

ERA Compliance Report - Pima County, Arizona - ERA 1 Quarter 1 2022

Report Period : Quarter 1 2022 (January-March)

Recipient Profile

Recipient Information

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|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Recipient DUNS | 074477969 |
| Recipient DUNS (+4) | 0000 |
| Recipient TIN | 866000543 |
| Recipient Legal Entity Name | Pima County |
| Recipient Type | Local Government |
| Recipient Address | 130 W Congress Street Fl6 |
| Recipient Address 2 | |
| Recipient Address 3 | |
| Recipient City | Tucson |
| Recipient State/Territory | AZ |
| Recipient Zip5 | 85701 |
| Recipient Zip+4 | |
| Country Name | |

Recipient Information

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| Discrepancies Explanation | The errors Pima County has emailed US Treasury about since 11/2021 remain in the expenditures reported since guidance on how to modify or delete them has not been received. |
| Is the Recipient Registered in SAM.Gov? | Yes |

Projects

Project Overview

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| Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN) | ERA0091 |
| CFDA # | 21.023 |
| Award Date | 1/15/2021 |
| Grant Funds Received | \$15,188,622.60 |
| Recipient Project ID | ERA-2101060180 |
| Name of the ERA Project | Pima County ERA Project |
| ERA Project Website URL | https://tucsonpimaep.com/ |
| Geographic Service Area | County-Wide |
| System for Prioritizing Assistance Narrative | <p>Criteria Emergency Rental Assistance Program applications are prioritized based on the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant Household Income (as % of AMI) • Time Unemployed • Months of Back Rent Owed • Risk of Homelessness / Unsafe Living Conditions • Date of Waitlist Application <p>Scoring An initial risk score is assigned on a scale from zero to nine, based on the following scoring for each factor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Media Income (AMI): one point for income below 50% AMI and two points for income below 30% AMI • Unemployment Status: one point for unemployed; two points for unemployed more than 90 days; • Months of Arrears: one point if length of arrears is four months or less; two points if length of arrears is greater than four months; • Risk of Eviction: one point for five-day notice; two points if a hearing date has been assigned; three points if a judgement has been received. <p>These factors, which together can yield a maximum of 9 points, render an initial risk score. In addition, constable cases are automatically given the highest score (an initial risk score of 9).</p> <p>Time scoring For every week that goes by after the eligibility form is received (and thus, initial risk score is awarded), one point is added. For example, a case that initially scores a five would move up to a six after seven days have gone by. Prioritization criteria and other ERA system information is publicly available at https://tucsonpimaep.com/frequently-asked-questions-faq/.</p> |
| | <p>Performance Goals Pima County Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP-1) provides emergency financial assistance to COVID-19-impacted households, landlords, and utility and home energy providers in Pima County. A data dashboard showing total funds obligated and paid, and households approved and paid is reviewed by Pima County leaders weekly.</p> <p>Major Timelines</p> |

