

Neighborhood Housing & OhfC



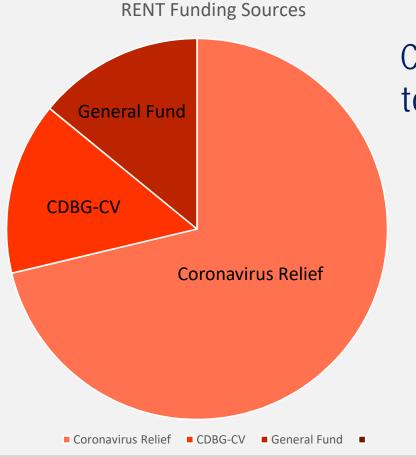
# RENT assistance for Austin tenants affected by COVID-19

Housing & Planning Committee Briefing: RENT Assistance Program & Tenant Stabilization Services – September 8, 2020

## Briefing Agenda

Budget Program Structure & Eligibility Tenant Stabilization Services Marketing & Outreach Strategy Applicant Data Program Enhancements

## Allocating Resources Directly to Vulnerable Households



City of Austin \$17.75 Million Commitment to Austin Renters Impacted by Covid-19

- Nearly \$13 million Direct Rental Assistance
- \$1.28 million for Tenant Stabilization Services (including Legal Representation and Tenant/Landlord Mediation)
- Nearly \$500,000 for Targeted Community Outreach



Structure

- ✓ \$12.9M Direct Rental Assistance
- \$1.28M Tenant Stabilization
  Services
- ✓ CVRF + CDBG-CV + GF
- Partners: HACA, CVR, CBO's
- ✓ Goal: 2,000 paid rents monthly
- Randomized Selection

**Eligibility** 

- 🗸 < 80% MFI
- Traditional + Non-Traditional

Leases

- ✓ No Duplication of Benefits
- ✓ COVID-19 Financial Impact
- Must reside within Austin's Full

Purpose Jurisdiction

Benefit

- ✓ Full Contract Rent Payment
- ✓ 30% 80% MFI = 1-month rent
- <30% MFI = 3-months rent</p>



- ✓ \$400,000
- ✓ Highly rent burdened households

are more likely to face eviction



- ✓ \$600,000 in funds for eligible
  - households
- ✓ Fees owed to landlords\*



### Expanding our Outreach Strategy

#### Build upon RENT 1.0 partnerships & success

- Where people work and live
- In communities of color
- Where essential workers are
- Grassroots approach (flyers, door hangers/postering)
- Community Partners Social Channels (300+)
- Non-Profits (75+ organizations)
- Contractors Associations
- Direct email (10K+ individuals)
- AISD programs, PARD Rec Centers, Senior Centers, testing centers, community clinics, food access centers, convenience stores, places of faith, and direct to homes, safely
- RENT Webinars for community organizations and landlords

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	Neighba Commur	rhood Housing & Tahf	à 👙	Applications open May 4 – May 6
Mary 1 - Mary 2 - Mar			sistanc	
Applications for May ENT program closed Wednesday May deh at tablyom. Yor of the localing Hesorera can all Information, with www.autointexas.gov/bensing econocces To holy constitutes at the local generic result housing due to the CVVID-19 products due CVVI d'Autoin has port together a con-time Radiel of Emergency Network "Crown (REVT) rest anisitions program lottery. Expanded	Austinites at i	t times are making it h risk of losing their rent put together a one-tim	arder to pay rent for tenants a ial housing due to the COVID- le <b>Relief of Emergency Need</b> s	19 pandemic, the City
✓ Who's eligible?	WHO'S ELIGIBLE? The funds will help income-eligible tenants in the City of Austin who: » Live in the City of Austin & make 80% of the Median Family Income.			
How will the RENT assistance program work?			& not recipients of other rent pi Liked + S Following + A Share	rograms.
How do lapply?  When is it available?	HOW WIL Renters who RENT assist the Housing will be issue		City of Austin Government May 4      City of Austin Government May 4      City of Austin May 5      City of Austin May 5 <thcity austin<br="" of="">Austin May 5      <thcity austin<br="" of="">Austi</thcity></thcity>	rg
	RENT assist monthly hou WHEN IS In order to g	City of Austin Government @austintexasgov Home About		Applications open May 4 - May 6
ers, community	lottery are c	Posts Events Photos	assist	
and direct to	CITY OF AJST	Videos Live Community Groups Iconosquare	<sup>for</sup> Austin affected by	tenants
		Create a Page	More info at Austin	Texas.gov/RENT

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### Working with Experienced Community Partners

\$400,000 in Funding to Partners Experienced to Maximize Impact

- INFORM the PUBLIC ABOUT RENT
  - o Calls, emails, webinars, social media, newsletters
  - o Flyers, door hangers
  - o Pre-printed media kits are available
- ASSIST WITH RENT APPLICATION PREPARATION
  - o Help applicants understand eligibility
  - Help applicants create an email address, or allow them to use your own
  - o Help applicants obtain their required documents
- ASSIST WITH ONLINE APPLICATION
  - Make computers available for applicants
  - o Help clients complete the application
  - o Help applicants upload their documents

#### Applications

- 7,877 Applications Started
- 1,555 Denied based upon information provided
- 3,903 Applications Submitted
- 2,419 will receive reminder notifications

#### Support Services

- 42% Report Needing Utility Assistance
- 11% Report Needing Eviction Prevention Services or Legal Representation
- 4% Report Needing Tenant Relocation Services

#### **Applicant Demographics**

- Reported Pre-COVID Income \$27,998\*
- Reported Current Income \$14,883\*
- 77% of Applicants under 30% MFI
- 62% are Female Headed Households

- 21% Reported the Head of Household as African American/Black
- 36% Reported the Head of Household as Hispanic

Data as of 9/3/20

#### Building a Program Responsive to Community Needs A Community and Data Informed Program



# Designed to be Sensitive to the Needs of our Community

- Applicants are not required to have a social security number.
- Applicants can be in contractual relationships for rent (outside of a "traditional lease" agreement).
- Examining the program design to contemplate a "warm" hand-off for persons in need of services other than direct rent.

#### Keeping You Informed: Timeline & Next Steps



- Direct Rental Assistance distributed starting in September.
- Tenant Stabilization Services starting in September/October.
- Community Outreach contracts awarded in September.
- Final program applications will be received in December.\*
- Ongoing data analysis to better serve Austinites.

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## **Contact Information**

RENT Assistance Program: Website: <u>www.austintexas.gov/RENT</u> Email: <u>AustinRENT@cvrassociates.com</u> Call Center: 512-488-1397 Monday – Friday 8 AM – 6 PM

## Questions?