

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

DATE: October 2, 2020

TO: Supervisor Marcelia Nicholson, Chairperson, Milwaukee County Board

FROM: Shakita LaGrant, Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Prepared by James Mathy, Housing Administrator

SUBJECT: **From the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, providing an informational report regarding the status of Milwaukee County's Eviction Prevention Program funded by the CARES Act**

Background

As part of Milwaukee County's Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act allocation, the Housing Division was given approximately \$10 million towards eviction prevention to be fully expended by December 31, 2020. Due to the loss of income many individuals encountered with the pandemic, these funds were needed to ensure families could remain in housing. Without these funds, the community would have experienced a severe increase in homelessness which would have been exacerbated by the restrictions in capacity placed on homeless shelters due to social distancing requirements.

Issue

Milwaukee County responded to this crisis by funding payments to landlords and providing additional case management services and legal assistance to those who had filed evictions. Prior to contracts being executed with community providers, the Housing Division was accepting referrals from the Rental Resource Center under the coordination of Community Advocates. As part of this initial support, Milwaukee County processed payments directly to landlords after Community Advocates approved their application. The program was then transitioned to provider contracts approved under File No. 20-557 in July with the following agencies:

Community Advocates: Community Advocates processes all applications for Eviction Prevention funding through their Rental Resource Center as well as makes all payments directly to landlords. The Housing Division provides direct monitoring of the program and support to Community Advocates. The total amount of this contract is \$6.5 million.

Hope House: Hope House provides rental assistance and case management for households facing evictions and housing instability. Through the concept of social determinants of health, Hope House provides additional support to families after their financial crisis stabilizes. This can be through mental health services, AODA services, employment as well as any other services to assist families with the challenges they may face. The total amount of this contract is \$2.5 million.

Legal Aid: Legal Aid provides additional legal representation using Milwaukee County CARES Act funding for those that are facing the prospect of being evicted. Legal Aid also directly links households that are involved in the court system with the Eviction Prevention Program. The total amount of this contract is \$37,500.

Data is tracked and updated each week to show expenditures as well as capture demographic data on participants to show the impact of CARES Act funding throughout Milwaukee County. A racial equity lens was used in the decision making process to allocate significant funds towards Eviction Prevention. Data shows that approximately 76 percent of the program's participants have been Black households. This is consistent with tracking data for the Housing Division's other homeless and prevention related services.

The following table provides the most recent report received as of September 20:

Metric	Week 9/14/20-9/18/20	Cumulative 6/1/20-9/18/20
Total inquiries received <i>Live Calls and Voicemails</i>	574	18,194
Website volume	N/A	51,417 unique visitors, 36,242 new visitors, 28,023 Rent Assistance Process pages hits (includes July and August)
Total applications received	189	4,786
Total applications currently in documentation verification stage	1,435	4,786
Total applications Sent to Community Advocates Case Managers for Final Approval	242	3,351
Checks Submitted MCEP	196	1,157
Funding Expended MCEP	\$464,723	\$2,517,615
Community Advocates Checks Sent OTHER FUNDING- <i>Not eligible for MCEP funding or supplemental</i>	14	159* <i>*16 paid by both MCEP and CA supplemental</i>
Funding Expended OTHER	\$ 11,986	\$199,462
Total Checks Submitted/Sent -MCEP and Other	210	1,316
Total Rent Assistance Funding Expended	\$476,709	\$2,723,078
Evictions Filed	59 <i>9/8/20-9/11/20</i>	3,979 <i>6/1/20-9/11/20</i>

The following is the demographic data for those who have received Eviction Prevention Assistance:

	Number	Percent (%)
1. Age Group:		
a. 0 - 2	76	6.77%
b. 3 - 11	301	26.83%
c. 12 - 17	147	13.10%
d. 18 - 20	38	3.39%
e. 21 - 35	311	27.72%
f. 36 - 60	214	19.07%
g. 61 & over	12	1.07%
Unknown's	24	2.05%
TOTAL (w/ unknown's)	1,123	100%
2. Gender:		
a. Female	683	60.82%
b. Male	417	37.13%
c. Transgender	0	0.00%
d. Other	0	0.00%
f. Unknown	23	2.05%
TOTAL (w/ unknown's)	1,123	100.00%
3. Race:		
a. Asian or Pacific Islander	6	1%
b. Black	848	76%
c. American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0%
d. White	65	6%
e. multi-race	40	4%
f. other	39	3%
g. Unknown	125	11%
TOTAL	1,123	100%
4. Ethnicity:		
a. Hispanic	52	5%
b. Non-Hispanic	729	65%
c. Other	342	30%
TOTAL	1,123	100%

Recommendation

This is an informational report. No action is necessary.

Shakita LaGrant-McClain

Shakita LaGrant, Director

Department of Health and Human Services

cc: County Executive David Crowley
Mary Jo Meyers, County Executive's Office
Kelly Bablitch, County Board
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