

# **ERASE SPOTLIGHT: COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE, AND PREVENTATIVE ERA PROGRAMS**

**MODERATOR: Tori Bourret, NLIHC**

- **Lee Patterson, Richland Library**
- **Tonya Myers-Phillips, United Community Housing Coalition**
- **Susan Jacob, Housing Counseling Services, Inc.**
- **Erin Hahn, Texas Housers**



Emergency Rental Assistance: A Path to a Permanent Program

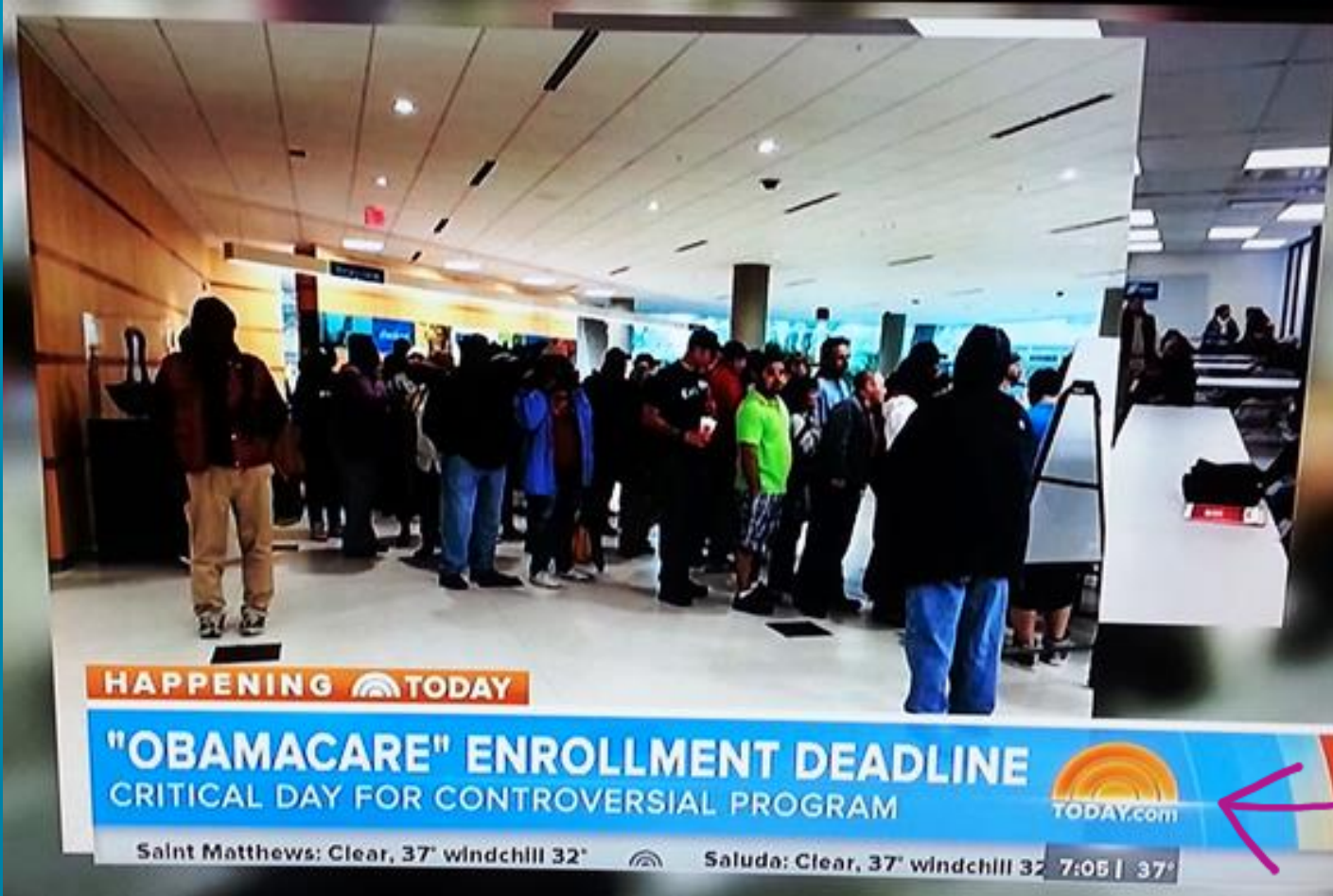




# ERAP with a Library

A relationship story...

Lee Patterson, LMSW



# Prologue

Once upon a time...



## Get health insurance before time runs out!

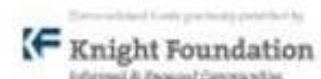


The Affordable Care Act enrollment deadline is **March 31**, but Richland Library has you covered.

An on-site expert is available to help you avoid the risk and fines for remaining uninsured. Visit [www.RichlandLibrary.com/ACA](http://www.RichlandLibrary.com/ACA) or call Community Engagement Project Coordinator Lee Patterson at **231-6383** today.

### To enroll, you'll need:

- Social Security numbers (or document numbers for legal immigrants) for all family in household
- Birth dates of family members
- Pay stubs, W-2 forms, or "Wage and Tax Statements"
- Policy numbers for any current health insurance
- Information about any health insurance the family could qualify for from an employer

