



21           **WHEREAS**, RISE Fund has been implemented and funds distributed to those who  
22 are in most need with all necessary speed, need for relief remains incredibly high,  
23 especially in communities that continue to be underserved, even after RISE Fund  
24 allocations have been exhausted; **NOW THEREFORE**,

25 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

26           The Council authorizes the City Manager to negotiate and execute contracts with  
27 service providers to offer direct financial assistance to members of underserved  
28 communities impacted by COVID-19, in the form of ACH transfers, debit cards, gift  
29 cards, or other methods sufficiently flexible to support a variety of needs which are due to  
30 the COVID-19 public health emergency. The updated RISE Fund framework is intended  
31 to prioritize relief for people in underserved communities who are low- or very low-  
32 income and/or who remain unemployed or underemployed, with a special emphasis on  
33 those who do not qualify for other forms of assistance, such as unemployment insurance.  
34 The City Manager is authorized to prioritize contracts that ensure funds are distributed to  
35 individuals by trusted community organizations that have access to larger networks of  
36 lower-income residents, and that can demonstrate their ability to reach and provide service  
37 to target priority populations, and who can perform active outreach through their clientele  
38 networks.

39           In an effort to remedy inefficiencies and inequities that can occur in an entirely first-  
40 come, first-served process of applying for relief, the City Manager is directed to seek a

41 simplified, centralized application(s) and intake process available, and consider  
42 expanding the options for awarding funds to individuals based on a lottery, or similar  
43 process, or client-based direct assistance programs (which provide support to existing  
44 clients who have previously qualified for assistance). The Council's policy objective is  
45 easing the burden of the application process for qualified residents. Options are at the  
46 discretion of staff but could include options such as the following:

- 47 • An open application period of at least 7 days over at least one weekend;
- 48 • An application accessible online and by phone, widespread outreach and plain-  
49 language instructions and information;
- 50 • Options to accommodate speakers of languages other than English throughout the  
51 application and service period;
- 52 • Simplified ways to provide required documentation and reduce levels of  
53 documentation required;
- 54 • Consistent applicant eligibility guidelines across service providers;
- 55 • Sufficient notifications to ensure applicants are up-to-date on the process;
- 56 • Ensuring any client-based direct assistance programs partner with organizations  
57 that can show they have access and trust with large numbers of persons in priority  
58 populations; and
- 59 • Other considerations as appropriate.

60 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

61 The City Manager is directed to explore using available resources to the extent  
62 possible to streamline the application process and intake, potentially to include  
63 underutilized City staff time as allowable and as consistent with administrative  
64 requirements that are included in awards to service providers and for which the service  
65 providers are being paid a service fee. If needed for programmatic or administrative costs,  
66 the City Manager is directed to return a budget amendment for consideration by the  
67 Council.

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70 **ADOPTED:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2020 **ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
71 Jannette S. Goodall  
72 City Clerk