

**Quality and Productivity Commission**  
**34<sup>th</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
**"Leading with Excellence"**

**2021 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT: RENT RELIEF: KEEPING THE AMERICAN DREAM ALIVE**

**DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: AUGUST 17, 2020**

(Must have been fully implemented for a minimum of at least one year - on or before July 1, 2020)

**CHECK HERE IF THIS PROJECT IS BEING SUBMITTED FOR THE COVID-19 IMPACT AWARD ONLY.** (Projects must be implemented on or before December 31, 2020. **Note:** Projects implemented less than one year ago will not be eligible for any other PQA awards. In addition, once a project is submitted, you cannot submit the same project for awards consideration in subsequent years).

**PROJECT STATUS:** \_\_\_\_\_ Ongoing       One-time only

**HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT?** \_\_\_\_\_ Yes       No

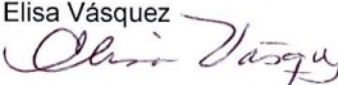

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12-point font. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made.

1 Living the "American Dream" has always been about having a roof over your head.  
 2 What would you do if you couldn't provide shelter for your family let alone be on the  
 3 brink of becoming homeless? During the COVID-19 pandemic, Los Angeles County  
 4 residents faced this conundrum – either pay for food, medicine, or bills or incur debt and  
 5 pay rent. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors responded by allocating \$133  
 6 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Secures (CARES) Act and County  
 7 (NCC) funding and directed the Chief Executive Office to work with the LACDA to  
 8 provide emergency rental assistance to income-eligible County households impacted by  
 9 the pandemic due to job loss or reduction in hours or pay. On August 17, 2020, the  
 10 LACDA launched the LA County COVID-19 Rent Relief Program, providing up to  
 11 \$10,000 in rent relief to households to maintain housing, reduce rental payments in  
 12 arrears, and minimize debt accumulation. The two-week application period resulted in  
 13 88,591 applications, with 44,917 eligible applicants. From the eligible applications, as of  
 14 June 11, 2021, the LACDA provided rental assistance payments to 14,117 households,  
 15 totaling \$116,339,000.

**BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY**

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

<b>SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> Los Angeles County Development Authority, 700 W. Main Street, Alhambra, CA 91801		<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (626) 262-4511
<b>PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME</b> Linda Jenkins		<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (626) 586-1765
<b>PROGRAM MANAGER'S EMAIL</b> linda.jenkins@lacda.org		
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> (PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME) Elisa Vásquez	<b>DATE</b> 6/24/21	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (626) 586-1762
		<b>EMAIL</b> Elisa.Vasquez@lacda.org
<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> Emilio Salas	<b>DATE</b> 06/24/2021	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (626) 586-1505
		

\*\*ELECTRONIC, WET, OR SCANNED SIGNATURES ARE ACCEPTABLE\*\*

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**1<sup>st</sup> FACT SHEET – LIMITED UP TO 3 PAGES ONLY:** Describe the **challenge(s), solution(s), and benefit(s)** of the project **to the County**. What quality and/or productivity-related outcome(s) has the project achieved? Provide measures of success **and specify assessment time frame**. Use Arial 12-point font.

**Challenge**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many Los Angeles County residents lost their jobs or experienced a decrease in hours. According to the Los Angeles County Department of Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS) “Pathways for Economic Resiliency: Los Angeles County 2021-2026” report, 437,000 County residents lost their jobs in 2020. As rents continued to be due, the County found that renters began making sacrifices in other areas, including incurring debt, deferring payments on bills, and going without food and medicine, in order to pay rent and provide a roof and shelter for their families.

**Solution**

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) provided \$133 million in CARES Act and NCC funding to the LACDA to implement the LA County COVID-19 Rent Relief Program. In collaboration with the Chief Executive Office’s Economic Development and Affordable Housing Division, the LACDA developed and implemented the Program to make rental assistance available to all County residents who qualified based on income (with the exception of residents living in the City of Los Angeles, as the City also received its own allocation of CARES Act funding). A W-9 and participation agreement were needed from the property owners to receive rental income on behalf of their qualified tenant. Citizenship documentation was not requested from either the renter or property owner. In addition, the LACDA identified target zip codes that were prioritized for 50% of the available funding, since these areas had the highest need for rental assistance.

