



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00130

Agenda Date: 9/12/2023

Agenda Item Name:

Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) Housing Stability Services

Presenter:

Claudia Tuck, Department Director, Community Support Services, (352) 231-0058
Sarai Cabrera, Social Services Director, Community Support Services (352) 264-6754

Description:

Services to help with eviction prevention and to provide housing stability.

Recommended Action:

Approve the agreements with Three Rivers Legal Services and with Florida Legal Services, and authorize the Chair to sign.

Prior Board Motions:

NA

Fiscal Note:

ERAP2 fund 230 - \$1,815,972

Strategic Guide:

Social and Economic Opportunity

Background:

The Emergency Rental Assistance program (ERA or ERAP) makes funding available to assist households that are unable to pay rent or utilities. The funds are provided directly to states, U.S. territories, local governments, and (in the case of ERA1) Indian tribes. Grantees use the funds to aid eligible households through existing or newly created rental assistance programs.

ERA2 payments are made directly to states. At least 90 percent of awarded funds must be used for direct financial assistance, including rent, rental arrears, utilities and home energy costs, utilities and home energy costs arrears, and other expenses related to housing. The remaining funds are available for 'housing stability services'. For purposes of ERA, housing stability services include those that enable households to maintain or obtain housing such as, but not limited to, eviction prevention, eviction diversion programs, housing counseling, housing case management, and legal services or attorneys' fees related to eviction proceedings and maintaining housing stability. ERA2 funds generally expire on September 30, 2025. Carr, Riggs and Ingram (CRI) are currently assisting the County with the administration of ERAP.

If these agreements are approved, Three Rivers Legal Services and Florida Legal Services will be provided ERA funding for the purposes of providing Housing Stability Eviction Diversion Services to renters in Alachua County. The Housing Stability Eviction Diversion Services seek to provide legal assistance to Alachua County households with the goal of improving the rental housing stability. Services to be provided by these two entities include a legal assistance helpline which will provide renters with access to an attorney with the goal of addressing present housing issues that may lead to eviction. The tenant education component will be addressed via tenant rights presentation and one-on-consultation after workshops. The individual casework will address a variety of barriers that affect an individual's ability to remain stably housed.