



MEMORANDUM

Rent Stabilization Program
Community Development Department

DATE: October 18, 2021

TO: Rental Housing Committee

FROM: Patricia Black, Senior Management Analyst
Anky van Deursen, Program Manager

SUBJECT: Update on Eviction Prevention Program

RECOMMENDATION

To receive an informational update on the Eviction Prevention Program and reallocate \$10,000 from the \$45,000 budgeted legal services for the Eviction Prevention Program to translations and one-on-one support services for the Eviction Prevention Program.

BACKGROUND

On April 19, 2021, the Rental Housing Committee (RHC) formalized a multi-pronged Eviction Prevention Program and authorized \$45,000 of funding for legal services. The RHC requested staff implement a multi-pronged eviction prevention and defense program that incorporated the following services in order to prevent evictions, mitigate the potential displacement due to COVID-19 financial impacts, and promote community stability:

- Multi-pronged outreach to tenants, landlords, and community organizations.
- Early intervention informational contact from City to tenant and landlord after Termination Notice filed with City.
- Case management services through Project Sentinel and other community-based organizations, landlord and tenant counseling, education and dispute resolution services.
- Full-scope legal representation for tenants as needed.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Eviction Prevention Program connects landlords and tenants in Mountain View with support services in an effort to reduce evictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Community members can access information, receive one-to-one support, and connect with services provided by our community partners like the Community Services Agency of Mountain View and Los Altos and Project Sentinel by attending Eviction Help Center Clinics and pop-up events.

Program Highlights (from May 13, 2021 through October 12, 2021)

- 123 households received one-to-one rent relief application assistance
- 7 application assistance and Eviction Help Center Clinics held
- 14 webinars hosted
 - 7 bilingual in English and Spanish
- 171 courtesy letters and informational packets mailed to tenants and landlords
- 50 volunteers trained
- 7 community organizations participated

Clients Served

- 81% required assistance in Spanish
 - 91% of all Eviction Help Center Clinic clients required non-English language services
- 100% of clients qualify as low income
 - 81% qualify as extremely low income (30% or below the Area Median Income)
- On average, three people reside per household and live on an income of \$27,516
- 96% of clients require rent relief and utility assistance
 - 68% need help with past-due rent
 - 76% need help with future rent
 - 59% need help with utilities
 - 27% need help with other expenses

Outreach Highlights

- 1 press release in four languages (English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian)
- 2 news articles
- 2 *Mountain View Voice* advertisements
- 1 webpage in three languages (English, Spanish, Chinese)
- 2 flyers in four languages (English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian)
- 9,000 flyers distributed by community members

- 91% of survey respondents learned about the services via word-of-mouth from community members and organizations, including distribution of flyers door-to-door
- 4 social media posts in English and Spanish

Rent Relief Application Assistance Events

The formal launch of the program began in May with Rent Stabilization Program staff hosting rent relief pop-up events and interactive webinars. In total, Rent Stabilization Program staff hosted five joint events in coordination with the Community Services Agency of Mountain View and Los Altos, Project Sentinel, the Community in Action Team (CAT), and community ambassadors from the Spanish Leadership Academy to help people apply for COVID-19 emergency rent relief programs (including the City, County, and State programs) and learn about COVID-19 eviction protections. Bilingual (English/Spanish) support was provided. The locations and times of the events changed throughout the summer based on community feedback. Locations included the Mountain View Senior Center, the Mountain View Community Center, Rengstorff Park, and City Hall Plaza. Rent Relief Application Assistance Events are now a part of Eviction Help Center Pop-up Events.

Eviction Help Center: Clinics, Webinars, and Pop-Up Events

On September 23, 2021, the Rent Stabilization Program held the first Eviction Help Center Clinic. Clinics are bilingual in English and Spanish and held every Thursday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Mountain View Public Library in the Program Room. Additional language support is available and can be requested by the public 48 hours in advance.

Eviction Basics and Rent Relief webinars are scheduled on a biweekly basis. Landlord-focused webinars are held on every other Tuesday; tenant-focused webinars are held every other Wednesday and are bilingual in English and Spanish.

Staff is working with community organizations and the City's Community Services Department to schedule additional pop-up events to take place in the coming months.

Legal Services

The Community Legal Services of East Palo Alto (CLSEPA) and the Stanford Community Law Clinic (CLC) agreed to provide pro bono legal services to qualifying community members at the Eviction Help Center Clinics either in-person or virtually through Zoom.

The CLSEPA and CLC started providing legal assistance for eviction issues on October 7, 2021.

ANALYSIS

The Eviction Prevention Program is robust and time-intensive. Implementation requires multiple staff members from different City departments, including the Multicultural Engagement Program (MEP), multiple community partner organizations, and an extensive volunteer network. The majority of clients are nonnative English speakers and require, on average, one and one-half hour to two hours of one-to-one support in a language other than English. The Multicultural Engagement Program, part of the City Manager's Office, provides the bulk of translation support, which is critical to the success of the program.

At this time, CLSEPA and CLC are providing no-cost legal assistance to support the clients attending the Eviction Help Center. While staff anticipates a change in client need toward legal assistance in the coming months, the program is currently assisting clients with rent relief applications to limit or entirely prevent evictions. Additionally, based on client demographics, the need for translation support will not dissipate with a change in services provided. Therefore, staff would like to request a reallocation of \$10,000 from the \$45,000 funding previously approved for legal services to translation assistance and one-on-one support.

FISCAL IMPACT

The reallocation of \$10,000 from the \$45,000 budgeted funding for legal services for the Eviction Prevention Program to translation assistance and one-on-one support for the Eviction Prevention Program reduces the legal services budget to \$35,000. There is no further fiscal impact on the CSFRA budget.

PUBLIC NOTICING – Agenda posting.

PB-AvD/JS/CDD/RHC
897-10-18-21M

Attachment: 1. RHC Memo End of Eviction Moratorium of September 29, 2021