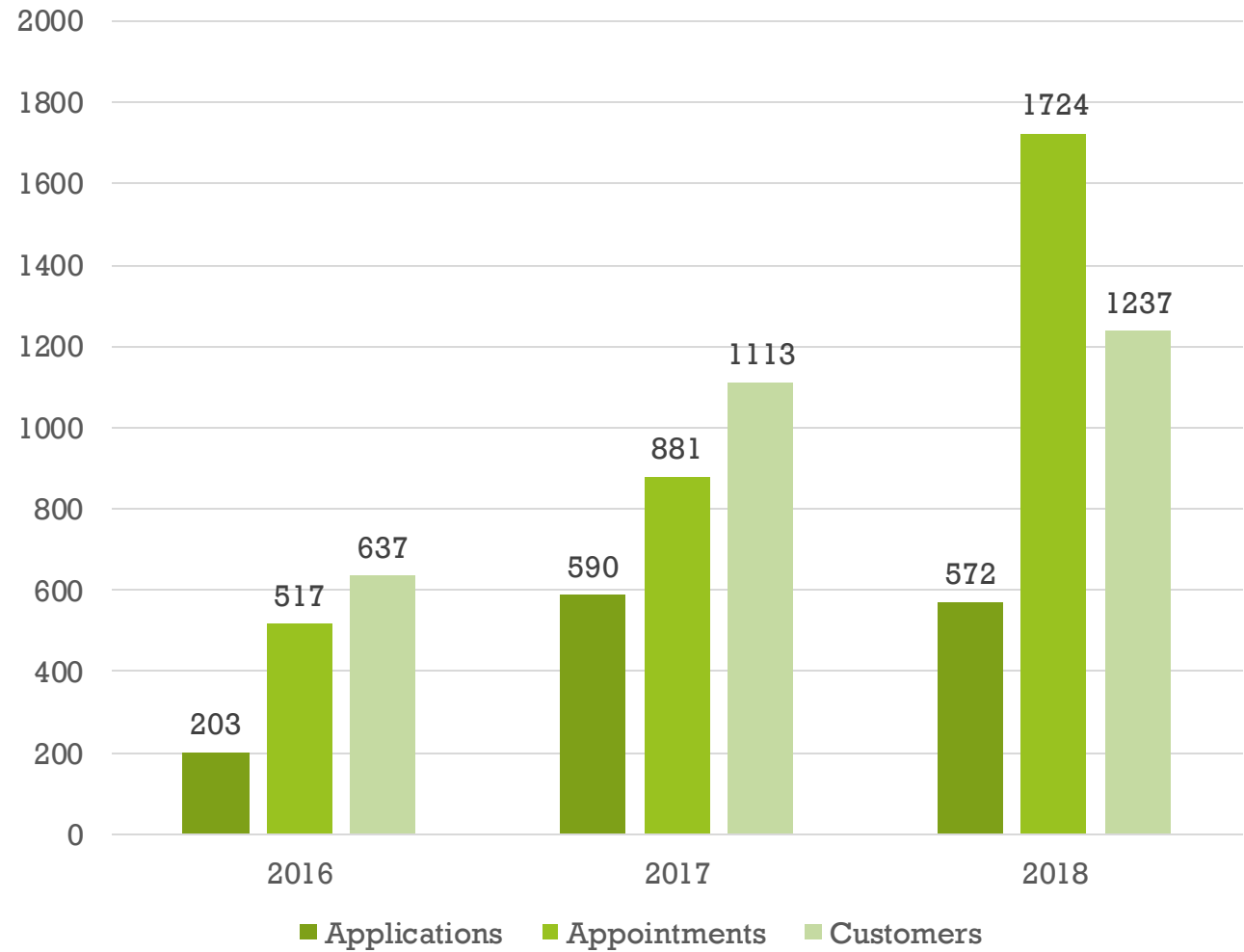


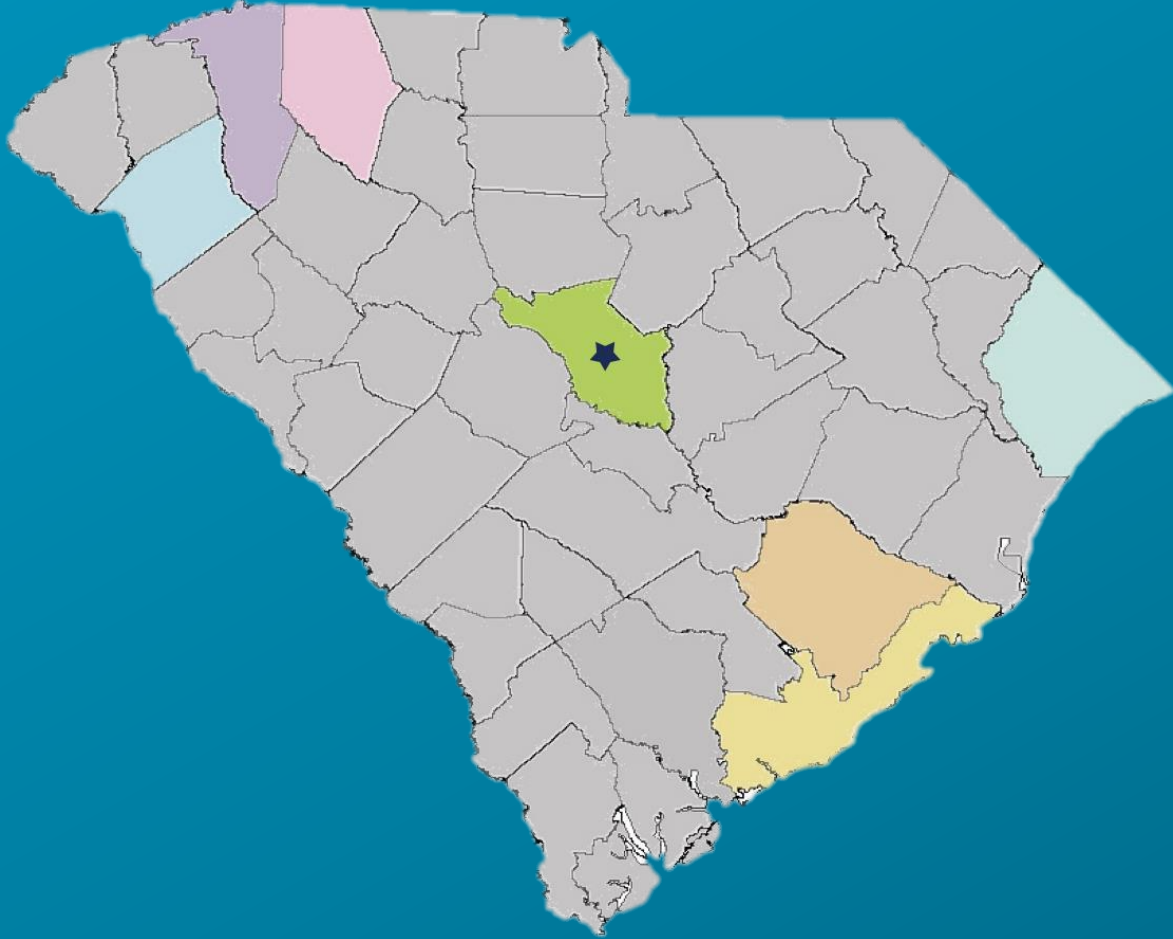
share  
information,



and complete  
hundreds of  
applications.

## In the beginning





# THE PROPOSAL

Hey, we have \$12 million and you have 14 locations with free internet and social workers. Let's get married!



**Richland Library  
Lower Richland**



**Richland Library  
Main**



**Richland Library  
Eastover**



**Richland Library  
North Main**



# March

2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



# April

2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	


IT WAS A SHORT  
ENGAGEMENT

# Emergency Rental Assistance Program



Patterson, Lee  
Library Social Work Manager

Published 5/27/2022

 I truly appreciate your help this weekend. I was able to get the other application submitted. What a great service in these very challenging time.

## QUICK LINKS

click the image for a larger view

ERAP Application



ERAP c

## Frequently

Click here for a printable bookmark with a list of documents clients will need.

What to Bring Bookmarks

Use this link to assist the client with applying for Emergency Rental Assistance through Richland County.

As a reminder, this is not our program, we are simply assisting with access so that our community has a more equitable chance at the

\$20 million

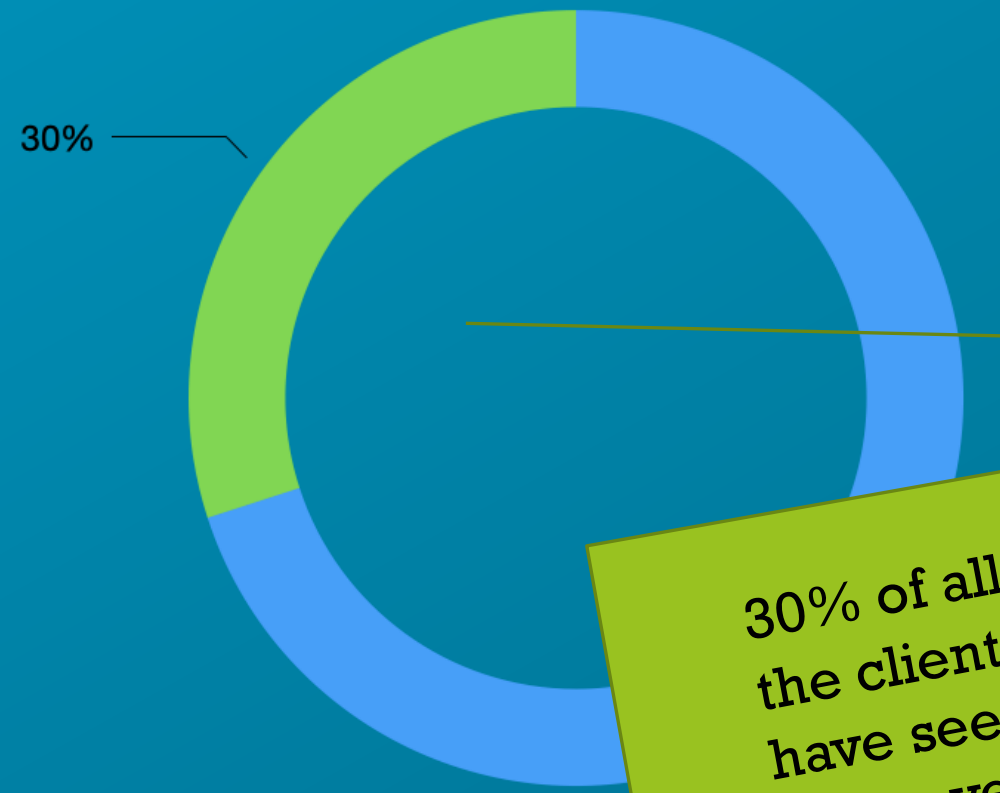
Happy Friday, everyone.

Richland County received \$12 million from the federal government for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). This program helps Richland County residents with their future rent and utility needs. Online applications open at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, September 13. Applications are ONLINE only. Richland Library locations are being promoted as access points for customers who need computer/Internet access. The need in our community for the program is significant. This program has broad eligibility and customers are anxious for the help to stay housed in the middle of a pandemic.

You can learn more about this program, how our Social Work team is assisting and how to answer customer questions on the internal [Social Work ERAP site](#). This site will be updated very regularly, so please continue to check back for the answers to your and your customer's questions. You can also learn more using this training, now available in Niche Academy: [Emergency Rental Assistance Program \(ERAP\) Training](#). This tutorial will help staff to better understand the Emergency Rental Assistance Program and its requirements, and how to help customers apply. This is not a short or simple training and will take about 2 hours to review and process this information.

DATE	LOCATION	PERSON
7-Sep	Lower Richland	Lee
8-Sep	Sandhills	Joyce
16-Sep	St. Andrews	Sharita
17-Sep	Southeast	Leah
20-Sep	Eastover	Lee
21-Sep	North Main	Leslie
22-Sep	Sandhills	Joyce
23-Sep	Ballentine	Sharita
27-Sep	Edgewood	Leah





30% of all of the clients we have seen in seven years have come in the last 18 months.

# THE HONEYMOON WAS OVER

# ERAP Application Required Documents

## Bring these items with you to your appointment:

- Current photo ID for everyone ages 18+ in your home.
- Signed lease agreement (all pages).
- Info about financial hardship because of COVID-19 (e.g. lost job, hours cut, increased expenses related to COVID-19 infection/quarantine, increased childcare costs due to school closures, etc.).
- Proof of income for all household members 18+ (2021 1040 Tax Return OR 1 month of pay stubs, Social Security award letter, child/spousal support statement, proof of unemployment income, etc.). If no income, notarized Certification of Zero Income.
- For rental assistance: Rent ledger showing past due rent by month. If applicable, eviction notice or late rental payment notice.

### ERAP – What Is Next

Today you applied for the Richland County Emergency Rental Assistance Program. Today is \_\_\_\_\_.

Your confirmation number is \_\_\_\_\_.

Your account was created using email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your password is: \_\_\_\_\_

The application portal can be found at [www.richlandcountysc.gov/era](http://www.richlandcountysc.gov/era)

#### What is Next?

1. Check your email to make sure you received your status email.
2. Let your landlord know you have applied for assistance, and they should be hearing from Richland County soon.
3. Make sure you have uploaded all of your verification documents to speed up your application.
  - o Only after all required documents and forms have been submitted by the applicant will a case manager be assigned to the application to verify program eligibility. At this time, an auto-generated notice will be sent to the applicant that their application is complete and will be reviewed for program eligibility.

Documents you still need to upload: \_\_\_\_\_

If you need to come back to us for help uploading your documents, please call us at 803-509-8371 for information on how to quickly get the documents uploaded at a Richland Library location.

4. Check your email often for updates on your application.

You were assisted at Richland Library by \_\_\_\_\_. While we are more than happy to help you at any time, you can get the most accurate answers on the status of your application from Richland County.

You can reach their call center, Monday through Friday 8:30AM to 4:30PM and Saturday 8:30AM to 12:30PM. Their phone number is 1-855-216-9198. Their email address is [eraf.richlandcounty.sc@tetratex.com](mailto:eraf.richlandcounty.sc@tetratex.com).



