this make a difference for people,” said Governor Jack Markell. “This program shows how collaboration among private and public agencies benefits Delaware citizens who need assistance. We are committed to working together so people who need it can receive assistance through some stressful times.”

Funding is provided for this program by both UWD and the City of Wilmington. UWD is contributing \$120,000 for the program through a grant from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund, while the City of Wilmington is allotting \$50,000.

“We’re pleased to partner with United Way of Delaware and the City of Wilmington on this important assistance program as it will help address the immediate needs of seniors in Wilmington,” said Anas Ben Addi, Director of DSHA. “We worked extensively with the City prior to the development of this program and concluded that many seniors could avoid foreclosure with just a little help -- a small, one-time grant to help them catch up on two specific expenses: their property taxes and their sewer/water bills.”

“Seniors are often pillars in their community, but they sometimes struggle to make ends meet, especially if they are on a fixed income,” said Michelle Taylor, President and Chief Executive Officer of United Way of Delaware. “We are proud to be supporting this partnership that will help stabilize Wilmington communities by keeping seniors in their homes.”

“We are pleased to partner with DSHA and United Way of Delaware on this important program,” said Wilmington Mayor James M. Baker. “Many of our senior homeowners are cash poor due to their limited incomes; in these difficult times, it is important to assist them in any way we can to ensure their homes are not moving toward foreclosure. This program will

allow many of our most vulnerable senior homeowners to get the assistance they need. I thank Wilmington's Director of Real Estate and Housing Tim Crawl-Bey and his staff for their work on this important initiative.”

Applicants to the program must meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Be 62 years or older as evidenced through photo ID or other form of official government-issued identification.
2. Property must be located within the Wilmington City Limits, and be the primary residence of the applicant who must be listed as the property owner on the tax records.
3. Household income may not exceed \$92,460 per year.

An application for senior tax assistance can be completed and submitted to DSHA's Wilmington Office at 820 N French Street, 10th Floor, Wilmington, DE 19801. Applications may also be distributed by community organizations who wish to assist residents. The completed Application; Authorization for Release of Information; Proof of Age documentation; current Tax/Sewer and Water bills and copy of the application for Property Tax Exemption (for those eligible for exemption) will be submitted to DSHA. For more information, please call (888) 363-8808 or visit www.destatehousing.com/HomeOwnership/hb_wstap.php.

About the Delaware State Housing Authority

The Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA), formed in 1968, is dedicated to providing quality, affordable housing opportunities and appropriate supportive services to responsible low- and moderate-income Delawareans. In addition to its role as the State's Housing Finance Agency, DSHA is unique in that it also serves as a Public Housing Authority and acts as a Community Development and Planning Agency. As a Public Housing Authority, DSHA receives funding from HUD to build, own and operate public housing in Kent and Sussex counties, two of Delaware's three counties. For more information about the Delaware State Housing Authority, please call: (302) 739-4263 or visit our website at: www.destatehousing.com.

About United Way of Delaware

United Way of Delaware's mission is to maximize the community's resources to improve the quality of life for all Delawareans. UWD is implementing *Live United 2015*, a five-year strategy to achieve long-lasting, measurable improvements throughout the state in the areas of Education, Income and Health. UWD works collaboratively with business, labor, government, nonprofit organizations, academic groups, faith groups, community organizations, concerned citizens and others to create positive, long-lasting solutions. For more information, please visit www.uwde.org or call (302) 573-3700.

###