



HUMAN SERVICES AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

DATE: April 11, 2019

TO: Chairman Tom Lewis and the Housing Finance Authority of Leon County

FROM: Shington Lamy, Director of Human Services and Community Partnerships
Matthew G. Wyman, Housing Services Manager

SUBJECT: County Staff Report for April 2019

This County staff report is provided by the Leon County Division of Housing Services to the Housing Finance Authority of Leon County (HFA) for the April 11, 2019 HFA meeting. The report discusses a new County Emergency Short-Term Housing Repair Program Policy (Policy) and provides an informational update on the Leon County Spring Home Expo.

Emergency Short-Term Housing Repair Program Policy

The County's Emergency Short-Term Housing Repair Program (Program) provides immediate assistance to low income homeowners in need of housing repair that poses a risk to the health and safety of the households and/or neighborhoods. Most often the Program completes projects including septic tank pump outs and tarping of dysfunctional roofs. Additionally, the Program is used to partner with other funding sources to promote a permanent solution. The HFA has been the primary source of funding for the Program providing \$30,000 annually.

Currently there is not a specific policy in place for the implementation of the Program. Traditionally, staff has utilized a combination of the County's SHIP Local Housing Assistance Plan and the HFA's Local Housing Assistance Plan. However, staff is proposing the establishment of a policy that outlines the purpose, eligibility, and process for the Program (Attachment #1). The Policy will align staff actions with applicable state laws, county ordinance, County policy, building code and multiple housing assistance plans. Formalizing a comprehensive policy will also promote fair and equitable provision of services.

The Policy will be presented to the County Commission on May 14, 2019 for adoption. Staff is seeking input from the HFA regarding the Policy prior to consideration by the County Commission. The entire policy is attached for your review. The following provides highlights of specific sections of the Policy including Program objectives, eligibility, and maximum awards.

Program Objectives

The purpose of the Program is clearly defined via two objectives:

1) To provide a rapid response to citizens in need through an expedited approval process for temporary and short-term repairs to homes with conditions that threaten the structural integrity of the home or endanger the health and safety of the inhabitants, neighbors or the community.

2) To act as a bridge to a Housing Rehabilitation Strategy that could provide a permanent, more acceptable home repair of the emergent need utilizing funding via the State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) or other source.

Assistance Type

Consistent with current process, the assistance awarded by the Program funds are a grant not a loan. Therefore, no lien would be placed on the property.

Income Eligibility

The Policy maintains that households with income at or below 80% of the Area Median Income will be eligible for the Program.

Eligible Repairs

The Policy lists several repairs that would be eligible under the Program including our most frequent activities of septic system pump outs and tarping roofs. Additionally, it also provides staff the flexibility to consider issues that may require emergency repair on a case by case basis.

Assistance Limits

Under the Policy, an eligible applicant may obtain emergency short-term housing repair assistance one-time for a specific housing condition, except in extreme circumstances such as repetitive surface septage requiring the need for more than one septic system pump out.

The maximum lifetime award remains One Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$1,650) per eligible household.

As approved by the HFA in July 2018, the maximum award can be higher if an elderly person or a person with special needs resides in a mobile home. In this circumstance, the maximum award is Seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$7,500). This allows the County to provide a permanent repair since SHIP funding for mobile home projects are significantly restricted.

As previously mentioned, staff is seeking input from the HFA on the proposed Policy prior to adding it to the May 14, 2019 Board of County Commissioner meeting agenda.

Leon County Spring Home Expo

Join us at this year's Spring Home Expo featuring tips on buying your first home, do-it-yourself demonstrations on common home repairs, home gardening, sustainable living, and more!

This event is of course made possible thanks in part to the Housing Finance Authority of Leon County. It will be on Saturday, April 13, 2019 from 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM at the Leon County Cooperative Extension at 615 Paul Russell Rd.

CC: Mark Hendrickson, Financial Advisor to the Housing Finance Authority of Leon County