



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 15, 2021

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**New Emergency Rental Assistance Program Available to San Joaquin County Residents
Effective March 15, 2021**

\$29.3 Million in Funding Available for Renters and Landlords to Prevent Evictions

Stockton, CA - A new \$29.3 million Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) will be available to San Joaquin County residents beginning March 15, 2021. The ERAP will help qualified tenants address unpaid rent, utilities, and prevent eviction, and assist landlords with their financial obligations.

The existing County-funded Family COVID-19 Assistance Grant program will soon conclude, as the initial \$5 million will be disbursed to approximately 1,300 San Joaquin County residents and families who have experienced financial harm due to the pandemic. San Joaquin County will notify those who had previously applied for this program of the new ERAP grant, so families who are in need of rental and utility assistance will have an opportunity to benefit from these new grant funds. Those who received County grant funds may also be eligible for the ERAP. The ERAP grant funds will be available until exhausted, or September 30, 2021, whichever occurs first. In addition, San Joaquin County is expecting approximately \$9 million in additional funds through the American Rescue Plan recently passed by Congress for rental assistance which will be used to augment the ERAP.

The Federal Consolidated Appropriations Act 2021 and California Senate Bill (SB) 91 have allocated a total of \$29.3 million to San Joaquin County for rental and utility assistance to qualified residents. The ERAP can provide up to 12 months of assistance for past due or future rental/utility expenses dating back to April 2020 through June 2021. The funds will generally be paid directly to the landlord and/or utility companies on behalf of the applicant. Qualified applicants must have income at or below 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI), with priority given to those with income below 50 percent of AMI.

ERAP is intended to stabilize households and prevent evictions. Per SB 91, tenants must continue to pay 25 percent of the rent owed to protect against eviction. Landlords must be willing to accept payment for 80 percent of their tenants' rental arrears and agree to waive the remaining 20 percent. If the landlord does not agree, a lower payment can be made directly to the applicant. Utility payments will be paid directly to providers under this program.

The application will be available through an online portal, where the applicant will create an account and submit an electronic application. The City of Stockton has also established a Rental Assistance Program, therefore, those living within the city-limits of Stockton, may apply at www.stocktonca.gov/renthelp. Those living in any other cities within San Joaquin County or unincorporated County areas, may apply at www.sjgov.org/covid19/grants.

“There is no more important priority than ensuring our residents stay housed,” said Supervisor Tom Patti, Chairman of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors. “The infusion of these dollars means we can broaden relief to renters and landlords who are facing undue and dire circumstances due to the pandemic.”

County residents may call 2-1-1 or email ERAPQuestions@sjgov.org if they need assistance applying or have questions. The application and portal will be available beginning Monday, March 15, 2021.

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