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| <p>Project Description</p> | <p>Pima County began accepting applications for ERAP-1 on March 1, 2021. Pima County met all ERA 1 obligation expenditure thresholds and received two voluntary reallocations from the State of Arizona. As of December 29, Pima County has exhausted all funds.</p> <p>Key Partner Organizations Current subrecipient partners are Compass Affordable Housing and Family Housing Resources for both ERA 1 and Sunnyside Foundation for ERA 2 only. These agencies provide housing stability services, assisting households access ERA, contacting applicants and assisting them to understand and submit the documentation required to be eligible and priority for services, assisting those in eviction proceedings or at imminent risk of eviction to access term legal services, full legal representation, emergency shelter, or rapid rehousing as appropriate. The subrecipient partner agencies access Pima County’s Emergency Services Network portal to access applicant records, upload documents, and route completed applications for review, approval and payment by Pima County.</p> <p>During the first year of ERA 1 Pima County subawarded a portion of the ERA-1 funding to Community Invest Corporation, a local nonprofit economic development organization founded in 1996. CIC served as a fiscal agent for eviction prevention dollars under the CARES Act in 2020. As part of that project CIC established a portal to accept applications from both tenants and landlords and subawarded with community based organizations to provide case navigation and support. CIC continued as a subrecipient for ERA 1 from March through December 2021. Pima has also worked closely during this period with the City of Tucson, which also subawarded ERAP funding to CIC to ensure a seamless process for tenants. Other partners have included legal assistance organizations, several Pima Constables, and Pima County Justice Court.</p> <p>Pima County has operated the Community Action Agency (now called Community Assistance Division or CAD) providing emergency rent and utility assistance for decades. The program has a high level of visibility to the neighborhood community and the general public as the resource for households in financial crisis. The CAD contracts with community-based organizations to form an Emergency Services Network with multiple access points. The program managed alongside of Pima’s countywide workforce program that provides the first line of response to layoffs, Pima County’s Housing and Urban Development grants for homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing. Outreach strategies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant portal and websites of the City, County and non-profit second-tier subrecipient partners; • Outreach and presentations to social services and legal aid agencies to encourage appropriate referrals; • Earned media from press releases; • Paid social media boosts and other advertising; and • Direct outreach to landlords and presentations to real estate, property management and multi-housing industry associations. <p>Other Housing Services Provided Pima County opted to provide assistance to households with Internet access, due to the vital importance of remote services, telework, distance learning, and online ordering during the pandemic.</p> <p>Housing Stability Services Provided Housing stability services consist of the eligibility determination, needs assessment using a standardized assessment to ensure identification of issues that threaten the household’s stability, verification of landlord and/or utility information, amounts owed, and eligible period of assistance, final determination of approved assistance amount, referral and navigation to access other needed services.</p> <p>Other Affordable Rental Housing Services and Eviction Prevention Services Provided Pima County recently launched Emergency Eviction Legal Services to provide legal advice and representation in eviction cases for low-income renters. Pima County offers https://www.pimacountyhousingsearch.org, a listing of units and other affordable housing opportunities. Finally, Pima County provides emergency shelter services, food employment and supportive services to families, youth, veterans, and individuals experiencing homelessness in Pima County.</p> |
| <p>Use of Fact Based Proxies for Determining Eligibility</p> | <p>Yes</p> |
| | <p>Pima County uses the Tucson Region Neighborhood Vulnerability Index as the fact-based proxy for determining eligibility. In 2020 City of Tucson, Pima County, and the Economic and Business Research Center at the University of Arizona collaborated to study housing and neighborhood vulnerability within the City of Tucson and Pima County.</p> |

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| <p>Explanation for Use of Fact Based Proxies for Determining Eligibility</p> | <p>goal of the first phase of this study was to identify "vulnerable", or stressed, neighborhoods within our region by compiling a Neighborhood Vulnerability Index.</p> <p>Vulnerability in this context refers to the differing ability of members of particular socio-demographic groups to withstand threats to their livelihoods, security, and social, economic, and political networks. Measures of social vulnerability attempt to integrate a set of characteristics of people and places that make them especially likely to be harmed by shocks such as natural disasters or development and rising housing prices. The Vulnerability Index is intended to be used for geographically - targeted strategies to direct resources, policies, and programs to best meet the needs of Tucson and Pima County's unique neighborhoods.</p> <p>The Neighborhood Vulnerability Index was developed by calculating a composite score of these five factors that measure vulnerability in a community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percent of residents that identify as anything other than "non-Hispanic white alone" Percent of households who rent, rather than own, their homes Percent of residents aged 25 and over who lack a four-year bachelor's degree or higher Percent of households with incomes below 80% of Area Median Income (as determined by HUD) Share of children that live in households below the official poverty line <p>There are 241 total census tracts in Pima County, with 157 of those tracts within or adjacent to the City of Tucson boundary. This study found 103 vulnerable census tracts in Pima County, or 42.7%. Of the total vulnerable tracts found were within the City of Tucson - this means that 55.4% of census tracts in Tucson were found to be vulnerable in some way.</p> <p>The study is available on line at the following link: https://mapazdashboard.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/images/cot_pima_vulnerability_study_5_20_20.pdf</p> <p>Households located in a census tract that is anywhere in the spectrum from "Vulnerable" to "Most Vulnerable" are exempt from the current income verification process. Instead, households living in a vulnerable neighborhood simply provide a self-attestation to being at or under 80% AMI in order to meet income eligibility. Households in "Most Vulnerable" tracts are still eligible for assistance, but have to provide documentation to verify income at or below 80% of AMI.</p> <p>An interactive mapping tool is available at this link: https://www.ebrc-charts.com/MAP-charts/City%20of%20Tucson%20Housing%20Study/vulnerability_2018_files . Case Workers use this map to locate the residence in question and determine if income verification is necessary. If not, they will screenshot the residence in question and submit it as part of their final application package. The tenant is then asked to self-report and attest to their income level, which is also verified by the Case Worker as 80% or below AMI.</p> <p>For residences that are NOT located in a qualifying zone, the Case Worker uses the full income verification process.</p> |
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Demographics