1431 Assembly Street | Columbia, SC 29201  
P: 803-799-9084 F: 803-799-3438

#### Submit documents by:

- Email scanned documents to [socialworker@richlandlibrary.com](mailto:socialworker@richlandlibrary.com)
- Fax to: 803.973.7588
- Drop documents off during walk-in hours: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. at Richland Library Main (1431 Assembly St.).
- Take documents to your closest library location. The staff there can scan and email them to us.
- Text full images to: 803.386.8506



### ERAP TENANT DOCUMENTS AND INFO

CLIENT# \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Unemployment Compensation for last 90 days or more?  Yes  No

Emergency Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Landlord Name \_\_\_\_\_

Landlord Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Landlord Email \_\_\_\_\_

Do you give Richland Library permission to speak with your landlord?  Yes  No

Lease

COVID Hardship Documentation – Type? \_\_\_\_\_

Ledger/Late Notice Monthly Rent: \_\_\_\_\_

Utility Bills

Electric  Water  Sewer  Gas  Internet

Please describe your COVID impact:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

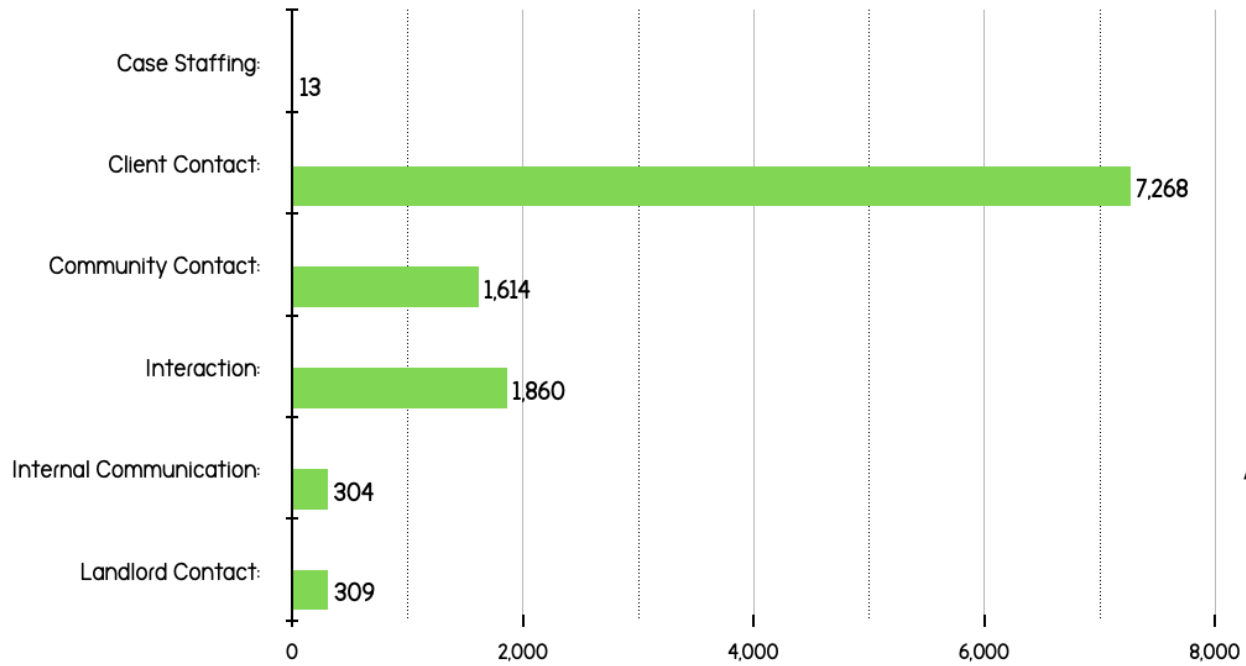
\_\_\_\_\_

I understand that all staff members in the Social Work department are **required by law** to report some things that may be disclosed during our meeting. This includes where there is a reasonable suspicion of child, dependent, or elder abuse or neglect; or when I may present a danger to myself, to others, or to property.

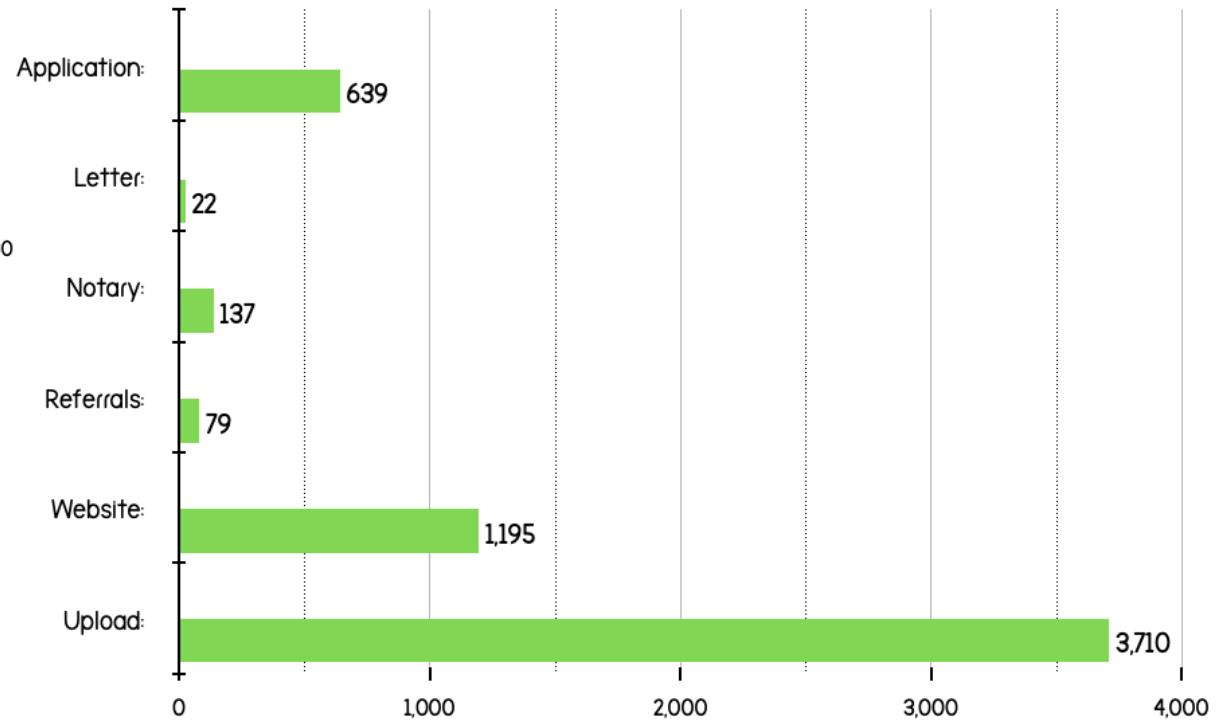
# 2 BROKE GIRLS



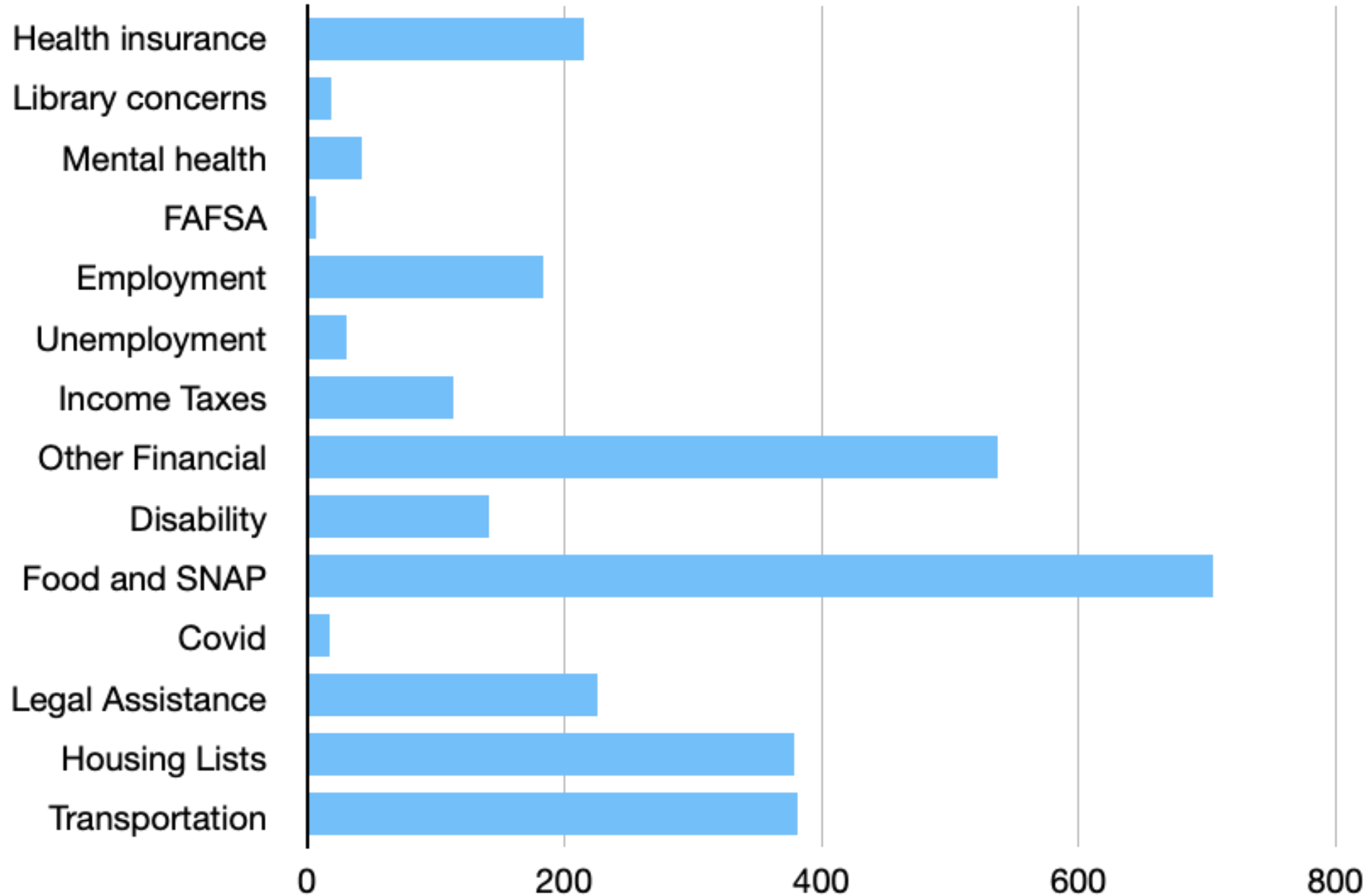
## WE TALKED A LOT



## WE TYPED A LOT



## What else did we help with?



# ERAP Closing

Hi - we received notice that Richland County is closing the Emergency Rental Assistance Program today at 5PM. They will NOT be accepting recertifications for additional assistance or new applications. Please see my whole letter here <https://bit.ly/2ZbKpWM> If we are awaiting documents from you at Richland Library, please reach out to us BEFORE 3:30PM with those documents. More information is here <https://bit.ly/2ZbKpWM>. Have you applied? <https://bit.ly/3G53tGE> Contact us: <https://bit.ly/3jhMxTw>

Status: Sent on 10/20/2021 @ 1:33 p.m.

