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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** JANUARY 19, 2023

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**THROUGH:** JAMES F. PARAJON, CITY MANAGER /s/

**FROM:** KATE GARVEY, DIRECTOR, DCHS

**DOCKET TITLE:**  
Consideration of Plan for Utilization of \$300,000 in Additional Rental Assistance Funding to Address Evictions.

**ISSUE:** Continued and urgent need to provide rental assistance for City households at-risk for eviction.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council approves funding from the General Fund Reserve in the amount of \$300,000 to assist residents at risk of eviction through the remainder of FY 2023 or until funds are exhausted.

**BACKGROUND:** On October 18, 2022, the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development advised localities that state funding for rental assistance through the Virginia Rent Relief Program (RRP) was exhausted as of October 14, 2022. The termination of the RRP significantly impacted residents and landlords with applications in queue. In some cases, residents had been notified that their applications had been approved,

but ultimately were denied. As the closure of the program occurred, the Department of Community and Human Services- Office of Community Service (OCS) experienced increased requests for rental assistance. As a result, by the end of November, OCS had exhausted state and local appropriated rental assistance resources.

Since then, eviction filings in Alexandria have continued. Landlords filed 339 Unlawful Detainer Summonses in November and 211 in December. There were 137 writs of eviction issued in November and 257 in December. Additional information is available on the Eviction Prevention Dashboard:

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/katherine.key2321/viz/AlexandriaVAEvictionTrends/SummaryDashboard?publish=yes> <<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpublic.tableau.com%2Fapp%2Fprofile%2Fkatherine.key2321%2Fviz%2FAlexandriaVAEvictionTrends%2FSummaryDashboard%3Fpublish%3Dyes&data=05%7C01%7Ckate.garvey%40alexandriava.gov%7Cb5e948dc0cbf424011b108daf9735890%7Cfeaa9b3143754aecc76ad32a890b%7C0%7C0%7C638096571054560839%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=%2FGQKLhNyCUpBjemIlw2qPth145urn56D70ddCCKsExA%3D&reserved=0>>

For the past two months, OCS has referred requests for rental assistance to community partners that received ARPA funding to provide emergency support services. From October 1 to December 31, 2022, \$247,378 in ARPA funding has been distributed to support households at risk of eviction. This funding will continue to be used to respond to the eviction crisis.

**DISCUSSION:** Additional funding in the amount of \$300,000 that was approved by Council to further address the eviction prevention needs in the community will be taken from General Fund Reserve. This funding will allow OCS to provide direct rental assistance to eligible households. It is anticipated that the requested funding will facilitate the provision of rental assistance for up to seventy (70) households at risk of eviction.

To qualify for this rental assistance, residents will meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Live in a household with children or are a vulnerable adult (elderly and/or disabled);
2. Income level at or below 50% of AMI;
3. Have an unlawful detainer summon or eviction notice. Exceptions will be made for tenants residing in the city's affordable housing partners' units;
4. Loss of income, a prevailing emergency event, or an increase in rent above 10%;
5. A demonstrated ability to increase income and or stabilize housing; and
6. Have not received rental assistance through the OCS more than twice in the past 12-months.

Qualifying residents may receive up to \$5,000. However, if more than \$5,000 is owed, the maximum assistance will be provided only if the resident can confirm the additional financial resources to make the full payment to stabilize housing.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** \$300,000 from General Fund Reserve will be utilized for this purpose.

**STAFF:**

Kendel Taylor, Interim Deputy City Manager  
Helen McIlvaine, Director, Office of Housing

Lesa Gilbert, Director, DCHS Center for Economic Support