



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **RENT Program Distributes Treasury's Emergency Rental Assistance in Record Time**

*HACA and the City of Austin earn high performer recognition for rental payment distribution efforts*

**AUSTIN, TEXAS** – The Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA) is pleased to announce that the [Relief of Emergency Needs for Tenants \(RENT\) Assistance Program](#) has successfully provided all \$25 million of the U.S. Treasury Department's first round of COVID-related Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA 1) to more than 4,000 local low-income families. While many other government entities across the country were not able to distribute their ERA funds, the HACA/City program was acknowledged as a high performer and will therefore receive additional funds later this Fall from the US Treasury. HACA was able to distribute the \$25 million in 4 months.

With thousands of Austin families still impacted by health and economic conditions during COVID, Treasury provided another \$29.7 million in rental assistance funding, which is presently being distributed to applicants who have applied at [Austin.covidrenthelp.org](https://austin.covidrenthelp.org). HACA has already distributed over 85% of these new funds in less than 3 months. So, in addition, the City of Austin is adding approximately \$6 million to the program this week. This represents the fourth round of Covid-related rental assistance administered by the HACA-City team for low-income families living within the City of Austin Full Purpose Jurisdiction, bringing the total funding to \$77.7 million for the RENT program. The need for rent assistance is still there, as the local eviction moratorium winds down and since the CDC's moratorium was struck down by the Supreme Court. More than ever, we need to ensure we keep families in their homes where they are safe while our economy continues to recover.

HACA was first selected by the City of Austin's Housing and Planning Department to help with the distribution of COVID-related rental assistance in April 2020, and over the course of the

past 18 months, the RENT program has provided qualified, low-income families up to 15 months of rent, with an average monthly rent of approximately \$1,100.

“We are housers first and foremost, so HACA was honored to work with the City’s Housing and Planning Department and ensure the success of the Austin RENT Program,” said Michael Gerber, HACA President and CEO. “The City’s \$6 million and ERA 1 and 2 funding brings the RENT program total to \$77.7 million and, working together, we have helped more than 16,000 Austin families avoid eviction thus far, allowing them to stay in their homes where they can be safe during the pandemic.”

“The City is grateful to HACA and our many local non-profit partners, who continue to help connect with our neighbors who were struggling to pay their rent,” said Rosie Truelove, Director of the Housing and Planning Department for the City of Austin. “We are so pleased that our RENT team has been able to be so responsive and efficient in expediting distribution of these much-needed funds to Austin families.” Over 2,000 owners of rental units have registered to help streamline the process. Renters receiving this assistance means rental property owners are also receiving the rent they need to operate their properties and keep their doors open.

“We are excited to build on the past successes of HACA’s RENT program while continuing to evolve and improve,” said Mr. Gerber. “As we move forward, we will be able to help even more people, all with the goal of keeping families in their homes.”

#### **About the Housing Authority of the City of Austin**

Established in 1937, the Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA) is a public unit of government separate from the City of Austin. HACA’s mission is to cultivate sustainable affordable housing communities and partnerships that inspire self-reliance, growth, and optimism. As a High-Performing housing authority that assists over 20,000 Austinites, HACA owns and operates 1,839 units of subsidized housing in 18 developments throughout Austin. For more information, visit [www.hacanet.org](http://www.hacanet.org), or find us on Twitter [@hacanet](https://twitter.com/hacanet).

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