

Item 1: Housing and Community Services Department

Safe Shelter and Rental Assistance

Analyst: Michelle Deister

Request: Allocate a total of \$12,000,000 from the Emergency Fund to the Housing and Community Services Department for rental assistance and safe shelter alternatives for Oregonians who have been impacted by income loss (unemployment or underemployment) due to COVID-19, or who are especially vulnerable to infection or health problems associated with virus because of inadequate shelter or housing.

Description: The Housing and Community Services Department (HCSD) will direct up to \$3,500,000 of allocated funding for safe shelter alternatives, which can include hotel and motel vouchers for vulnerable populations including the homeless and farmworkers, whose living situations and underlying health conditions make them particularly susceptible to severe consequences from exposure to COVID-19. These funds are intended to be directly awarded by HCSD to organizations identified or informed by regional Continuums of Care. In the event that funds could not be subscribed and utilized within six months from the time of award by HCSD in the region in which they were allocated, the funds are to be redirected to rental assistance payments by the receiving entities.

At least \$8,500,000 is to be disbursed by HCSD to Community Action Agencies utilizing the Master Grant Agreement, for the purpose providing rental assistance payments to landlords on behalf of those impacted by income loss due to COVID-19. HCSD will target this rental assistance to COVID-impacted low income people at 50% or less of area median income.

These amounts are intended to be used for direct assistance payments to Oregonians; expenditures by disbursing organizations such as outreach, data collection, supportive in-home services or organizational capacity building are not deemed allowable uses of the funds. These funds are intended to be one-time in nature.

Recommendation: The Co-Chairs of the Emergency Board recommend approval of an allocation of \$12,000,000 from the Emergency Fund to the Housing and Community Services Department for safe shelter alternatives and rental assistance payments to COVID-19 impacted Oregonians.