



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

**Agenda Number:**

**Clerk of the Board of Supervisors**  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Department Name:** Community Services  
**Department No.:** 057  
**For Agenda Of:** February 9, 2021  
**Placement:** Administrative  
**Estimated Time:** N/A  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Department George Chapjian, Community Services Director (805) 568-2467  
Director  
Contact Info: Dinah Lockhart, Deputy Director (805) 568-3523  
Laurie Baker, Grants Program Manager (805) 568-3521  
**SUBJECT: Execution of Agreement with United Way of Santa Barbara County to Implement an Emergency Rental Assistance Program Utilizing Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 Funds**

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Risk Management**

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Approve and authorize the Chair to execute a County Subrecipient Agreement in the amount of \$13,373,876 (Attachment A), with United Way of Santa Barbara County (United Way), utilizing Federal Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 funding for administration and implementation of an emergency rent and utility assistance payment program for qualifying Santa Barbara County residents; and
- b. Determine that the above actions are not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(4), because they consist of the creation of government funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities, which do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment; and are otherwise exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15269 as it consists of a specific action necessary to mitigate an emergency.

**Summary Text:**

On December 27, 2020 the President signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 which included \$25 billion in emergency rental assistance. The County anticipates receiving an estimated \$13,373,876 allocation of 2021 Appropriations Act funds to provide direct assistance to renter households in the form of rent, rental arrears, utilities, utility arrears, and other housing expenses resulting from the pandemic. Assistance to a given household can last up to 12-months, plus an additional three months if the need for assistance is re-verified after the initial 12-month term. CDBG-CV funding for United Way's Emergency Rental Assistance Program approved by the Board on December 15, 2020 will be used to fill an application gap for Carpinteria, Guadalupe, Buellton, Solvang and Unincorporated County residents until the 2021 Appropriations Act funding Emergency Rental Assistance Program is up and running. Once this new program is live, staff anticipates returning to the Board to redirect remaining CDBG-CV funds for other eligible uses.

The recommended actions will implement federal funding for programming designed to address County residents' immediate, direct financial needs with three months of rental assistance payments, up to a total amount of \$6,000. Rent payments will be made directly to landlords which must be applied to any arrears for back-rent before any current or future rent. Applicants will also be eligible for utility payment assistance. Utility payments will be made directly to utility providers. The Program will be available to all County residents at or below 80% AMI, though qualifying individuals at or below 50% AMI will be prioritized. Direct rental assistance funds are allocated equally across the five County supervisorial Districts, though may be adjusted thereafter based on demand and number of applications submitted in each District. If cities within the County receive their own allocation of 2021 Appropriations Act funds for emergency rental assistance, those cities' residents would be eligible for both their respective cities program and the County's program.

**Background:**

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021

The President signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 on December 27, 2020, which included \$25 billion in emergency rental assistance. Tribal communities, U.S. territories, states (including the District of Columbia), and local governments with populations over 200,000 are eligible to receive funding. The County anticipates receiving an estimated allocation of \$13,373,876 and the County Executive Office submitted the required certification to the U.S. Treasury by the January 12, 2021 deadline. Grantees can use up to 10% of their allocation for administrative expenses, case management or other services. The remaining 90% must be used for rent, rental arrears, utilities, utility arrears, and other housing expenses resulting from the pandemic for qualifying households. Qualifying households are renters with incomes up to 80% AMI where 1) one or more individuals in the household has qualified for unemployment benefits or attests that they have experienced a reduction in income, incurred significant costs, or experienced financial hardship due to the coronavirus pandemic; and 2) one or more individuals in the household can demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

The emergency rental assistance funding recommended in this Board Letter will provide emergency financial relief County-wide to qualifying resident households in the form of a three-month rent subsidy, up to \$6,000 per household. Households can reapply for an additional three-months of rent assistance, for up to 15-months of rent assistance. In addition to utilizing Family Services Agency for case management services, the Budget, Exhibit B, to the United Way Agreement includes a line-item for

United Way to sub-contract with a provider to provide additional supportive services to applicants at 50% AMI or below and at risk of homelessness.

The budget, Exhibit B to the United Way Agreement (Attachment 1), is summarized in the following table.

