



MEMORANDUM

Date: October 24, 2023

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Leshner
County Administrator

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jan Leshner", is written over the printed name and title.

Re: **Pima County Eviction Assistance Program**

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Pima County has obligated over \$88.6 million in rent and utility assistance to over 17,000 unique households through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program. Due to the success of the program, Pima County has received seven reallocations of funding initially allocated to other jurisdictions, allowing the program to continue to benefit the community well beyond when it would have otherwise shut down. Based on evidence-backed models, the impact of this investment has been enormous—between \$200 million and \$350 million in economic benefit to the community.

As detailed in the attached memorandum from Community & Workforce Development (CWD) Director Dan Sullivan, funding is likely to be fully exhausted by the end of December 2023. CWD is taking or has already taken steps to prepare for this inevitable occurrence, some detailed in prior memorandums to the Board with additional steps detailed in the attached memorandum. After ERAP funding is exhausted, Pima County will revert to annual funding sources, which are significantly less generous, have more administrative burdens associated with them, and are estimated to be insufficient to meet ongoing community need.

The Arizona Department of Economic Security will be opening a portal for families with children or seniors to directly apply for assistance formally on November 4. In addition, Pima County is pursuing funding through the Arizona Department of Housing to continue local funding focused on cases in the eviction court.

JKL/dym

Attachment

c: Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer
Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator
Dan Sullivan, Director, Community & Workforce Development

Date: October 23, 2023

To: Jan Leshner
County Administrator

From: Dan Sullivan 
Community & Workforce Development
Director

Francisco García, MD, MPH
Deputy County Administrator and Chief
Medical Officer

Re: Emergency Rental Assistance Program End

The Pima County Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) has been an unmitigated success. Working collaboratively since March 2020, we have served more than 17,000 households with \$88.6 million in rent and utility assistance. This aid has assisted families distributed throughout the Pima County and across all our incorporated jurisdictions. (Attachments A & B.) Researchers have assessed that rental assistance and eviction programs are cost-effective. The return on investment for eviction prevention interventions has been estimated to range from \$3 to \$5 per \$1 spent. Based on such models, the net impact of the federal ERAP investment in Pima County has easily yielded between \$200 million and \$350 million in economic benefit to this community.

ERAP has continued far beyond its original end date, because we have been reallocated funds from the state and federal government in recognition of our programmatic efficiency. In previous correspondence, we forecasted the inevitable exhaustion of all federal expanded rental assistance and our work to prepare for that eventuality. Based on the most-recent estimates, this will occur by December. When this happens, we will return to our existing, but more restrictive eviction/rental assistance program.

At this time we have already taken (or plan to quickly take) the following steps to efficiently wind down this program:

- Eliminated vacant ERAP-funded positions, converting those resources into rental assistance
- Limit new rental assistance awards to one month
- Fund utility requests with alternate funding sources
- Paused new appointments for assistance.

We have worked closely and continuously with our colleagues from the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) to ensure funding for Pima County residents once we have exhausted local rental assistance resources. The Governor recently allocated \$153 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to extend rental assistance to households with children and elderly individuals. This program will pay up to three months of back rent. DES intends to formally open their portal for Pima County applications on November 4.¹ DES estimates that these funds will last until May 2024. Information on DES's new program and its application portal can be found at <https://des.az.gov/ERAP>.

¹As of today, it appears the portal is accepting Pima County applications, but the website will officially announce launch on November 4.

The Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH) has asked local governments and community organizations for information on an upcoming request for proposals for housing-related funding. A major component of this funding is the State's investment of \$150 million in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, which rent and utility assistance programs are eligible to apply for. As part of our response, we have notified ADOH that we will request \$10 million for rent and utility assistance when the formal Request for Proposals is released.

Personal Program Impact

ERAP has provided meaningful assistance to thousands of Pima County residents who were able to remain housed and kept families intact. Community & Workforce Development (CWD) receives many messages and notes of gratitude from ERAP recipients. One recent message came from a client who was grateful for the assistance received during a devastating time – the loss of his mother, sibling, and job over the course of months. This individual was grateful not only for the connection to workforce employment and training, but for the ability to grieve, hang family memorials and sleep in his own home. Without the assistance of ERAP, he would have been evicted, displaced, lost sentimental belongings and unable to successfully move forward with employment.

Another recent example occurred Friday October 13. Navigator Spencer Potrie received a call from a Constable regarding a family of five (with three young children) facing imminent eviction. In coordination with the Constable, our Navigator persuaded the landlord to work with the rental assistance process to obtain the necessary documents so that the rent arrears and one month's prospective rent could be paid. Our Escalation team immediately processed the application and provided a payment guarantee to the landlord on Monday, October 16th, allowing the family to stay housed.