Number of Cases: 1491 — [Download CSV Log](#)

Type: SMS & Text-to-Speech

Estimated Costs: \$90.3000 (6020 credits)

Created by Lee Patterson at Richland Library Social Work on 10/20/2021 at 12:50 p.m.



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## WE SAT IN THE MESS WITH OUR COMMUNITY

- We went to eviction court.
- We advocated with landlords.
- We advocated with the County

## WE WERE HONEST ABOUT THE HARD THINGS

- “South Carolina law is simple.”
- *Clarity is kindness*
- We made new friends



# South Carolina Legal Services

*Balancing the Scales of Justice*



COLUMBIA, SC  
**NAACP**

4

MAYBE WE  
SHOULD SEE  
OTHER  
PEOPLE?

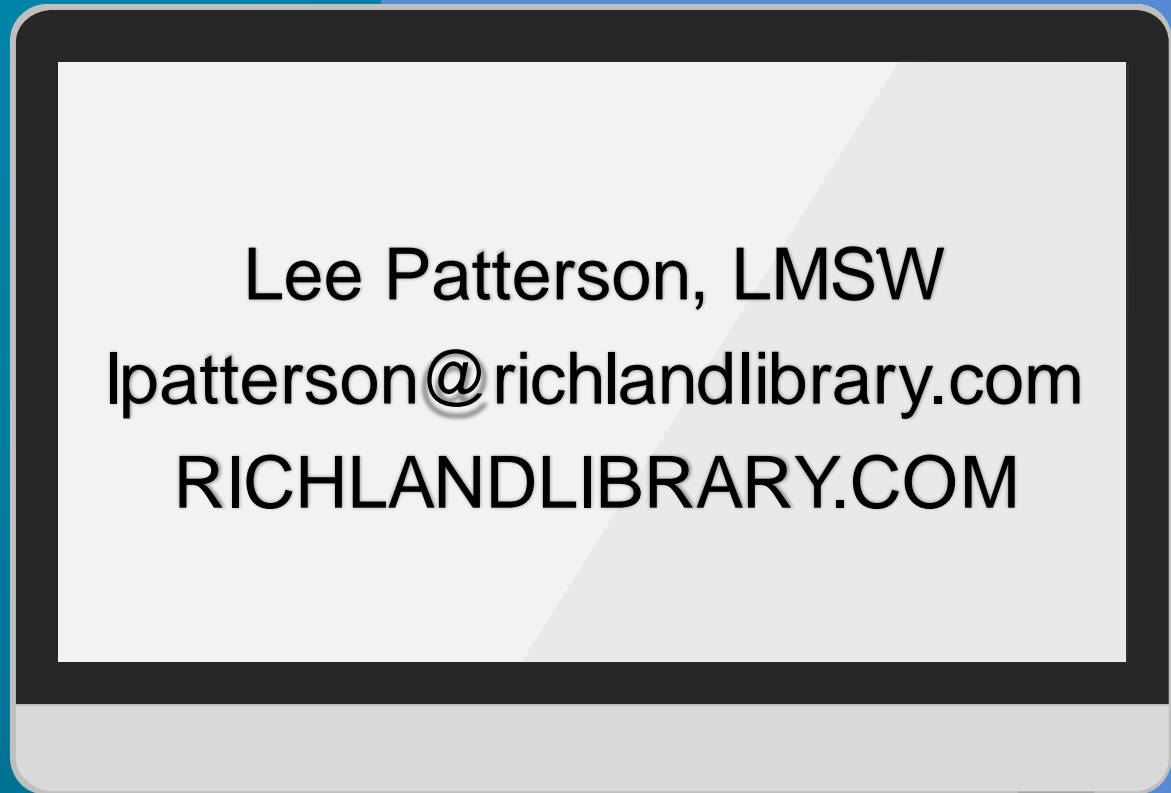


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WHERE DO  
WE GO FROM  
HERE?





Lee Patterson, LMSW  
lpatterson@richlandlibrary.com  
RICHLANDLIBRARY.COM



United Community  
Housing Coalition



Michigan  
Legal  
Services



wisdom  
Institute  
Lessons in life, Learning and Spirit.™



## KEEPING DETROITERS IN THEIR HOMES

*A comprehensive eviction prevention collaboration*

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# OUR PROJECT

- The Keeping Detroiters In Their Homes Project is a continuation and expansion of the ongoing work of tenants, Detroit residents, nonprofit organizations; legal aid organizations; City of Detroit officials, and our district court to **keep Detroiters in their homes.**
- We organize, train, and support Detroit tenants and homeowners to conduct on-the-ground advocacy, outreach, partnership development, systems change, and reform needed to both shape Detroit's ERA program in the short and adopt long-term eviction prevention measures like a right to counsel.

## BIG GOALS

- ***ACCELERATE Use Of Emergency Rental Assistance Using Neighborhood Networks***
- ***APPLY Permanent Eviction Prevention Measures Through The Establishment Of A Right To Counsel For Detroiters Facing Eviction***
- ***CHANGE The Narrative On Data By Training Detroit Residents To Tell Their Own Stories And Narrative And Elevate Use Of Qualitative Data***

# OUR TEAM



United Community  
Housing Coalition

\*Legal Services, ERA, Housing Placement, Home Repair & Purchase, Tenant Organizing,



\*Legal Services, Public Policy Advocacy,



\*Community Organizing, Youth Services, Family Services, Immigration/Undocumented families Assistance Bilingual Services



\*Community Organizing, Public policy Advocacy, Social Services



\*Community Outreach, Public Policy Advocacy, Community-based Research, & Story telling

- ❖ We are a collaborative of five organizations & part of the Detroit Right To Counsel Coalition
- ❖ Our collaborative includes legal service attorneys, community advocates, community organizers, & renters
- ❖ Each of our organizations is Detroit-based
- ❖ All organizational project leads live in the City of Detroit
- ❖ 3 of 5 project leads are Detroit renters



# OUR APPROACH

## ❖ CONTINUING & EXPANDING THE WORK OF DIVERSE STAKEHOLDERS

Tenants  
Organizers  
Detroit residents  
Nonprofit organizations  
Legal aid organizations  
City of Detroit officials  
Court officials

## ❖ Going Where the People Are

Grassroots sensibilities, relational organizing, word of mouth as an urban communication system design

## ❖ Finding Common Ground -- An Intentionality

Black Indigenous People of Color at the center, power analysis, shared power, negotiating power, decision making  
Art infused healing justice womanist activism within the rubric of actualizing project objectives  
Solidarity, Collectivizing, Decolonizing  
Resource Development – Grant writing teamwork (extemporaneous modeling)

# WE ARE MAKING AN IMPACT!

## Goal One

We will push city and court officials to use the “neighborhood networks” and trusted neighborhood messengers to inform and educate tenants/residents about Detroit’s eviction assistance programs and housing issues impacting Detroiters.

## Key Achievements:

- ✓ We established a successful canvassing program with our local district court to conduct outreach to tenants who were most at risk of eviction by default.
- ✓ Our canvassing efforts sent letters and conducted door-to-door outreach to every Detroit resident with a court date but did not appear and was at risk of a bailiff eviction.
- ✓ **Our canvassing and ERA decreased eviction orders.** Targeted outreach was made by mail and canvassing to over 3,500 households where there was an "order of eviction" applied for with a bailiff likely to evict within 7-10 days and to households where there was a default judgment entered and the likelihood of eviction with 10-20 days. That outreach reduced the cases that would have escalated to an order of eviction being signed by 20%.
- ✓ **UCHC dispersed \$48,771,715.09 in emergency rental assistance to date.**

# WE ARE MAKING AN IMPACT!

**Goal Two:** We will obtain eviction prevention and diversion measures through policy reforms and/or judicial partnerships. We will build support for Right to Counsel and train and support tenants/residents as leaders, organizers, advocates, and spokespersons.

## **Key Achievements:**

- ✓ **We passed a Right to Counsel Ordinance providing free legal representation for low-income Detroiters facing eviction!** We formed a broad coalition (Detroit Right to Counsel Coalition) and became the first city in Michigan and the 15th city in the nation (and 18th jurisdiction) to pass right-to-counsel protections. Our ordinance covers tenants, homeowners, and administrative proceedings and includes tenant outreach, public reporting, and an annual public meeting as mandated activities.
- ✓ We established new communication channels with our District Court to explore an eviction-diversion program to complement our recently passed Right to Counsel ordinance. We are working holistically and aggressively to maximize tenant protections in Detroit and achieve real housing security in Detroit.

# WE ARE MAKING AN IMPACT!

## **Goal Three:**

We will encourage transparency through Tracking Program Data, Success, Challenges, and Ongoing Needs. We will train and support tenants /residents to collect, analyze, and share eviction and housing data and our own stories, and other holistic resources that are often not considered in program design, delivery, or evaluation.

