



Legislation Text

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To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Katherine Smith, Community Resources, Director

Prepared By:

Katherine Smith, Community Resources, Director

Presenter: Katherine Smith, Community Resources, Director; Linda Haley, Division Manager, HCDS; Todd Weaver, Finance Director

Subject:

11:00 AM *Emergency Rental Assistance Update

Purpose and Request:

The purpose of this study session is to provide the Board updated information related to Arapahoe County's current Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program to include current allocations and spending, outcomes, and the program's current state.

Background and Discussion: Arapahoe County received two allocations of Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) named ERA1 and ERA2. Arapahoe County is currently in the process of spending our first "tranche" of ERA2 funding, which was \$5.5 million. In addition, Arapahoe County has requested and received our second "tranche" of ERA2 funding from the US Treasury, which was approved, in the amount of \$4.1369 million. A third tranche of ERA2 funding will be requested once our second tranche is 75% spent.

Arapahoe County has currently spent 87% of our ERA2 allocation, tranche 1. The ERA2 allocation will need to be spent in accordance with Treasury benchmarks in order to avoid any funding being returned to the Federal Government.

Arapahoe County's ERA program has served 2,703 households with retrospective rental assistance, prospective rental assistance, and utility assistance over 2021 and 2022. In addition, ERA funded a hotel/motel voucher program during the pandemic and then funded case management services for the individuals housed in

hotels/motels. In addition, we have funded 5 temporary grant funded Navigator positions to assist individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or on the verge of homelessness.

The ERA team currently has 1,323 applications “pending” in the system that need to be reviewed. Based on 2021 numbers (1,500 households), we can estimate spending \$10 million in funding for these households. With this number of households in the queue, we would like to discuss options to ensure fiscal sustainability and equity with this program. Options include:

- Continuing to prioritize eviction processing first
- Limit the number of times a household can apply and receive services
- Require cooperation with ADWorks! for Able Bodied Adults
- Place a temporary moratorium on new applications

The purpose of this study session is to review current data with the Board and request further direction on the programs next steps.

Fiscal Impact: If ERA funds are not spent in accordance with Treasury benchmarks, there is a risk that some ERA funding may need to be returned to the Federal Government.

Alternatives: Community Resources can continue to run the ERA program as is, with no changes.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

- ☒ Be fiscally sustainable
- ☒ Provide essential and mandated service
- ☒ Be community focused

Staff Recommendation: Community Resources staff recommends continuing to prioritize eviction processing first, in tandem with Colorado Legal Services. In addition, Community Resources staff recommends placing a temporary moratorium on new applications in order to process the current applications received.

Concurrence: Finance Department