ERA Applicants

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| Number of unique households that completed and submitted an application for ERA assistance: | 355 |
| Number of Unique Households that Received ERA Assistance (#): | 369 |
| Number of Unique Households that Received their Initial ERA Assistance in the Current Reporting Period: | 355 |

ERA Assistance Provided

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| Number of unique households that received ERA assistance by type: Rent | 358 |
| Number of unique households that received ERA assistance by type: Rental Arrears | 291 |
| Number of unique households that received ERA assistance by type: Utilities/Home Energy Bills | 171 |
| Number of unique households that received ERA assistance by type: Utilities/Home Energy Arrears | 169 |
| Number of unique households that received ERA assistance by type: Other expenses related to housing | 3 |
| Number of unique households that received ERA assistance by type: Housing stability services | 82 |

Participant Households at Certain Income Levels

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| Number of unique households at certain income levels: Less than 30% of Area Median Income | 61 |
| Number of unique households at certain income levels: Between 30 and 50% of Area Median Income | 242 |
| Number of unique households at certain income levels: Between 50 and 80% of Area Median Income | 65 |
| Total number of recipient households whose income eligibility was determined based on their eligibility for other federal benefit programs: Households Eligible- Prior Enrollment | 99 |
| Total number of recipient households whose income eligibility was determined using a fact-based proxy: | 163 |
| Total amount of ERA award paid to or for participant households: | \$2,234,646.31 |
| Average Number of Months of Rent or Utility/Home Energy Payments Covered for Each Participant Household: | 7.00 |

Award Activity Amounts Approved (Obligated) and Amounts Paid (Expended) During the Quarter

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| Total Dollar Amount of ERA Award Funds Approved (Obligated) to or for Participant Households | \$2,741,666 |
| Total Dollar Amount of ERA funds Paid (Expended) for Administrative Expenses | \$236,897 |
| Total Dollar Amount of ERA Award Funds Approved (Obligated) for Administrative Expenses | \$236,897 |
| Total Dollar Amount of ERA Award Funds Paid (Expended) for Housing Stability Services | \$20,565 |
| Total Dollar Amount of ERA Award Funds Approved (Obligated) for Housing Stability Services | \$0 |

