

A G E N D A



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	66701	Agenda Number	18.
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Meeting Date:	2/2/2017	Department:	Public Health
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Subject

Authorize negotiation and execution of an agreement with AUSTIN TENANTS' COUNCIL for a 56-month term beginning on February 1, 2017 to provide housing-debt reduction negotiation services for clients enrolled in housing stability programs, in an amount not to exceed \$95,000.

Amount and Source of Funding

Funding in the amount of \$95,000 is included in the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Operating Budget of Austin Public Health Department.

Fiscal Note

A fiscal note is not required.

Purchasing Language:	
Prior Council Action:	On September 14, 2016, Council approved Ordinance No. 20160914-001 adopting the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Operating Budget.
For More Information:	Shannon Jones, Director, 512-972-5010; Stephanie Hayden, Assistant Director for HHSD Community Services, 972-5017, Robert Kingham, Social Services Policy Manager, 512-972-5026, Elena Lloyd, Agenda Coordinator, 972-5033.
Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:	
MBE / WBE:	
Related Items:	

Additional Backup Information

Past housing debt, an eviction record, and criminal history are known barriers to securing safe, stable, decent, and affordable housing. In many cases, Austin social service agencies encounter these barriers while attempting to re-house Austinites who are homeless, in a shelter, or in other housing stability case management. Although these social service agencies may have funding and other resources to dedicate to securing new housing for these clients, they are often unable to finalize housing because of a client's unresolved housing debt from the past.

In August 2015, Austin Public Health (APH) allocated \$18,200 to a new project undertaken by Austin Tenants' Council (ATC), named the Housing Stability Pilot Program. With guidance from APH, ATC entered into referral agreements with local social service providers to receive cases in which past debt was interfering with a client's ability to secure housing. ATC was contracted to leverage its knowledge and relationships with housing providers and property owners in order to negotiate a lower debt for clients, assist in securing current stable housing, and save City-funding used toward resolving these debts.

The pilot project opened one test case in November 2015, officially launched in February 2016, allowing eight months of active project work. Over the course of the project, 23 clients benefitted from debt negotiation services, creating a total savings of \$25,159, and ATC negotiated to stop eviction-filings for four clients. On average, ATC debt negotiations reduced the debt by 71%.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Output and Outcome measures will be negotiated with ATC staff.

Related Departmental Goal:

Promote and foster increased self-sufficiency, healthy behaviors, and lifestyle among targeted populations.

Assist people in achieving safety, stability, and long-term self-sufficiency.

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