

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State launches pilot Texas Eviction Diversion Program Approximately \$3.4 million targeted to help residents avoid eviction in 19 counties

(AUSTIN) — Today, the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, the Texas Supreme Court and the Texas Office of Court Administration launched a pilot program designed to help eligible Texas tenants, who are behind on rent due to the COVID-19 pandemic and have been sued for eviction, stay in their homes and provides landlords with an alternative to continuing the eviction process.

The [Texas Eviction Diversion Program](#) pilot, funded with \$3.3 million of CSBG CARES Discretionary funds is set to begin on October 15. The pilot will be available in 19 counties through a select group of approved administrators. The chart below provides information related to each participating organization and counties served:

CSBG-D Eviction Diversion Pilot Program		
Subrecipient		Total Award
Brazos Valley Community Action Program	Brazos, Chambers and Montgomery	\$ 600,000
El Paso Community Action, Project BRAVO	El Paso	\$ 600,000
Gulf Coast Community Services Association	Harris	\$ 600,000
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission	Deaf Smith, Potter and Randall	\$ 299,287
San Antonio, City of, Department of Human Services	Bexar	\$ 600,000
Texas Neighborhood Services	Erath, Parker, Palo Pinto and Wise	\$ 257,949
Texoma Council of Governments	Fanin and Grayson	\$ 170,188
Community Action Corporation of South Texas	Bee, Jim Wells, Kleberg and San Patricio	\$ 239,736
Grand Total		\$ 3,367,159

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Under a recent Texas Supreme Court Emergency Order, www.txcourts.gov/media/1449812/209113.pdf, courts handling eviction trials in these pilot counties will ask the parties (the tenant and the landlord) whether they are interested in participating in the Eviction Diversion Program. If both parties express an interest, the court will pause the eviction action for 60 days to allow the parties to see if the tenant is qualified to receive this special eviction diversion rental assistance. If qualified, a lump sum payment will be made to the landlord for past-due rent in exchange for the forgiving of any late fees and allowing the tenants to remain in their homes, with the final result being the dismissal of the eviction case.

An acute example of the need for this program is evidenced by the more than 10,171 eviction cases filed in Harris County alone since the beginning of March, almost all coming after federal and local eviction moratoriums were lifted, per January Advisors, a data science firm located in Houston. The Office of Court Administration estimates that more than 75,000 eviction cases would have been filed during the moratorium period. Once eviction moratoriums expire in places such as Travis, Tarrant, and Dallas counties, and the CDC moratorium expires at the end of the year, evictions across the state are expected to rise without additional rental assistance.

“The Texas Eviction Diversion Program serves as an integral part of the state’s abilities to help overcome the financial stress the COVID-19 pandemic has caused for many families,” said TDHCA Executive Director Bobby Wilkinson. “We, along with our partners at the Texas Supreme Court and OCA, share in the honor of providing this needed assistance to keep families housed and help rental property owners remain financially sound.”

“Judges across Texas have a duty to ensure that justice is delivered in a timely, fair, and impartial way. In times like these, sometimes that means that we search for creative ways to meet the needs of landlords and tenants,” said Texas Supreme Court Chief Justice Nathan L. Hecht. “The Texas Judiciary is happy to work with the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs to provide a way for tenants to stay in their homes and ensure that landlords are made whole.”

“The Texas Eviction Diversion Program will help courts deal with the anticipated deluge of eviction filings by reducing filings and diverting cases to an agreeable solution. Courts have worked hard to maintain access to justice during the pandemic, but we anticipate difficulty with timely handling the large number of eviction cases likely to be filed soon,” said David Slayton, Administrative Director of the Texas Office of Court Administration. “The program launching today will permit courts to focus on those cases that need the most attention and ensure that landlords and tenants are able to resolve their issues timely.”

The results of the pilot TEDP will help inform improvements to the TEDP program when it expands to provide statewide coverage. When expanded, the program will be funded by the Community Development Block Grant CARES Act funds. TDHCA anticipates the full program to be available in additional larger metropolitan areas by the end of the year, and the remainder of the state in early 2021.

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For more information on the TEDP pilot, please visit <https://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/TEDP.htm>. Individuals needing rental or utility bill assistance, or experiencing homelessness or at risk of being homeless should search TDHCA's [Help for Texans](#) web page for local providers who may be able to help.

About The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs is committed to expanding fair housing choice and opportunities for Texans through the administration and funding of affordable housing and homeownership opportunities, weatherization, and community-based services with the help of for-profits, nonprofits, and local governments. For more information about fair housing, funding opportunities, or services in your area, please visit www.tdhca.state.tx.us or the [Learn about Fair Housing in Texas](#) page.