Performance & Financial Report

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| <p>Performance Narrative</p> | <p>Activities Implemented and Notable Accomplishments Pima County continued its operation of the Emergency Rental Assistance program, utilizing both the ERA2 allocation and ERA1 funds that had been reallocated from the Arizona Department of Economic Security. The program continues assist vulnerable households stay in their housing and also to connect with resources to improve financial stability, such as career development, education and training, and high quality childcare programs.</p> <p>Pima County’s Community Assistance Division oversees the program and is working to recruit additional personnel to provide the housing stability services associated with each application for assistance. New reports were developed and implemented in the Pima County Emergency Services Network database to extract and aggregate the demographic information required for these quarterly reports.</p> <p>Pima County Community Assistance Division held a Resource Fair on March 5th. The event was held on a Saturday morning on the basketball court of a public park in the Fairgrounds neighborhood. This is a vulnerable community, strategically selected because rents are escalating fastest here and have risen more than 50% over the past year. The event featured public health resources including vaccine information, employment services, childcare resources, County attorney staff, staff and materials from Pima County’s Emergency Eviction Legal Services program, and above all, application facilitators for the ERA program.</p> <p>In the days before the event CAD staff walked the neighborhood conducting door to door outreach about rental assistance. They-visited rental apartment properties leafletting; at one complex five-day notices were visible taped to doors; at this and several other gated properties, staff were prevented by the landlord or site manager from entering to speak with tenants.</p> <p>Activities Planned Pima County is working to recruit and hire for additional vacancies and preparing to take over the operation of the local assistance application portal for landlords and tenants. Currently applications are pre-screened and referred to Pima County by the City of Tucson’s ERA subrecipient partner,</p> |
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| | <p>but the City and its partner are planning to wind down their ERA initiative, leaving Pima County as the sole ERA program in the region. By hiring ten additional Program Specialists next quarter, Pima County intends to provide more robust housing stability services to address households that have been waiting for their applications to be approved for rental and other assistance.</p> <p>Another resource event will be held in another targeted area, featuring resource tables, an early childhood education celebration, and opportunities for families with small children to enroll in the Pima Early Education Program Services to access childcare scholarships.</p> <p>Notable Challenges and Mitigation</p> <p>Pima County is not always able to prevent tenants from losing their housing due to a variety of factors and scenarios. Pima County has utilized State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) to establish two new programs that complement Emergency Rental Assistance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emergency Eviction Legal Services – provides brief assessment and full representation for tenants in the eviction process. 2. Emergency Hoteling Support – provides hotel stays of up to 60 days, with delivered meals and referrals to rehousing rental assistance services for households who do end up losing their housing. Most of the households have been able to self-resolve their situations without further assistance. <p>One trend that is beginning to appear is repeat applicants who have exhausted the maximum months of assistance who are still not able to afford their rent.</p> <p>Here again, CAD makes referrals to employment specialists for these non-eligible applicants and other services such as PEEPS high quality childcare, to try to improve underlying financial stability.</p> <p>On a macro level, Pima County has convened an Affordable Housing Task Force with diverse perspectives and expertise to try to identify new data, feedback, and ideas to inform development of policy tools to confront this crisis of housing affordability.</p> |
| <p>Narrative on Effective Practices</p> | <p>Pima County’s ERA program is administered by the County’s Community and Workforce Development Department. An online application portal is accessible and promoted to both tenants and landlords. The Department also maintains a linked resource page with frequently-asked questions, information about related programs, and related topics ranging from jobs to pets. Tenants are guided to the program by community based organizations who are partners with Pima County in the local Emergency Services Network to coordinate ongoing state and federal grants for utility and rental assistance. Tenants are also referred from the Department’s Emergency Eviction Legal Services program, which provides brief and full legal representation for low-income households facing eviction. Pima County’s ERA program balances speed with individualized contact and coordination services. As one beneficiary of the program put it, “The whole process was fairly easy... I felt like I had a personal case manager. He worked on my case. He stayed in contact with me. He emailed me. He called me. He did everything. We called each other. He told me what to do. I mean, he was phenomenal.”</p> |

Federal Financial Reporting

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| Current Quarter Obligations | \$2,330,514.50 |
| Current Quarter Expenditures | \$2,330,514.50 |
| Cumulative Obligations to Date | \$17,359,060.65 |
| Cumulative Expenditures to Date | \$17,172,400.20 |

Certification

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| Name | |
| Telephone | |
| Title | |
| Email | |
| Submission Date | 5/5/2022 12:47 PM |