



County of Orange

Memorandum

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CLERK OF THE BOARD
COUNTY OF ORANGE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

January 4, 2024

To: Robin Stieler, Clerk of the Board

From: Supervisor Doug Chaffee, Fourth District

Subject: Add item to the January 23, 2024, Board of Supervisors meeting, Discussion Calendar

1. Approve use of \$500,000 from Fourth District Discretionary funds to be used towards Emergency Rental Assistance Pilot Program in partnership with the Friendly Center.
2. Find under Government Code section 26227 that this expenditure will serve a public purpose and is necessary to meet the social needs of County residents.
3. Authorize and direct the County Executive Officer, or designee, to negotiate and enter into an agreement as necessary to effectuate the purpose of this allocation, including, but not limited to, the allocation of funds to the Friendly Center for the Emergency Rental Assistance Pilot Program.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Board of Supervisors authorized the use of district discretionary funds for programs providing healthcare, housing assistance, workforce development, education, childcare, infrastructure projects and equipment, and meal gap programs; benefit monies to local governments including school districts, and/or non-profits; programs aiding veterans and residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness; and economic support, including arts-related small businesses and non-profit organizations that support local programs around the County.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Orange County was allocated funding from the U.S. Department of the Treasury for the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program to assist eligible households with financial assistance and housing stability services. In Orange County, the ERA Program was administered by the Health Care Agency (HCA), which provided a maximum financial assistance of \$10,000 per household. The U.S. Treasury also approved funding for the Rent Relief Program during Covid-19. Although the public health state of emergency was lifted, housing affordability continues to be a problem for many Orange County residents.

For the year 2022, in Orange County, there were over 3,000 rent-based evictions reported. According to the Orange County 2023 Affordable Housing Needs Report, 130,175 low-income

renter households in Orange County do not have access to an affordable home and 81% of extremely low-income (ELI) households in Orange County are paying more than half of their income on housing costs as compared to 1% of moderate-income households. With inflation, rent and housing costs burdens, it is crucial to establish a new emergency rental assistance program for households in under-resourced communities.

Friendly Center, based in the City of Orange, with a satellite location in the City of Buena Park, provides housing assistance, case management, and resources to assist residents experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness. Rental assistance through the Friendly Center is limited based on funding availability, with funds available to cover only about 25% of requests.

Implementation of an Orange County Fourth District Emergency Rental Assistance Pilot Program will provide a safety net and financial assistance to tenants and who meet certain qualifications of being at risk of experiencing homelessness. By prioritizing assistance towards those who are at risk of becoming homeless, this program will help serve as a homelessness prevention strategy. A homeless prevention strategy will alleviate some of the stresses put on our Orange County agencies to address and provide services to our existing homeless population.

Scope of Services

The Fourth District office is partnering with the Friendly Center, which already provides emergency rental assistance and wrap-around services, to administer the Fourth District Emergency Rental Assistance Pilot Program. The program will assist Fourth District residents with short-term rental assistance to prevent them from losing their tenancy and transition individuals/families, who earn sufficient income, from unhoused/temporary housing to permanent housing.

Fourth District discretionary funds will be allocated towards the Emergency Rental Assistance Pilot Program. Primary funds will be allocated accordingly, with 80% of funds towards emergency rental assistance and 20% towards transitioning unhoused/temporary housed residents into permanent housing. Partial funds will be allocated towards administrative fees.

Responsibilities & Eligibility Criteria

The Friendly Center, administering the Emergency Rental Assistance Pilot Program, will have the following responsibilities:

1. Screen applications for qualification requirements, which consist of Fourth District Orange County residents who are experiencing financial hardships due to health issues, job loss, or loss of spouse/partner, and are low-income households.
2. Ensure funds are used only for deposits and rental assistance, up to a maximum value of three months' rent per residence.
3. Commit recipient to working with a Case Manager to identify housing options, develop a plan (and ability) to pay rent in the foreseeable future including a monthly budget, knowledge of supportive programs, and knowledge of other benefits available.

Income Limits based on Orange County AMI:

Number of Persons in Household:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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Orange County Area Median Income: \$127,800	Acutely Low	13400	15300	17250	19150	20700	22200	23750	25300
	Extremely Low	30150	34450	38750	43050	46500	49950	53400	56850
	Very Low Income	50250	57400	64600	71750	77500	83250	89000	94750
	Low Income	80400	91850	103350	114800	124000	133200	142400	151550
	Median Income	89450	102250	115000	127800	138000	148250	158450	168700
	Moderate Income	107350	122700	138000	153350	165600	177900	190150	202400