Unhealthy conditions found in hazardous housing can lead to lead poisoning, asthma, respiratory illness, cancer, and unintentional injuries, resulting in missed school days and poor school performance for children, as well as missed workdays for parents. The requirement for safe and healthy housing has become even more urgent as people spend more time than ever in residential environments due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To protect the health of West Virginia families and prevent continued increases in associated healthcare costs and societal consequences, full federal funding is needed for critical programs and services.

CDC’s Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program  YES
CDC’s National Asthma Control Program  NO
CDC’s Environmental Health Tracking Network  NO
HUD’s Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes  NO
HUD’s Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)  YES
HUD’s HOME Investment Partnerships Program  YES
EPA’s Lead Categorical Grants  YES
EPA’s State Indoor Radon Grants  YES
EPA’s Drinking Water Revolving Fund  YES
HHS’ Maternal and Child Health Block Grants  YES
HHS’ Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)  YES
DOE’s Weatherization Assistance Program  YES

Full funding to federal programs such as those listed above will help to address many of the risks and burdens facing the residents and families of West Virginia. For example:

In West Virginia, 24% of children live in households with a high housing cost burden, and 25% of children live in poverty.

58% of West Virginia housing was built before 1978 and is likely to contain lead-based paint.

In 2017, 201 West Virginia children tested had an elevated blood lead level (5 μg/dL or more); only 15% of children 72 months or younger were tested. Average blood lead testing activity fell by 53% in the spring of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approximately 12% of adults (2018) and 9% of children (2014) have current asthma in West Virginia.

Almost 14% of adults in West Virginia have COPD, the highest rate in the nation.

20 counties in north and east West Virginia have predicted average indoor screening levels above the EPA action level for radon.