

Virtual Community Update Eviction Prevention Initiatives



A joint update from Monroe County
and the City of Rochester

Introductions, Main Presenters



Gary Kirkmire, City of Rochester

Commissioner

Dept. of Neighborhood and Business Development

Thalia Wright, Monroe County

Commissioner

Department of Human Services

Introductions, Other Supporting Staff



City of Rochester, Dept. Neighborhood and Business Dev.

- Dana Miller, Deputy Commissioner
- Anne DaSilva-Tella, Assistant Commissioner
- Carol Wheeler, Manager of Housing
- John Oster, Sr. Community Housing Planner
- Henry Fitts, Grant Management/Research Coordinator

Monroe County, Department of Human Services

- Denise Read, Director of Financial Assistance

Attendee Instructions and Reminders

Submit questions in writing only, at any time:

- Enter in the Q&A box at the bottom of the Zoom window
- Questions will be addressed at the end
- Similar questions/comments will be combined

Visit www.CityofRochester.gov/EvictionPrevention for:

- Link to video recording of this event on Youtube
- Download tonight's slides
- Program contact info and additional information

Local Eviction Prevention Activity To-Date



2020 Federal CARES Act funding

- City and County both received allocations
- Over \$10 million allocated to-date for eviction prevention

Primary eviction prevention initiatives funded:

- **Eviction Prevention Pilot Initiative 1.0:** rent arrears funding
- **Tenant Defense Project:** free tenant legal services
 - www.TenantDefense.org
- **Housing Council Hotline:** tenant and landlord counseling
 - (585) 546-3700, open Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm

Outcomes to Date



Eviction Prevention Pilot Initiative (EPPI) 1.0

- Over 1,944 tenants received rent assistance
 - Served tenants in 37 of 42 zip codes in Monroe County
- Total rent payments, over \$5,072,906

Tenant Defense Project

- Over 2,154 tenants served via the hotline
- Over 1,131 tenants received free legal services

Housing Council Hotline

- Over 531 tenants/landlords received housing counseling

Continuing Challenges



Approximately 25% of tenants still behind on rent as of March

- Per surveys of landlords conducted by Harvard and County

Eviction moratorium expires May 1st

- Courts have already begun to reopen for some case types

Landlords missing significant income

- Difficulty keeping up with mortgage and taxes
- Deferring maintenance

Announcing: EPPI 2.0 Program

Accepting applications starting April 1st

- County and City co-funding single program
 - Monroe County will be lead agency
 - **Serving all Monroe County residents**
- Replicate similar structure to EPPI 1.0
 - Network of 13 contracted non-profits to administer funding
 - Incorporating lessons learned and feedback from EPPI 1.0
 - **Landlords can now apply with tenant consent!**
- Contracted agencies will manage:
 - Application intake and review
 - Approve and issue payments to landlords/property owners

Basic Tenant Eligibility Requirements

Open to all of Monroe County

1 Person Household

Income Limits

\$42,804/year

\$3,567/month

1. Income Qualified, by either:

- ✓ Annual income at 80% AMI or below
- ✓ Current month income at 80% AMI or below

2. Documented COVID Impact, by either:

- ✓ Qualified for unemployment
- ✓ “...reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced other financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the COVID-19 outbreak”

3. Documented Risk of Homelessness or Housing Instability, by any of:

- ✓ Past due utility bill, past due rent notice, eviction notice
- ✓ Unsafe or unhealthy housing conditions
- ✓ “Any other evidence of such risk”

Eligible Assistance

1. Up to 12 months back rent

- ✓ Amount documented by landlord

2. Up to 3 months future rent

- ✓ Only if household can't afford ongoing rent
- ✓ 2 months for 50-80% AMI
- ✓ 3 months for 0-50% AMI

Note: utilities only eligible if included in the rent

Applying for the EPPI 2.0

NOTE: Not accepting applications until April 1st

211 will be main point of entry for program

- Applicants will be assigned to agencies by:
 - Closest proximity to residence
 - Specialized populations, if known:
 - Domestic Violence Survivors
 - Non-native English speakers, new Americans
 - Landlord initiated applications

However, agencies may also initiate applications

- Individual agency contact information will be listed on more detailed program webpage

Program Launch Timeline

Accepting applications starting on April 1st

- Applicants should collect needed documents now

Community will be directed to call 211 for pre-screening

- New callback feature so don't need to wait on hold
 - But make sure to pick up the unknown number caller!
- Open 24 hours a day, phone line is less busy at odd hours

Mass promotion campaign beginning March 30th

- Targeted postcard mailing
- Water bill inserts
- Social media + Radio

Additional Upcoming Funding for 2021



US Treasury, Emergency Rent Assistance Program (ERAP)

- Total local allocation: \$39 million
- Monroe County: \$28.5 million
- City of Rochester: \$10.8 million

- New York State: Over \$1 billion

Unified NYS application system expected in late April

Questions?