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>GRANT AMOUNT</b>
Family Services Agency (FSA) Case Management Contract Services: 12 months @ \$25,000/month	\$275,000
Eviction Prevention for Extremely Low Income Services Provider	\$715,680
Online Application System, cloud hosting, text messages/communication	\$6,100
PR and Marketing	\$16,720
Direct Processing Costs (postage, check stock, printing, letterhead, envelopes)	\$16,500
Program Support Staff (bilingual) x2	\$100,000
Program Coordinator	\$75,000
Finance, Administration, Contract Reporting & Audit	\$75,000
Benefits and Overhead Percentage of Staffing	\$50,000
Admin Contingency	\$7,388
1 <sup>st</sup> Supervisorial District Direct Rental Assistance Payments to Landlords	\$2,407,297.68
2 <sup>nd</sup> Supervisorial District Rent & Utility Assistance Payments	\$2,407,297.68
3 <sup>rd</sup> Supervisorial District Rent & Utility Assistance Payments	\$2,407,297.68
4 <sup>th</sup> Supervisorial District Rent & Utility Assistance Payments	\$2,407,297.68
5 <sup>th</sup> Supervisorial District Rent & Utility Assistance Payments	\$2,407,297.68
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$13,373,876</b>

The County’s partnership with United Way of Santa Barbara for previous emergency rental assistance programs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic using CDBG-CV and CARES Act funding was successful and, to expedite Program implementation, the County will continue its partnership with United Way. The County’s CARES Act emergency rental assistance program ended on November 30, 2020. United Way leveraged \$991,052 of the County’s CARES Act allocation and \$164,094 of the County’s CDBG-CV funds to serve a total of 406 households with rental assistance for an average of 2.5-months. The \$1,165,398 of CDBG-CV funds approved by the Board on December 15<sup>th</sup> for United Way’s Emergency Rental Assistance Program will be utilized to fill an application gap for Carpinteria, Buellton, Solvang, and Unincorporated Santa Barbara County residents until the 2021 Appropriations Act program is live. Once the new program is accepting applications, staff anticipates returning to the Board to redirect remaining CDBG-CV funds for other eligible uses to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus in light of this new federal emergency rental assistance funding.

United Way will continue to partner with Family Services Agency (FSA) to implement the Emergency Rent Assistance Program under this agreement and to otherwise connect with low-income families particularly adversely impacted by the COVID-19 global pandemic with its existing grants program.

Additionally, the recommended Agreement (Attachment 1) provides for United Way to sub-contract with a provider, selected based on experience and past performance preventing homelessness for extremely low-income families and individuals with histories of housing instability, to provide supportive services to applicants at 50% AMI and below particularly at risk of homelessness. It is estimated that the \$12,036,488.40 recommended for approval in this Board Letter for direct rental and utility assistance County-wide will assist 1,720 families.

**Performance Measure:**

United Way/Family Services Agency will income-qualify persons served and document that County residents served have household incomes at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI), as determined and published by HUD annually. Residents with incomes at or below 50% AMI will be prioritized. United Way will report on the number of persons or households served on a monthly basis and must retain documentation for 5-years to indicate that the program was operated in accordance with the Treasury’s Regulations.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

County general funds are used for a portion of HCD’s overall administrative expenses; however, no County funds are being used to fund the Program.

**Fiscal Analysis:**

Federal				\$13,373,876	
Fees					
Other:					
<b>Total</b>	\$	-	\$	-	\$13,373,876

**Key Contract Risks:**

The U.S. Department of Treasury could require the County to repay federal funds expended for ineligible expenses with non-federal funds. The Subrecipient Agreement specifies eligible expenses and County staff will review each payment request submitted by the Subrecipient to ensure that expenses incurred were for eligible costs. County staff will conduct ongoing monitoring to assure that the Program is being administered in accordance with regulatory requirements. The funds are available through December 31, 2021 though 65% of the County’s allocation must be obligated by September 30, 2021 or risk reallocation by the Treasury Department. Quarterly reports to the State on average amount of funding provided per household, number of assistance payments, and income levels are anticipated; reporting forms were not available as of the docketing date of this Board Letter.

**Staffing Impacts:**

No new staffing impacts. The Program recommended for funding will be overseen by existing HCD staff.

**Special Instructions:**

1. Please return one copy of the Minute Order to Ted Teyber at [eteyber@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:eteyber@co.santa-barbara.ca.us).

Approval of Subrecipient Agreement – COVID-19

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2. Please return one executed copy of the United Way Agreement to Ted Teyber at [eteyber@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:eteyber@co.santa-barbara.ca.us).
3. Please retain one executed original of the Agreement for COB records.

Author: Edward Teyber, Senior Housing Specialist

**Attachments:**

A: United Way Agreement

**Attachment A**  
United Way Agreement