## **Key Achievements:**

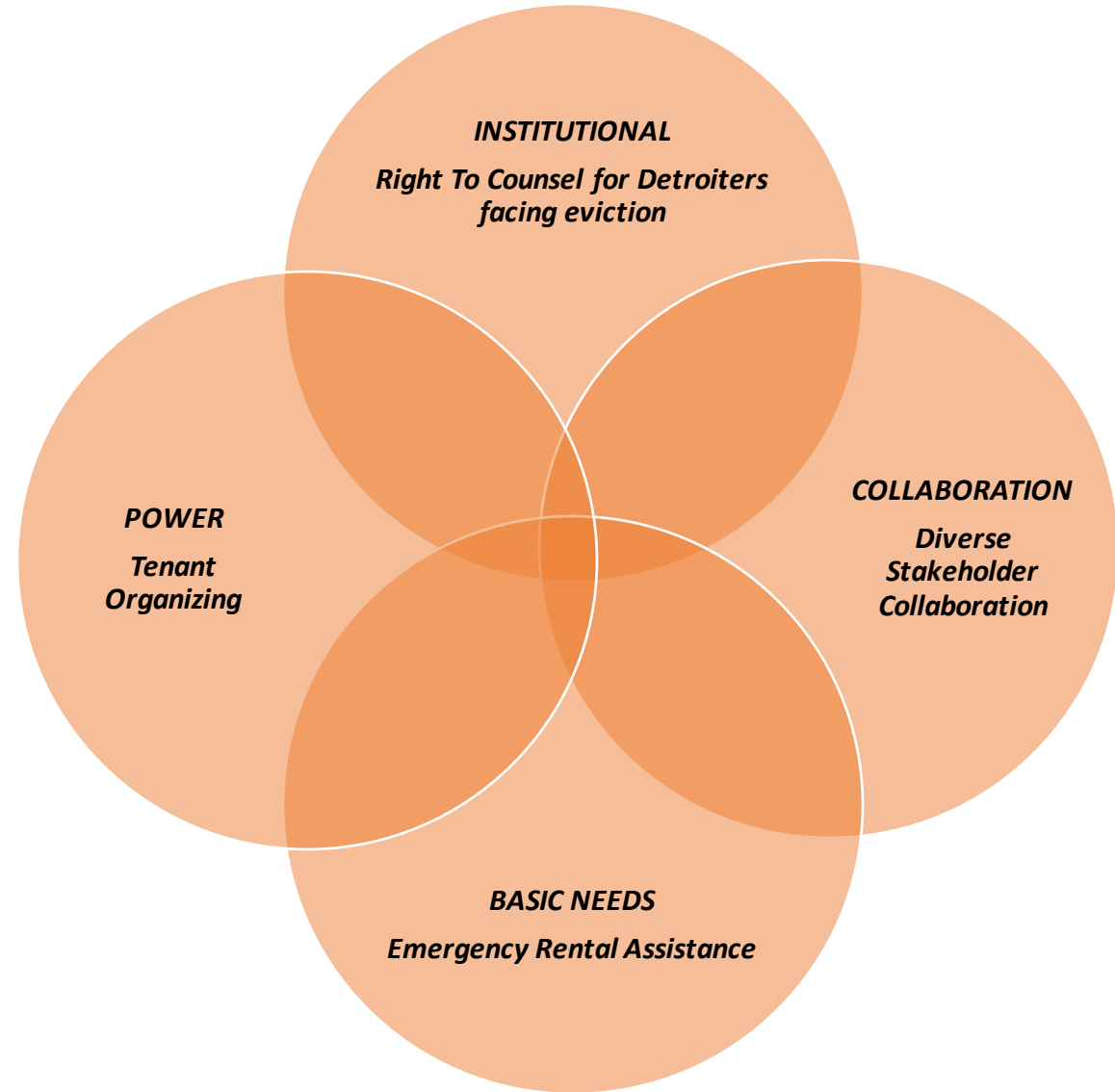
- ✓ We started a story bank and recorded approximately 30 stories on why Detroiters need a Right to Counsel Ordinance, support Right to Counsel, and their vision for a housing-secure city.
- ✓ We partnered with the nationally renowned Stout firm to secure the study and release of “The Economic Impact of a Right to Counsel.” Our ERASE grant collaborative members, Michigan Legal Services, United Community Housing Coalition, and Wisdom Institute, served as data partners, helping to collect quantitative and qualitative data for the report, and participated in the analysis.
- ✓ Wisdom Institute helped to author the qualitative companion report, the first of its kind with Stout.
- ✓ We worked with U-M Poverty Solutions researchers to provide feedback for the policy recommendations for better housing protections.
- ✓ We hosted 17 events for education, advocacy, and training and provided space for impacted persons to create, determine, and control their own stories and lead a community-led housing narrative.

# KEYS TO OUR SUCCESS



- **ACCELERATE Use Of Emergency Rental Assistance Using Neighborhood Networks**
  - Broad outreach (door to door, community events, community partners, flyer distribution) to raise awareness
  - Targeted outreach through court data and district court partnership to residents at the highest risk of eviction
  - Providing legal representation to negotiate settlements
- **APPLY Permanent Eviction Prevention Measures Through The Establishment Of A Right To Counsel For Detroiters Facing Eviction**
  - Raising awareness and hope through outreach and publicity
  - Building a broad and diverse coalition
  - Costs and Benefits Study of a Right To Counsel Ordinance for Detroit
  - Targeted communication with stakeholders
- **CHANGE The Narrative On Data By Training Detroit Residents To Tell Their Own Stories And Narrative And Elevate Use Of Qualitative Data**
  - Qualitative Companion Study for a Right To Counsel Ordinance for Detroit
  - Creating community communication channels
  - Training Detroit residents to tell their own stories
  - Protecting and holding space for tenants in our coalition leadership

**WE BELIEVE  
HOUSING IS A  
HUMAN RIGHT  
AND WE WORK TO  
PERMANENTLY  
REDUCE  
EVICTIONS!**



# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPACT

## Institutional

- Pass and fund Right to Counsel ordinances
- Help courts develop and strengthen emergency motion rules
- Train local police departments on illegal evictions; develop procedures for responding to calls on illegal evictions

## Collaboration

- Support local stakeholders to conduct broad and targeted education and outreach at the neighborhood level
- Institutionalize diverse voices and prioritize inclusion of those with lived experience, “on the ground” advocacy, and research partners in policy making circles

## Basic Needs

- Continue Emergency Rental Assistance
- Offer payment assistance for land contract holders

## Power

- Support and fund tenant organizing
- Support and fund community advocacy coalitions

YOU CAN REACH THE KEEPING DETROITERS IN THEIR HOME TEAM AT:

Tonya Myers Phillips, Michigan Legal Services (Project Lead)

[mstphillips@gmail.com](mailto:mstphillips@gmail.com)

Ted Phillips, United Community Housing Coalition (Organizational Grantee)-

[tphillipsuchc@yahoo.com](mailto:tphillipsuchc@yahoo.com)

Tenesa Sanders, Detroit Action (Organizer)

[tenesa@detroitaction.org](mailto:tenesa@detroitaction.org)

Nora Rodriguez, Congress of Communities (Organizer)

[nora@cocswdetroit.com](mailto:nora@cocswdetroit.com)



# Use of ERA Funds to Divert and Prevent Evictions

**Presented by:**

**Susan Jacob**

**Housing Counseling Services, Inc.**

# Housing Counseling Services, Inc.

- Non-profit, housing, training, advocacy and referral center
- FREE services to the community since 1972
- Help clients resolve and prevent housing obstacles so they can become well-informed housing consumers!

# Evictions in Washington, DC

Eviction in Washington D.C. is a formal legal process:

- At least a 30-day notice
- Court Summons & trial
- Decision issued by judge
- Eviction by U.S. Marshalls

**Landlords may NOT physically evict tenants, remove belongings (No "self help" evictions)**

- Can only be evicted for a legally valid reason (non-payment of rent, violating lease terms, landlord personal use etc.)

# Stronger Together by Assisting You (STAY DC)

- Program funded by ERA 1 and ERA 2
- DC closed the program by end of October 2021 and expended all funds by December 2021
- Received additional reallocated funds which were used to fund the last approximately 1200 remaining open applications
- During the eviction moratorium, the program was successful in assisting tenants in reducing the size of balances due, but may not have paid the full balance due to program restrictions

# Stronger Together by Assisting You (STAY DC)

Total ERA Funds Allocated



**\$352M**

STAY DC Rental Funds Distributed



**\$165.78M**

Total ERA Paid and Obligated



**\$352M**

Other Rent Assistance for  
<50AMI Households



**\$48.11M**

Admin and Housing Stability  
Costs Paid and Obligated



**\$32.35M**

Total Rental and Utilities  
Application in Process



**\$97.45M**

Unobligated ERA  
Funds Available



**\$0**

STAY DC Utility Funds Distributed



**\$8.31M**

LAST UPDATED: 10/28/2021

# Stronger Together by Assisting You (STAY DC)

## District of Columbia Emergency Rental Assistance - Reports to U.S. Department of the Treasury

		Financial Assistance to Households*									
Data Element	Fund	Jan 1 - Mar 31, 2021	Apr 2021	May 2021	Jun 2021	Jul 2021	Aug 2021	Sept 2021	Oct 2021	Nov 2021	TOTAL
Amount of Assistance	ERA1	\$ 19,775,603	\$ 4,638,282	\$ 8,467,718	\$ 32,206,267	\$ 25,755,528	\$ 49,300,782	\$ 38,046,887	\$ -	\$ -	\$178,191,067
	ERA2	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,669,877	\$ 37,718,163	\$58,634,590	\$100,022,630
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 19,775,603</b>	<b>\$ 4,638,282</b>	<b>\$ 8,467,718</b>	<b>\$ 32,206,267</b>	<b>\$ 25,755,528</b>	<b>\$ 49,300,782</b>	<b>\$ 41,716,764</b>	<b>\$ 37,718,163</b>	<b>\$ 58,634,590</b>	<b>\$ 278,213,697</b>
Number of Unique Households	ERA1	2,654	2,782	3,379	6,705	7,039	10,254	9,065	-		
	ERA2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,394	8,784	13,555	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,654</b>	<b>2,782</b>	<b>3,379</b>	<b>6,705</b>	<b>7,039</b>	<b>10,254</b>	<b>10,459</b>	<b>8,784</b>	<b>13,555</b>	

\* Reporting metric includes financial assistance to households only; does not include administrative costs or housing stability services