Future Direction

Our rental assistance programs have the overarching goal of preventing households from experiencing unsheltered homelessness. We have integrated rent and utility assistance within the Emergency Eviction Legal Services (EELS) program in order to focus resources at the last point before homelessness may begin. Navigators are co-located within the court to help process escalated rental assistance applications in coordination with a dedicated rental assistance team. Additionally, a social worker/navigator is tasked with working with the Constables office to intervene in cases of especially vulnerable tenants when eviction cannot be prevented. Sustainable rehousing placements using expedited rental assistance funds help prevent homelessness for this population. Currently, EELS is processing approximately 34 escalations per week.

The EELS Emergency Housing program ensures very recently evicted households have a safe, dignified place to stay and avoid street homelessness. Where there is no immediate pathway for sustainability and an eviction is inevitable, participants are placed in the shelter program in order to bridge them to a sustainable living situation. Currently, Emergency Housing clients are sheltered for an average of 76 days and 85 percent have moved on to stable housing after that stay. Currently, we have funding for sheltering of the operation through fiscal year 2023-24 for a total of 67 rooms.

Still, many of these households lack a path toward sustaining housing after rental assistance, either due to unaffordable rent or due to lack of ongoing income to pay rent. Moving forward, staff proposes to integrate

additional available rent/utility assistance with EELS services to eviction prevention and diversion efforts in partnership with the courts. To ensure future stability for clients, staff will evaluate each rental assistance application to develop a plan for sustainability tailored to each household. Client case plans may include direct enrollment in workforce programs, childcare referrals through the PEEPS program, or navigation to a more affordable market unit or housing subsidy. Beyond rent and utility assistance, the other program components are already provided by CWD through ongoing funding.

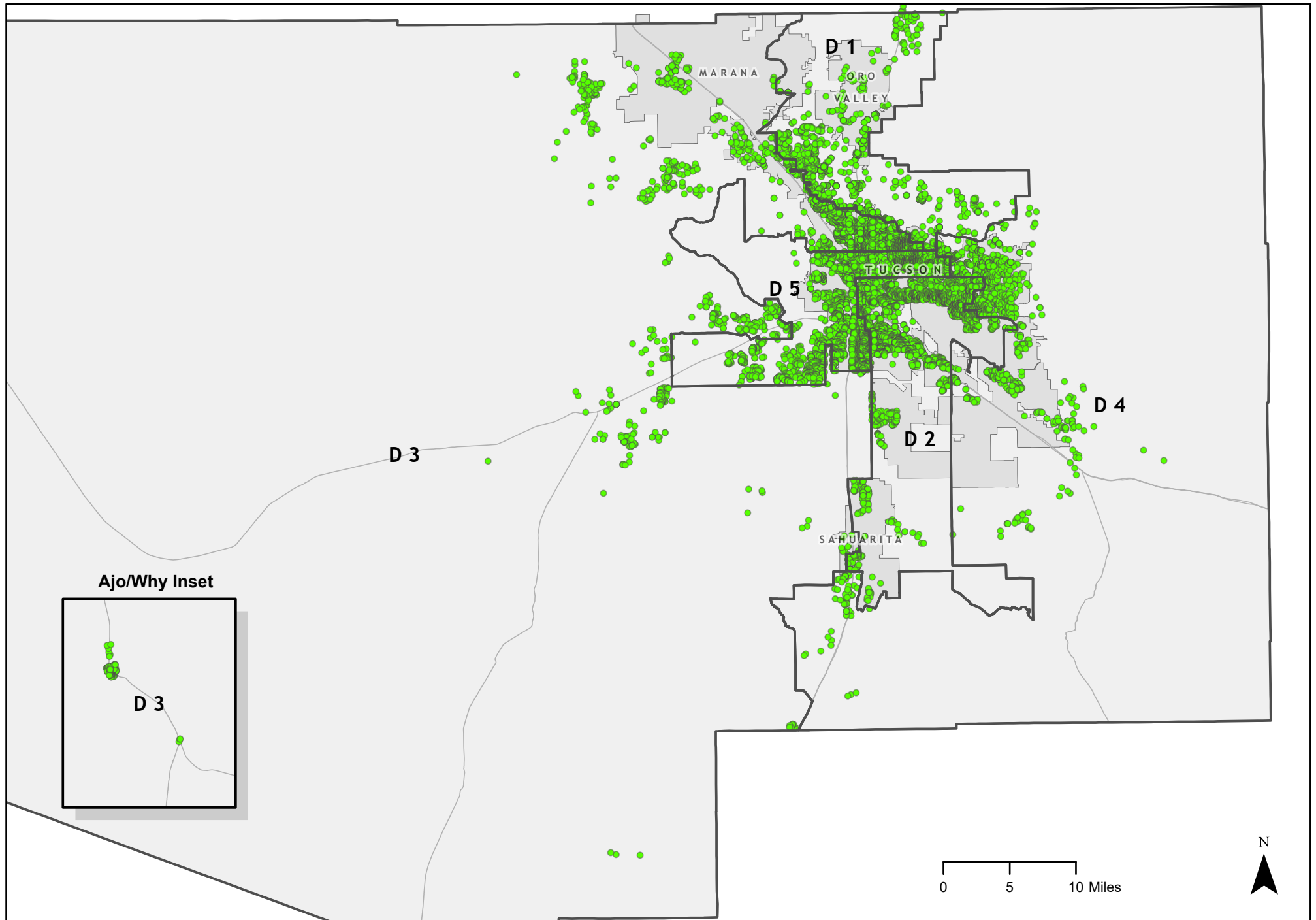
Combined with existing resources, the newly-funded DES rental assistance program targeting families and seniors, we believe an initial investment of \$2 million this fiscal year could be used to prevent an additional 800 households from experiencing homelessness, through rental assistance to an existing landlord or rehousing assistance. It is also clear that a source of revenue to offset these expenses is not yet identified.

