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The Supreme Court of Texas, the Office of Court Administration, and the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs reflect on the successful completion of the Texas Eviction Diversion Program

AUSTIN — As Texas’s first statewide eviction diversion program comes to an end, the Supreme Court of Texas, the Office of Court Administration (OCA), and the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) are celebrating the program’s accomplishments and the hard-working public servants who helped achieve them.

Born out of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Texas Eviction Diversion Program (TEDP) launched in October 2020 through a collaborative effort between the Court, OCA, the Office of the Governor, and TDHCA. Through Supreme Court emergency orders and OCA guidance, the TEDP: (1) allowed courts to pause eviction cases while tenants and landlords applied for rent relief; (2) provided training to court administrators about available rent relief programs; (3) reimbursed landlords for past-due rent and fees, while keeping tenants in their homes; and (4) kept eviction filings off tenants’ records by making case records confidential.

TDHCA administered the rent and utility relief portions of the program. More than 25,000 renter households facing eviction received more than \$243 million, had their evictions stopped and their court records made confidential.

“Our state, like many others, faced a monumental eviction problem as the pandemic devastated tenants and landlords physically, emotionally, and financially,” Chief Justice Nathan L. Hecht said. “The Court shares its deepest gratitude for the agencies, judges, and court personnel who dug in with us to create and operate this vital program, ensuring so many

families were able to stay in their homes and that landlords were compensated for lost rent and fees.”

The TEDP not only benefitted the recipients but kept courts moving as judges were able to dismiss eviction cases from their dockets while the participants received assistance.

“The Texas Eviction Diversion Program was one of the first statewide diversion programs in the nation to launch during the pandemic,” said Megan LaVoie, OCA’s Administrative Director. “It went from a pilot program to a full statewide operation in a matter of months and its success is attributed to the many entities and stakeholders who came together to find solutions.”

Bobby Wilkinson, TDHCA’s Executive Director said, “Collectively, our agencies crafted and launched one of the most comprehensive eviction diversion programs in the country, and continuously worked to improve the delivery of vital rental assistance. We are proud to have served so many Texans in need in such difficult times.”

The Texas Eviction Diversion Program came to an end on June 30, 2023. The TEDP was part of a larger network of programs funded with temporary relief funds, including TDHCA’s Texas Rent Relief Program (TRR) funded by the U.S. Treasury. TRR disbursed \$2.2 billion in rent and utility assistance to more than 323,000 income-eligible Texans before closing on July 7, 2023. TDHCA also provided a historic \$43 million to the Texas Access to Justice Foundation to fund legal aid services, including representation in eviction court, legal counsel, and mediation services. These services are estimated to continue through March 2024.

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