



M E M O R A N D U M
PLACER COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY
County of Placer

TO: Placer County Housing Authority Board of Commissioners

DATE: March 9, 2021

FROM: Amanda Sharp, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Emergency Rental Assistance

ACTION REQUESTED

1. Approve a grant agreement with the County of Placer, through its Department of Health and Human Services, to accept and administer the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) grant to the benefit of Placer County residents, excluding the City of Roseville, consistent with County and Federal guidelines in an amount not to exceed \$6,714,939.29 from March 10, 2021, through March 31, 2022, and authorize the Executive Director of the Placer County Housing Authority to execute the agreement with Risk Management and County Counsel concurrence, and to sign subsequent amendments up to \$100,000, consistent with the agreement's subject matter and scope of work with Risk Management and County Counsel concurrence.
2. Approve a grant agreement with the Placer Community Foundation in the amount not to exceed \$80,000 to assist with outreach efforts related to the ERA grant for the period of March 15, 2021 through June 30, 2021 and authorize the Executive Director of the Placer County Housing Authority to execute the agreement with Risk Management and County Counsel concurrence.
3. Approve an agreement with Sierra Nevada Connecting Point in the amount not to exceed \$50,000 for the period of March 15, 2021 through December 31, 2021, to take public calls, do prescreening and provide referrals to community-based organizations for application assistance for the ERA grant, and authorize the Executive Director of the Placer County Housing Authority to execute the agreement with Risk Management and County Counsel concurrence, and to sign subsequent amendments up to \$5,000 consistent with the agreement's subject matter and scope of work with Risk Management and County Counsel concurrence.
4. Approve an umbrella agreement with Advocates for Mentally Ill Housing, Inc., Sierra Community House/Crisis Intervention Services, Latino Leadership Council, and Project Go for application assistance for the ERA grant in a maximum aggregate amount of \$250,000 for the period of March 15, 2021 through June 30, 2021 and authorize the Executive Director of the Placer County Housing Authority to sign the agreements, and add additional community-based providers with Risk Management and County Counsel concurrence. Additionally, if needed, authorize the Executive Director of the Placer County Housing Authority to execute amendments through December 31, 2021, with Risk Management and County Counsel concurrence.

BACKGROUND

The Placer County Housing Authority (PCHA) provides rental assistance to more than 579 very low-income Placer County residents who may also be elderly, homeless, veterans and/or disabled through its Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, the Mainstream Voucher program and HUD-VASH. In 2020, in partnership with the Placer County Community Development Resource Agency (CDRA), PCHA began administering rental assistance to very low-income individuals and families affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic through the California Department of Housing and Community Development HOME Program's emergency Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA). All these programs have served the citizens of Placer County outside the city limits of Roseville, as the City of Roseville's residents are served by the City.

On January 21, 2021, Placer County received \$11,843,012.90 from the Federal Treasury Department to administer the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) grant. Specifically, this funding will assist renter

tenants at or below 80% of the area median income unable to pay rent and/or utilities due to loss of income from the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding was made for immediate distribution but with some minor exceptions and must be used by December 31, 2021.

PCHA will administer the larger portion of the funding to serve citizens outside of the city limits of Roseville and the City of Roseville will administer the funds for the citizens inside the Roseville city limits. Due to quick deadlines and in an effort to get this needed aid as soon as possible to renters, and in turn landlords and utility providers for renters' owed obligations, the PCHA will contract with the Placer Community Foundation for information dissemination, 211 referral and prescreening type services. In addition, PCHA will contract with community partners to assist in getting eligible tenants enrolled.

PCHA proposes to engage Placer Community Foundation to provide ERA grant communication and outreach services in English and Spanish. The initial outreach will begin March 15, 2021 and will end June 30, 2021, however if funding is still available, PCHA will amend the agreement to continue outreach and communication efforts.

Nevada Sierra Connecting Point Public Authority, our 211 operator, previously acted as the screener and referrer for our Emergency TBRA (Tenant Based Rental Assistance) program, and they agreed to take public calls, do prescreening and provide referrals to community-based organizations for application assistance for the ERA grant. All renters seeking assistance will contact 211, and based on the Federal guidelines, the callers will be screened to see if the ERA program may be appropriate for rental and utility payment arrears and future assistance. Those that are eligible will be referred on to a community-based agency that has agreed to do application assistance as part of the ERA grant umbrella. Those referred for application will need to be Placer County residents renting or leasing, at or below 80% of the Area Median Income, with a hardship caused by the pandemic who are at risk of homelessness.

The program will allow for rental and utility arrears to be paid back in full to March 13, 2020. There is not a limit on the amount per tenant, save for funding, and the intention is to have the tenant completely caught up so as to ensure the tenant can remain housed. Once all arrearages for the tenant are paid off, the tenant will be eligible to future rent and utility payments. These will be made month by month, and will be for three months at a time, and will cover full rent and utility costs. If further assistance is required after the initial three months, the tenant will need to reapply by way of a streamlined reapplication process, and may be eligible for an additional three months at a time, through March 31, 2022. The Treasury Department program guidelines provides for priority application processing for tenants that meet specific preferences. These are tenants that are at or below 50% of Area Median Income and those with a tenant that has been unemployed for 90 days or more at the time of application. During the initial application period, these tenants will be prioritized and processed first, while those not meeting these will be initially waitlisted. Placer County and Roseville Housing Authorities will work together to ensure consistency in program implementation.

As mentioned above, those that appear eligible will be forwarded to a community-based agency that has agreed to do application assistance as part of the ERA grant umbrella effort to assist in the application process. Currently, four agencies have agreed to be part of the umbrella agreement and they include; Advocates for Mentally Ill Housing, Inc., Sierra Community House/Crisis Intervention Services, Latino Leadership Council, and Project Go. Each agency will sign an agreement with PCHA through June 30, 2021, and may be asked to sign amendments through December 31, 2021, depending on need and funding. Other community-based agencies wishing to join the umbrella may also be added via an agreement with Risk Management and County Counsel concurrence.

Once an application is completed, the community-based organization will send the application to PCHA for final approval, and if approved PCHA will make payments to the landlords, tenants, and/or utility companies. Approved applicants will receive assistance for up to three months, but will need to reapply if their need continues. They can receive a total of 12 months through March 31, 2022 as funding allows.

FISCAL IMPACT

The grant dollars will be included in the Department's FY 2020-21 Budget and FY 2021-22 if necessary.

The agreements are on file with the Clerk of the Board.