# Eviction Diversion Framework

- HCS participates in 2 working groups related to Eviction Diversion
- Collaboration among government agencies, CBOs, legal services and the courts
- HCS staff are present in court hearings as housing counselors to provide information on current applications for assistance and to provide clients with information on how to apply
- Extensive collaboration among partners to make sure “last mile payments” are accurate and will in fact stop an eviction (every penny owed at the moment of eviction must be paid in order to redeem tenancy)

# Outcomes

- Evictions started on September 13<sup>th</sup> as soon as the Federal moratorium on evictions was lifted
- From September 2021 to December 2021 about 550 evictions were scheduled.
- Of those about 70% of those evictions were stopped due to funds being dispersed from ERA 1 and ERA 2 funds AND ALSO local funds to capture those “last mile payments.” We disbursed approximately \$300M with a majority of those funds coming from ERA 1 and ERA 2.
- Fantastic collaboration between legal service providers, government agencies, CBOs and court entities (including attorneys for housing providers)
- Recognized that housing case management is vital in assisting tenants in reaching housing stability



# Outcomes

- Legislation passed:
  - Housing Providers could not evict tenants who had applied for assistance through STAY DC and the local ERAP program within a certain time frame
  - Tenants owing less than \$600 could not be taken to court for eviction
  - Housing Providers must be registered with the DCRA
  - Housing Providers must issue a notice to tenants prior to filing for eviction in court (must be in the client's preferred language) within a specific timeframe
  - Housing Providers generally cannot use credit history as a reason to deny a voucher holder tenancy

# Challenges

- Funding for the collaborative work (counselors in court rooms and case management)
- Technology access for tenants to apply for rental assistance funds
- Making sure “last mile payments” are covering the eviction redemption amount
- Some issues with tenants receiving payments but not given to Housing Providers but Housing Providers also refusing to participate

# Two Tracks of Landlord Engagement

- **Diversion:**

occurs prior to judicial action (identify buildings with high delinquency rates and engage with pop-ups as an example)

- **Prevention:**

occurs when there is a judicial action already in process and may include the combined efforts of Housing Counselors in the court rooms, legal services providers and landlord attorneys to prevent the eviction or further judicial action

# Components for Landlord Engagement

- Participation from Housing Providers and their commitment to Eviction Diversion and the process as a whole
- Tenant Participation (for agreements, payment plans, forgiveness plans, provide documents requested)
- Housing Counselors (assist in negotiating with landlords and bring resources to the community)
- Legal Service Providers (other than non-payment of rent cases and/or if a Housing Provider does not engage in the eviction diversion process)
- Making sure Housing Providers are not ignored in the conceptualization and actualization of the Eviction Diversion Framework
- We must understand and accept Housing Provider motivations (usually to maximize profits)

# Goals of Landlord Engagement

- To engage with Landlords prior to court filings for delinquent tenants (this is the priority)
- Utilize ERAP and other financial assistance programs as a tool in negotiating with landlords
- Provide an option for tenants to work longer term with Housing Counselors on establishing stability in their housing situation, if needed or wanted
- Making sure Housing Providers are not ignored in the conceptualization and actualization of the Eviction Diversion Framework

# Types of Housing Providers

- Providers who are in the rental business (goal is to maintain tenancy over the long run)
- Providers who are investors (could be looking to empty units or displace tenants)
- Providers who are social investors (share a goal of sustainable affordable housing ex. Non-profit housing developers)
- Understand all 3 are not created equal and even some non-profit organizations who have housing programs do not always want to find ways to keep delinquent tenants housed

# What are some Barriers to Landlord Engagement?

- Properties with serious housing code violations
- Unresponsive Landlords
- Adversarial relationships with tenants
- Providers unwilling to share documents needed for payments
- Crime
- Discrimination
- Providers not willing to engage with technology
- Disengaged owners

# Strategies to Move Beyond the Barriers

- Extensive landlord outreach which offers both financial and human support
- Pop-up events offered onsite (in the field and building relationships), mainly in partnership with ERASE cohort member Empower DC
- Case management services offered onsite
- Having negotiated affordable payment plans or forgiveness options with the support of a Housing Counselor
- Potentially offering on time rental payment rewards rather than focus on late fees (RELIEF program as an example)
- Integrate landlord access into the ERAP portal so they can upload documents directly
- Engaging landlords in direct outreach and referral of their residents to support service agencies
- Housing Counselors in the court rooms instantly interacting with delinquent tenants and connecting them with ERAP services and obtaining documents needed from landlords in real time in the court room



# Proven Strategies Used

- Engaging with landlords for pop-up events
  - \*barrier here are tenants are not always willing to engage with outside help because of distrust of the landlord
- Housing Counselors in court rooms
  - \*able to provide real time information on application status and inform the court what is needed from the landlord
- Negotiating affordable payment plans
  - \*happens on a regular basis under the DC ERAP program and having a process in engaging landlords to move towards a combination of forgiveness and affordable payment plans is beneficial

# Next Steps

- Completing the Eviction Diversion Framework as a firm process
- Have housing counselors present in court mediations to ensure payment plans and other housing stability challenges are addressed with the Housing Providers present
- Keep documentation barriers fairly low but also ensure that funds are disbursed within regulations to ensure limited funding reaches the most at-risk tenants
- Continue to engage with landlords prior to court filings to ensure tenants are assisted without the anxiety of having to go to court and to reduce the number of overall court filings



Thank you

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[Housingetc.org](http://Housingetc.org)



# Monitoring ERA and Evictions in Texas

Lessons learned & recommendations  
for the future

Erin Hahn, Research Analyst  
October 17, 2022

# Three prong approach

## Eviction court watch program

Observational data collected in four Texas cities

## Eviction data tracking

Eviction case filing rates collected from all 254 counties in Texas

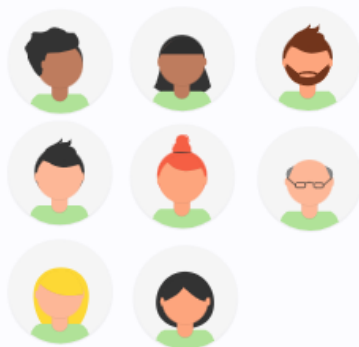
## ERA data tracking

Programmatic data collected from 38 ERA programs in Texas

informs

## Advocacy

(ERA best practices, eviction court reforms, etc.)



## Who can become a court observer?

Join the Houston ESN by attending a training!

After attending a training session anyone can join the Houston ESN. People can join as representatives of a group or individuals. As long as hearings are streamed, participants in the Houston ESN don't even have to live in Harris County.

Members of the Houston ESN must agree to certain basic norms covered in the training. You'll need a decent internet connection and device that connects to the internet to join.

## How does it work?

### Attend a training.



Sign up here.

First, let us know you're interested and we'll get you set up with a training session over video chat.

As a member of the ESN you'll receive occasional calls to action when there are opportunities for public comment.

### Observe a case.



Sign up here.

After your training, decide how you want to participate in the ESN.

- You can act as a presence in the courtroom (we prefer people don't risk exposure by attending in-person hearings, but everyone is free to make their own choices).
- You can pay a little bit more attention and enter notes in a handy form we have that will help us spot any issues.
- And, if you don't have time to court watch you can always share stats that we share on social media to keep the conversation going around evictions.

### Share your observations.



You'll receive a link in your email where you can submit your observations.

# Texas Eviction Case Tracker

Texas Housers

## Texas Counties

- Anderson
- Andrews
- Angelina
- Aransas
- Archer
- Armstrong
- Atascosa

**Latest update:** 10/11/22  
**Data notes:** New eviction case counts are provided by the State of Texas Office of Court Administration (OCA). Since 2011, the OCA has aggregated eviction cases and repair and remedy cases into a single case category called landlord-tenant disputes. This page reflects the OCA landlord-tenant dispute data. Tests performed by Texas Housers indicate that the vast



Per most recent month of data, at least

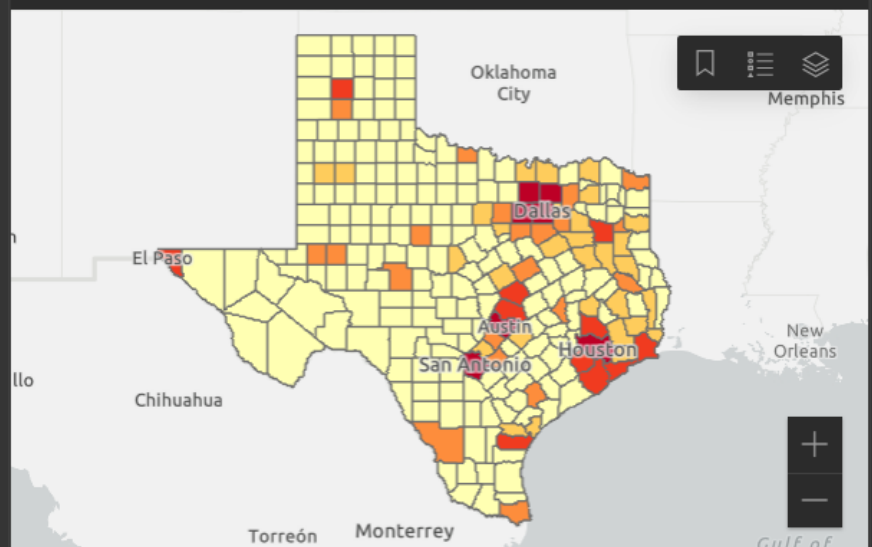
# 23,779

## new eviction cases were filed.

Most recent month of data: July 2022

Data are updated ~1.5 months after the last day of reporting (e.g., Dec data are uploaded on or around Feb 15).