Housing assistance for a sustainable future will rely heavily on available funding and programming that addresses root causes of financial crisis. A robust financial empowerment component is key in addressing stability and self-sufficiency. An interactive and engaging session that includes budget counseling, monthly budget planning, and financial credit discussion is one component of case management and overall case plan for success. Using resources such as traditional utility assistance as an incentive to keep households engaged increases the likelihood of sustainability.

Attachment A:	Pima County Rent & Utility Assistance, 2020-Present
Attachment B:	Pima County Rent & Utility Assistance by Jurisdiction
Attachment C:	Links to All Prior ERAP Updates

ATTACHMENT A

Pima County Rent & Utility Assistance, 2020-Present



ATTACHMENT B

Pima County Rent and Utility Assistance by Supervisor District and Jurisdiction

Supervisor District	Households Served 2020-Present
1	1,376
2	4,698
3	3,979
4	1,505
5	4,554
(Indeterminate Location)	963
Total	17,075

Jurisdiction	Households Served 2020-Present
Marana	239
Oro Valley	172
Sahuarita	158
South Tucson	275
Tucson	11,685
Unincorporated Pima County	3,583
(Indeterminate Location)	963
Total	17,075

ATTACHMENT C

Prior ERAP Memoranda

Please see the following links for all memoranda regarding CWD and ERAP.

- [June 16, 2020 – Updated Eviction Information](#)
- [July 29, 2020 – County Response and Prevention Efforts Regarding COVID-19 Related Evictions](#)
- [September 10, 2020 – Applications for Rental and Home Energy Assistance](#)
- [March 12, 2021 – Emergency Rental Assistance Program Capacity in Pima County](#)
- [March 19, 2021 – Various Federal Programs and Funding Allocations Associated with Emergency Rental Assistance, Low Income Energy Assistance, Food Supplements, and Other Programs to Ease Eviction Pressures](#)
- [April 5, 2021 – Emergency Rental Assistance Program Update](#)
- [May 14, 2021 – Pima County Emergency Rental Assistance Update](#)
- [June 10, 2021 – Report on Rental Assistance Program](#)
- [June 24, 2021 – Updated on the Emergency Rental Assistance Program known as ERAP 1 and ERAP 2](#)
- [August 6, 2021 – Emergency Rental Assistance Program Update](#)
- [August 24, 2021 – Office of Emergency Eviction Legal Services](#)
- [September 16, 2021 – Emergency Rental Assistance Program and Emergency Eviction Legal Services Updates](#)
- [December 6, 2021 – Emergency Eviction Legal Services Update and Board of Supervisors, December 7, 2021 Agenda Item 19 \(Procurement – Legal Services\)](#)
- [March 8, 2022 – Update on Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#)
- [July 21, 2022 – Federal Eviction Rental Assistance Program Update](#)
- [September 14, 2022 – Additional Information for the Board of Supervisors September 6, 2022 Meeting – Emergency Rental Assistance Program – Consent Item No. 2](#)
- [October 31, 2022 – Emergency Rental Assistance Program October Update](#)
- [December 9, 2022 – Emergency Rental Assistance Program Update](#)
- [January 30, 2023 – Emergency Rental Assistance Program January Update](#)
- [July 24, 2023 – Additional Information for the Board of Supervisors July 25, 2023, Agenda No. 55 Grant Acceptance – Emergency Rental Assistance 2 Program](#)