



**For more information, contact:**  
Sonia Gee, President & CEO  
713-574-7543 | [see@mamhouston.org](mailto:see@mamhouston.org)

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Memorial Assistance Ministries Launches Program to Help Families Facing the Loss of a Loved One Due to Covid-19**

**Houston, TX** – To provide financial assistance to families facing the loss of an immediate family member due to COVID-19, Memorial Assistance Ministries (MAM) has launched the Lost Loved One program, with a grant from the Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund, led by United Way of Greater Houston and the Greater Houston Community Foundation.

“Losing a loved one is never easy, and the pandemic and economic crisis has only made that grief and adjustment more challenging as some families are really struggling to rebuild their lives while in the midst of grieving,” said Stephen Maislin, President and CEO of Greater Houston Community Foundation. “These grants are meant to help ease the financial burden that is associated with the death of a family member while supporting the mental health needs of children and families who are struggling with their grief during this time.”

To qualify, applicants must be a resident of Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery or Waller County; have experienced the loss of an immediate family member due to Covid-19 since March 1, 2020; and have a household income of less than 80% of Area Median Income (AMI). Qualifying families will be provided \$3,500 to address immediate needs such as funeral arrangements, or assistance with rent, mortgage, or utilities. All individuals will receive information and referrals to grief counseling.

“MAM’s work is based on the value of neighbors helping neighbors,” states Sonja Gee, MAM President and CEO. “For families facing the tragedy of a COVID related death, the impact of this bereavement fund is more than just the vital financial support it provides. It is the sense of community and belonging it offers to those who may otherwise feel they are facing this tragedy on their own. It is like the hot casserole and warm hug that remind us we are not alone, that our community cares, and that together, we can get through even the most difficult of situations. MAM is proud to offer such an important service to Houston during this challenging time, and grateful to the fund’s donors, United Way and Greater Houston Community Foundation for the opportunity.”

For more information about the Lost Loved One program, please visit the MAM website at [www.mamhouston.org/lostlovedone](http://www.mamhouston.org/lostlovedone), or call the information line at (713) 468-4516 ext. 149. Applications to the program are available in English and Spanish.

### **About Memorial Assistance Ministries**

MAM is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring families have the means to meet their basic needs. Services include financial assistance for rent, utilities and medical needs, as well as educational opportunities for clients to learn English, develop skills for employment, increase financial responsibility, and navigate the process to become a citizen. Clients and staff work in partnership to identify needs and develop customized plans to help lead to more successful outcomes. For more information about MAM, please visit [www.mamhouston.org](http://www.mamhouston.org).

### **About the Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund**

The Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund has provided \$16.8 million in grants to support trusted nonprofits partners and grassroots charitable organizations in the four-county region. More information on grantees and donors can be found on the Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund website, [www.greaterhoustonrecovery.org](http://www.greaterhoustonrecovery.org).

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