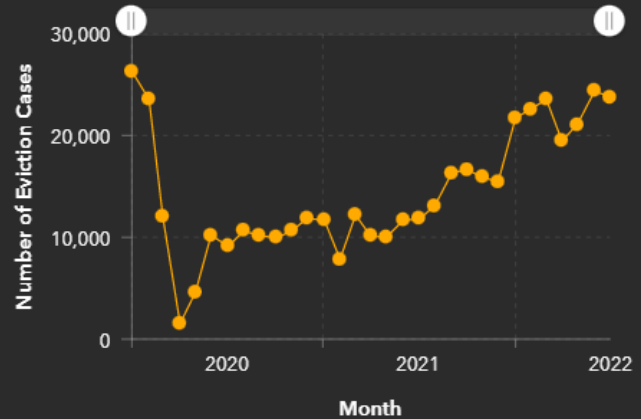
## Eviction Cases in Texas Counties



CONANP, Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA  
Powered by Esri

Toggle layers on and off using the "Layers" popup in the top-right corner of the map. Use the "Legend" popup to interpret the map symbology.

## Eviction Cases Over Time



Pop-up case numbers for the first of the month represent cases for the entire month.

# 140 out of 803

## courts failed to report

### their eviction data last month.

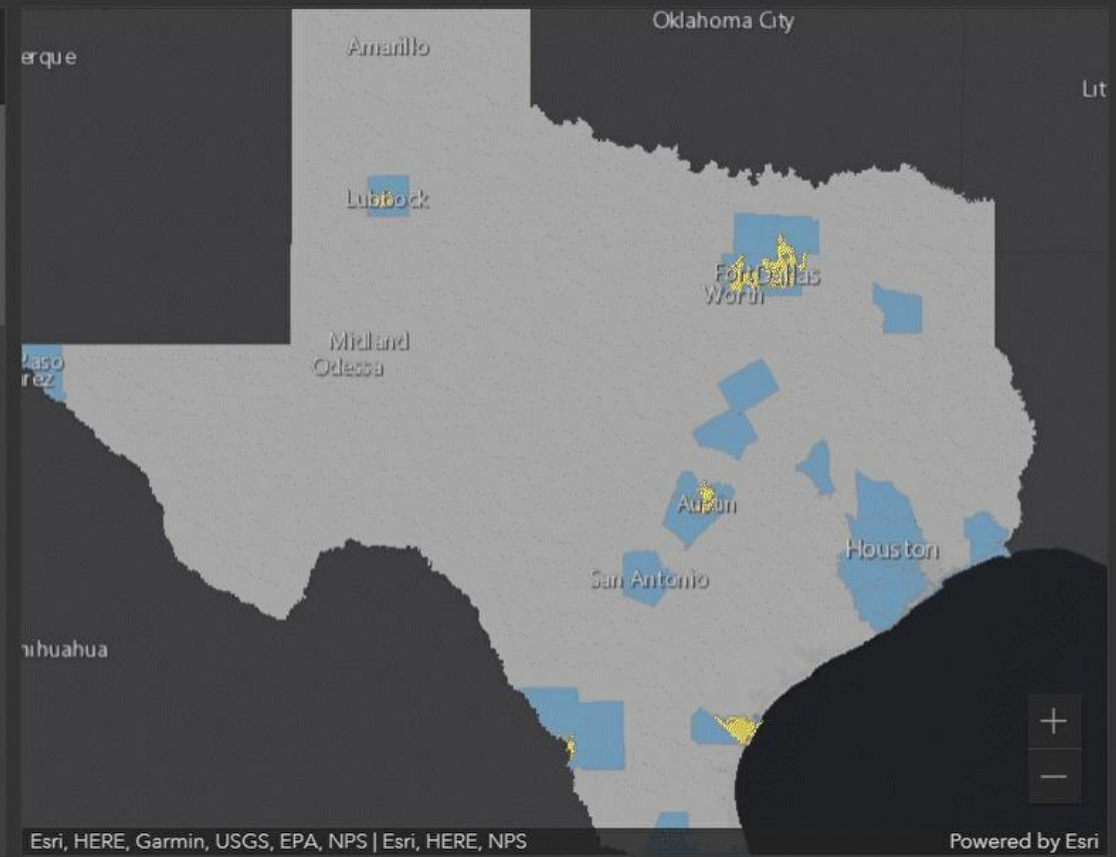
In a typical month, over 100 Texas JP courts fail to report data to the State.



# Tracking the Distribution of ERA in Texas

Select an ERA program:

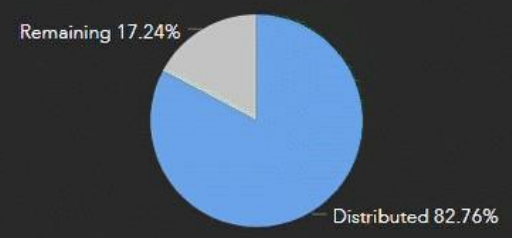
- Arlington
- Austin
- Bell County
- Bexar County
- Brazoria County
- Brazos County
- Cameron County
- Collin County
- Corpus Christi
- Dallas (City)
- Dallas County



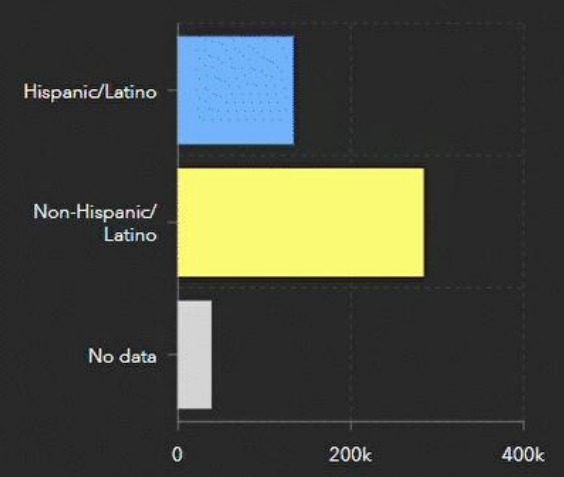
3B \$ distributed

477.8k households assisted

### ERA distribution as a percent of total funding



### Households assisted by Ethnicity



- Map Legend
- City ERA program
  - County ERA program
  - Statewide ERA program

**Important notes about the dashboard's data**  
(see methodology section for more detail)

1. Data is current as of March 31, 2022 (the end date of Treasury's Q1 2022 reporting period and the last time ERA grantees were required to compile the income and demographic data that is displayed here). Because ERA programs have continued to distribute assistance



