

# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Ragan Henninger  
Lee Wilcox

**SUBJECT: EMERGENCY RENTAL  
ASSISTANCE DEFERRAL**

**DATE:** March 5, 2021

Approved

*D. DSYL*

Date

**3/5/2021**

## INFORMATION

On February 9, the City Council provided direction to the Administration to implement the \$30.38 million in federal Emergency Rental Assistance funds that the City has received from the U.S. Department of the Treasury. As directed, the Administration has been working diligently with Santa Clara County and the countywide Homelessness Prevention System to build on the existing system and successful 2020 coronavirus relief efforts.

Scaling a program of this size in a short period of time is not without challenges, particularly when ensuring compliance with federal requirements and coordinating with the State of California. For the reasons outlined below, the Administration is recommending deferral of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program item from the March 9 Council agenda. Our goal is to bring this item forward on March 23.

New federal guidance was released on February 22, and while it contains some elements that will allow our local program to better serve our most vulnerable residents, there are some outstanding questions for those administering Emergency Rental Assistance funds. Treasury held a webinar on March 4, and stated that they will release additional guidance and clarifications in the near term.

In addition, on March 5, the City and County met jointly with staff from the Business, Consumer Services & Housing Agency and Housing and Department of Housing and Community Development. This meeting was most productive, however, we have additional work to do to coordinate our programming.

There is one significant piece of good news for Mobile Homeowners. The new Treasury FAQs do not address whether the Emergency Rental Assistance funds can help mobile homeowners (who own the mobile home they live in but pay rent for the land on which it is located) with rental arrears. However, we learned and confirmed that the State will include mobile home space rent as an eligible category in the State program.

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As the city with the largest number of mobile home parks in California, we will continue to advocate for clarity from Treasury to ensure this and future programs provide access to rental assistance for residents of this important form of often-affordable housing.

In finalizing program development with our partners, we will develop materials and conduct outreach so mobile homeowners with space-rent arrears and mobile home park owners with tenants in rental arrears will know how to access rental assistance from the appropriate resource.

/s/  
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Deputy Director  
Housing Department

/s/  
LEE WILCOX  
Deputy City Manager and  
Emergency Operations Center Co-Director

For questions, please contact Michelle McGurk, Assistant to the City Manager and Assistant Director, Community and Economic Recovery Branch of the EOC, at (408) 535-8254 or Ragan Henninger, Deputy Director, Housing Department at [ragan.henninger@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:ragan.henninger@sanjoseca.gov).