



NEWS RELEASE

Community Development and Housing

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Rent-relief programs meet goals, transition to state

After meeting the U.S. Treasury's performance benchmark by obligating of over \$34 million of pandemic rental assistance to help more than 4,500 San Bernardino County residents retain their housing, the San Bernardino County Rent Relief Partnership (SBCRRP) Program has merged with the State of California's Housing is Key rental assistance program. The merger of the programs represents the State and County's commitment to continue providing effective service to County residents impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The Board prioritized helping county residents who fell behind on their rent and utility payments to meet their obligations and stay in their homes," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Curt Hagman. "Like many other innovative programs initiated by San Bernardino County, such as the COVID-Compliant Business Partnership Program and the Great Plates Delivered meals program, the Rent Relief Partnership has been key to helping our residents during this challenging time."

Prior to the merger, the state and County operated separate programs that served different income populations which caused confusion amongst residents. On Oct. 1, 2021, in an effort to consolidate the programs, streamline processes, reduce confusion, and increase program efficiencies, the SBCRRP program transitioned to the Housing is Key program. Approximately \$8.4 million of the County's Round 1 allocation and \$56.8 million of the Round 2 allocation will be transitioned to the State to be administered under the Housing Is Key banner. These monies will be earmarked to continue to provide services specifically to eligible San Bernardino County residents. The state will augment the County's funding with a direct allocation it received from the U. S. Treasury to serve many more San Bernardino County residents in need.

Given the magnitude of the funding and the immense demand for coordination between programs, other locally managed programs in the cities of Los Angeles, San Jose and San Francisco and the counties of Orange, Contra Costa and San Joaquin have transitioned their programs to the state as a result of recent program modifications made by the state to better align with local goals and objectives.

The SBCRRP website is still functional and is directing first-time assistance seekers, as well as those with applications in the review process to the State's Housing is Key program at https://housing.ca.gov/covid_rr/program_overview.html for further assistance. County residents who previously submitted an application on the state's online portal will have their applications reactivated, and in most circumstances will not have to reapply. Under some circumstances, applicants will have to reapply. The County and its service provider, Inland SoCal United Way 211+, have sent out notifications advising applicants of next steps. In an effort to mitigate the impact of the transition, the state has also agreed to prioritize reactivated or resubmitted applications that were in the queue prior to the Oct. 1, 2021 transition date.

Current and prospective applicants are encouraged to call (833) 687-0967 for more information regarding the program, to obtain an update on their application status, or to request an appointment for assistance with the application process during the transition period.