AMI Race Ethnicity

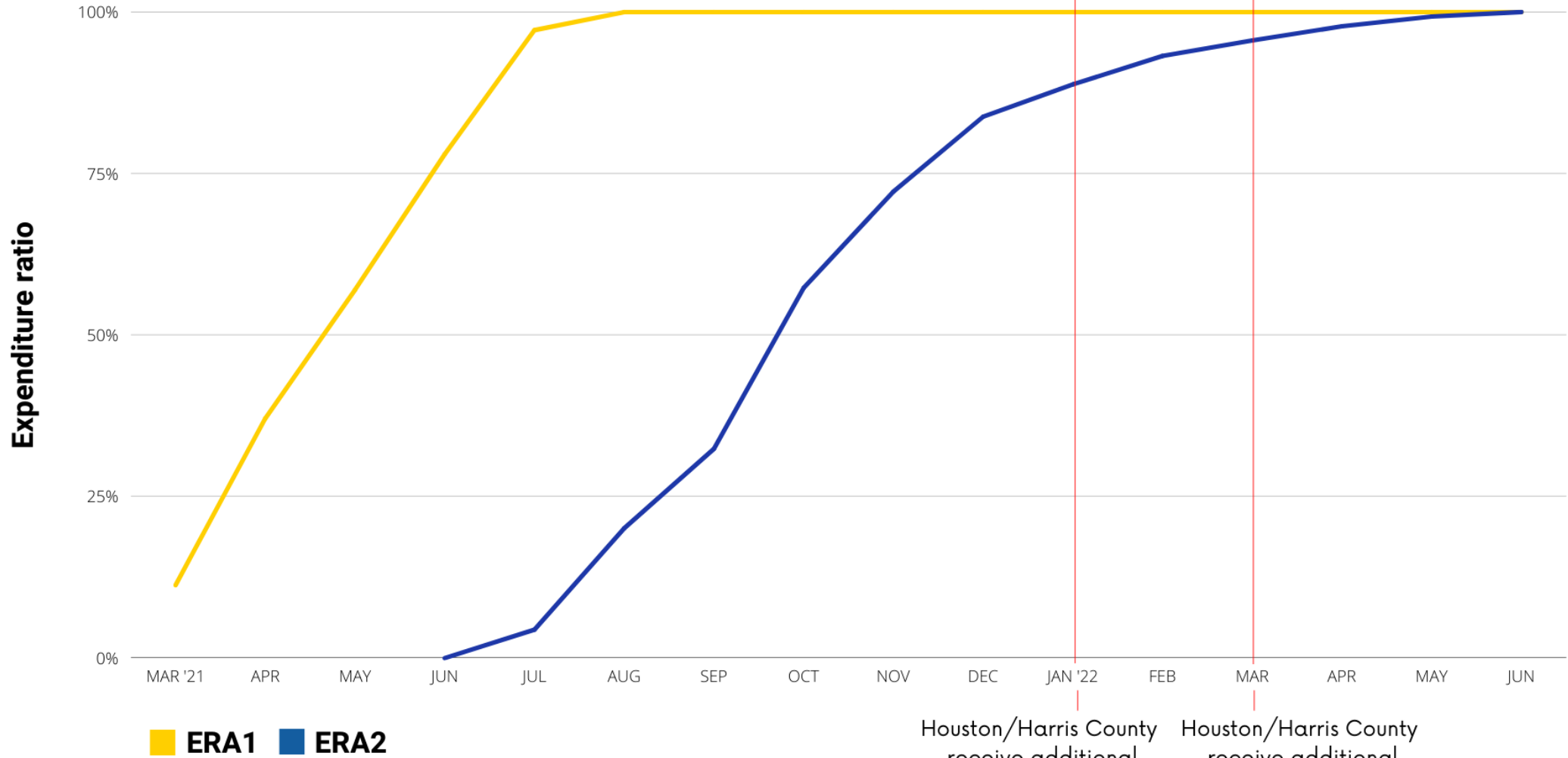




# Houston & Harris County

ERA1 award: **\$143.9m**

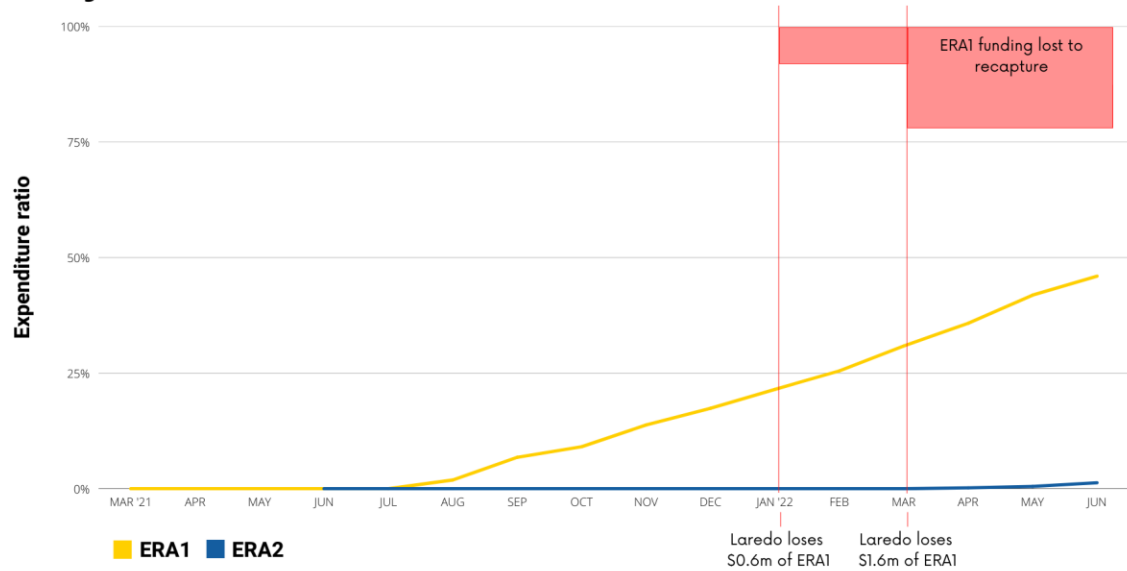
ERA2 award: **\$157.5m**



Monthly ERA Spending Reports, August 2021 - June 2022. Source: U.S. Department of the Treasury

# City of Laredo

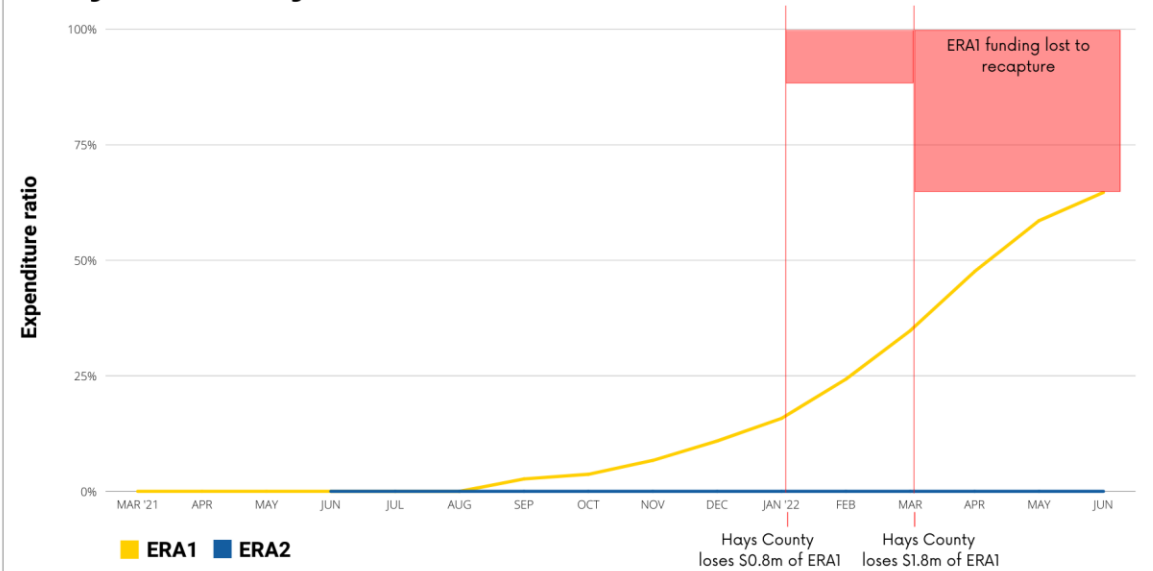
ERA1 award: \$7.9m  
ERA2 award: \$8.3m



Monthly ERA Spending Reports, August 2021 - June 2022. Source: U.S. Department of the Treasury

# Hays County

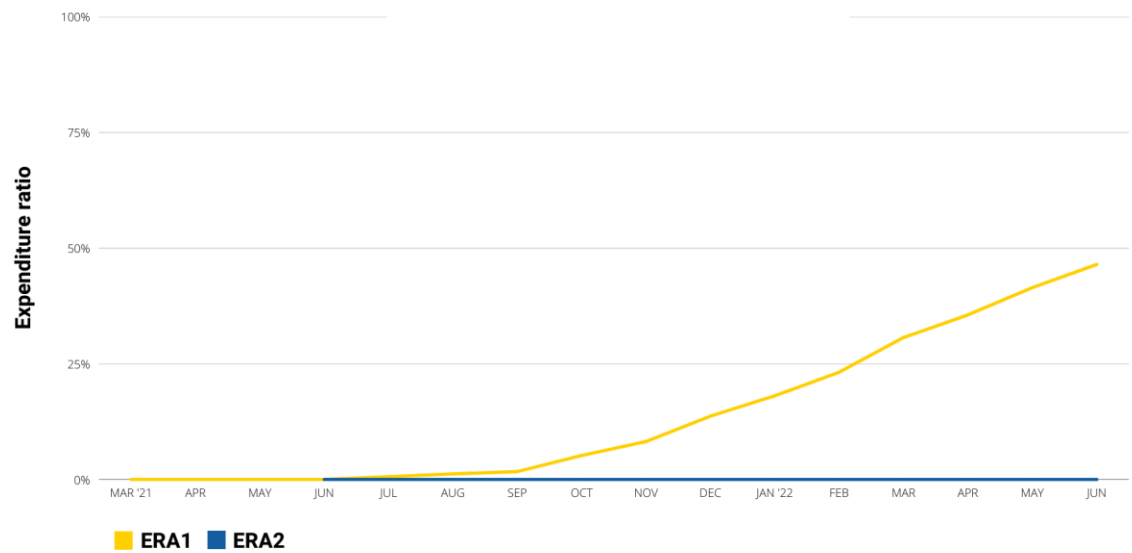
ERA1 award: \$7.0m  
ERA2 award: \$7.6m



Monthly ERA Spending Reports, August 2021 - June 2022. Source: U.S. Department of the Treasury

# Hidalgo County

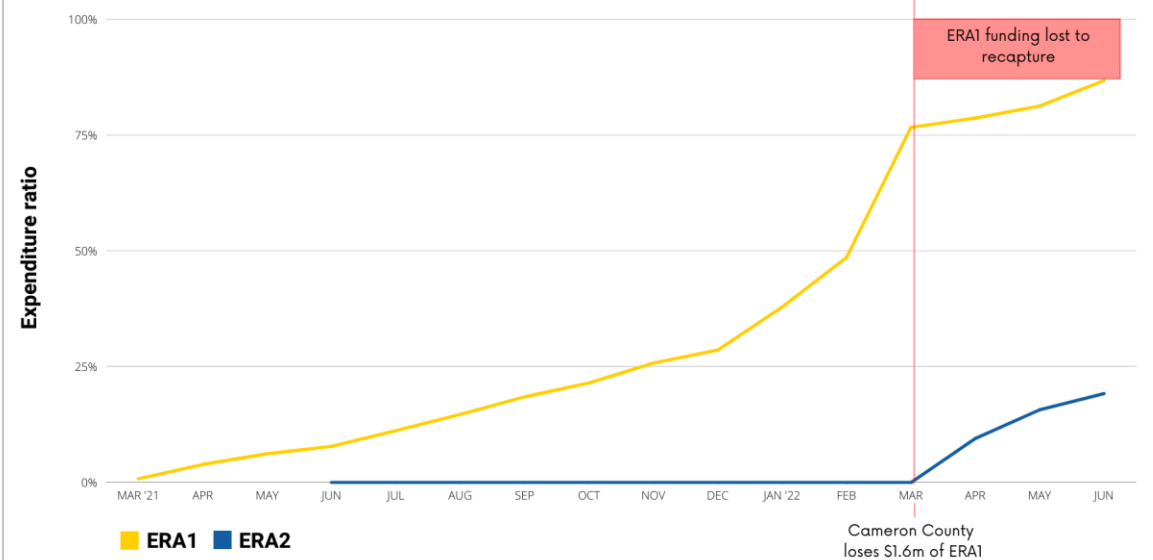
ERA1 award: \$40.6m  
ERA2 award: \$50.2m



Monthly ERA Spending Reports, August 2021 - June 2022. Source: U.S. Department of the Treasury

# Cameron County

ERA1 award: \$12.8m  
ERA2 award: \$13.3m



Monthly ERA Spending Reports, August 2021 - June 2022. Source: U.S. Department of the Treasury

# Recommendations

## **Federal:**

- Provide flexible guidelines *and* offer additional guidance to jurisdictions without rental assistance experience
- Be prepared for and responsive to regional/cultural challenges
- Have a plan for uncooperative local governments

## **State/local:**

- Leave rental assistance infrastructures intact (even as federal funding dries up)
- Strengthen community and non-profit networks
- Approach eviction prevention holistically



**TEXAS  
HOUSERS**  
TEXAS LOW INCOME HOUSING  
INFORMATION SERVICE

## **EVICTIION PREVENTION PLATFORM**



**REFORM  
EVICTIION  
COURT**



**INVEST IN  
EVICTIION  
DIVERSION**



**PASS  
TENANTS'  
RIGHTS LAWS**



**FUND  
LOW-INCOME  
HOUSING**