

First Recipients Benefit from Resilience Cayman Utility Relief Programme

Project supported by R3 Grant

Grand Cayman, 18 December 2020: An initial 65 Caribbean Utilities Company (CUC) customers have benefited from a new utility relief programme managed by Resilience Cayman and supported by a CI\$50,000 grant from R3 Cayman Foundation.

All of the recipients are unemployed workers who have been struggling to keep up with their bills for the past 9 months since businesses closed in response to COVID-19 measures. Recipients approved in November had their arrears paid directly to CUC, up to a maximum of CI\$250.

In addition to direct financial assistance, programme recipients are also enrolled in an online budgeting series to improve their skills in managing their monthly spending and provided with tips on reducing their energy consumption.

Resilience spokesperson Patricia Patino Langfitt says the programme is an extension of the charity's food relief efforts which have supported over 3,000 families since the start of the pandemic.

"As the economy has reopened there are still thousands of families that either have no work or have reduced hours and lower incomes than before the closures. Even with the \$1,000 stipend that the Ministry of Tourism is providing, many are finding it hard to pay for their housing, utilities and food needs," she says.

R3 Chairman Bryan Hunter says the Foundation is responding to the growing need for utility and rental relief as the economic impacts of the pandemic continue.

"Even as recent news about a COVID-19 vaccine brings renewed hope for economic recovery, R3 recognises the urgent need to help families and individuals make ends meet in the short term, and reskill or upskill for the return of tourism in the medium to long term," he says.

Resilience's utility relief programme requires a completed online application (available at <https://www.resilience.ky/utilityrelief>) along with supporting documents. An income verification process is also conducted and decisions are made for completed applications on a monthly basis. The program is still accepting applications until 22 December for grants to be made in early January.

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About Resilience

Resilience Cayman was formed in 2020 in response to COVID19 to address the

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immediate and long term issue of food and income insecurity for many residents who have been hard hit through job loss and business closures. Since April 2020, Resilience Cayman has provided food assistance to more than 3,000 families in the form of food vouchers and daily meals. We have also provided summer internship opportunities and grants to 35 young Caymanian college students to ensure that they are able to continue their education and develop workplace skills for their future careers.

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About R3

R3 Cayman Foundation is a private sector-led, charitable organisation focused on disaster Readiness, Relief and Recovery in the Cayman Islands. Our mission is to help our three islands proactively prepare for, resiliently cope with and sustainably recover from manmade or natural emergencies and disasters. Established in 2020, our support enables community partners to maximise their positive impact in our community. To learn more and see our work in action, please visit www.r3foundation.ky.

Organisations and individuals seeking funding from R3 are encouraged to visit www.r3foundation.ky to download the application form. To donate to R3, please email info@r3foundation.ky.

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