

May 10, 2022

*****CONSUMER ALERT*****

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL ENCOURAGES HOMEOWNERS TO BE ALERT FOR SCAMS WHEN SEEKING MORTGAGE RELIEF

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today issued guidance to Illinois residents applying for mortgage relief under a new program that provides grants to homeowners affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Raoul is urging homeowners who are interested in applying for the program to be on the lookout for scams associated with the grant.

“Unfortunately, scammers stand ready to take advantage of homeowners who have been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and are seeking assistance to keep their homes,” Raoul said. “Any entity that requests payment for assistance in submitting an application is not legitimate and should be reported immediately as fraud.”

The Illinois Emergency Homeowner Assistance Fund Program (ILHAF) – administered by the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) – is accepting applications for grants of up to \$30,000 per household to aid Illinois homeowners struggling to pay their mortgages due to

COVID-19. Under the new program, eligible homeowners may receive grants for delinquent mortgage payments; property taxes; homeowner, condominium or co-op association fees; or homeowner’s insurance and flood insurance. Homeowners can apply for the program before May 31 by visiting [IHDA's website](#).

Raoul reminds interested Illinois residents to be on the lookout for scammers who often make false guarantees to lure consumers into paying illegal upfront fees to apply for programs such as the ILHAF. The scam – commonly known as mortgage rescue fraud – often targets homeowners in financial distress. Scammers will advertise over the internet or through unsolicited mailings with names or website domains that may appear to be authentic. Raoul also reminds residents to be on the lookout for fraudulent emails or texts that phish for information under the guise of representing legitimate governmental entities.

Homeowners applying for mortgage relief can protect themselves by:

- **Attending an information session hosted by the IHDA** to learn about the ILHAF application process, program eligibility and other free resources available to help you save your home. Additional information is available on the [IHDA website](#).
- **Exploring your options** by contacting your mortgage servicer or a [HUD-certified housing](#) counseling agency to discuss options to prevent foreclosure. A certificate from a HUD-certified housing counselor or a letter from your mortgage servicer detailing efforts to resolve your delinquency will be required to apply for ILHAF assistance.
- **Review the [acceptable documentation list](#)**, and be prepared to provide all required documents.

Homeowners can submit a complaint involving ILHAF application fraud directly to the [IHDA](#). Individuals wishing to report a complaint involving a mortgage rescue consultant, mortgage rescuer or mortgage lender should visit the [Attorney General's website](#) or call the Attorney General’s Homeowner Helpline at (866) 544-7151.