In anticipation of the launch, the LACDA worked with 211LA to create an accessible online application portal and a call center with assistance in different languages. Due to the magnitude of the funding and urgent need, 29 partner agencies collaborated with the LACDA in the implementation of the Program. The Program began accepting applications on August 17, 2020 and remained open for a two-week period. During that period, 211LA received 88,591 applications, of which 44,917 were eligible.

Originally, all payments through the CARES Act were due by December 31, 2020; however, Congressional leaders approved an emergency COVID-19 relief bill that included \$25 billion in emergency rental assistance and an extension of CARES Act funding through December 31, 2021.

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Use Arial 12-point font.

Additionally, to maximize the amount of relief provided to renters, the Board approved changes to the LA County COVID-19 Rent Relief Program on January 5, 2021, to ensure maximum programmatic flexibility, resulting in an additional \$23 million in NCC to the original allocation of \$110 million of CARES funding, to meet the overwhelming demand.

Under the extension, the LACDA allowed rental payments to be sent directly to the tenants if the property owner was unwilling to participate and receive payments directly from the LACDA.

### **Benefits**

The LACDA is proud to have helped renters stay housed throughout the pandemic – and ensure they keep their home long after the pandemic is over. The goal of the LA County COVID-19 Rent Relief Program was to ensure impacted households were able to stay housed and prevent homelessness. That was why the LACDA identified target zip codes that were prioritized for 50% of the available funding, since these areas had the highest need for rental assistance.

Additionally, this Program benefited Los Angeles County’s property owner community, many of whom are mom-and-pop providers of rental housing. The payments received helped meet their mortgage obligations on rental properties, which many relied on for part-time or full-time income.

As of June 11, 2021, the LACDA provided rental assistance payments to 14,117 households, totaling \$116,339,000. Over 90% of the households assisted resided in the target zip codes.

### **Testimonial**

As a retiree, Terry had been making ends meet, prior to the pandemic, through Social Security and two part-time jobs. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, those part-time jobs were hit hard, and she struggled with making rent. Watch the video to hear more from Terry: <https://vimeo.com/524480114>.



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**Linkage to the County Strategic Plan – 1 page only.** Which County Strategic Plan goal(s) does this project address? Explain how. Use Arial 12-point font.

The LA County COVID-19 Rent Relief Program embodies **Goal I – Make Investments That Transform Lives.**

Housing is one of the most complicated social and health challenges. When households struggle to pay the rent, they not only face financial and housing instability, but they are also at heightened risk for a host of negative health outcomes.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, renters faced affordability challenges in Los Angeles County. Unfortunately, COVID-19 exacerbated the issue. In partnership with the Housing Initiative at Penn, the LACDA conducted a survey with 9,154 LA County COVID-19 Rent Relief applicants between January 27 to February 2, 2021. Based on the results gathered on February 10, 2021, 69% of tenants were behind on their rent, with 23.2% owing one month of rent and 22.7% owing two months. The average rent owed was \$5,883.21, and 66.3% of respondents were unemployed.

Additionally, the survey found that 64.1% of respondents delayed bill payments to afford rent, 56.2% reduced total food consumption, and 54.6% took on more debt. Thanks to the swift action taken by the Board to respond to the health and economic crisis brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, the LACDA was able to assist more than 14,000 households who were falling behind, or at risk of falling behind, on their rental payments.

As Goal I describes, “We want to be a highly responsive organization capable of responding to complex societal challenges – one person at a time.” The Program staff fully captured this spirit by taking the time to contact each applicant individually to verify the information and find the best solution to assist them. Once the Program rules changed and expanded on January 5, 2021, staff went back to those applicants who didn’t receive funding to determine if they were now eligible under the new rules, continuing to afford the citizens of Los Angeles County to live the American dream.

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**COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY):** If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. Please indicate whether these benefits apply in total or on a per unit basis, e.g., per capita, per transaction, per case, etc. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12-point font

**Cost Avoidance:** Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these are costs to the County or to other entities.

**Cost Savings:** A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these were expenditures by the County or by other entities.

**Revenue:** Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

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\$	\$	\$	\$	X

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**FOR COLLABORATING DEPARTMENTS ONLY**

*(For single department submissions, do not include this page)*

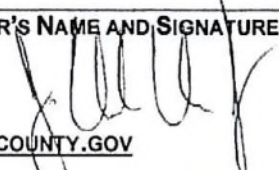
**DEPARTMENT NO. 2 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE  
 500 W TEMPLE ST. 7<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

**PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE**

JOSE ANTONIO CHEW

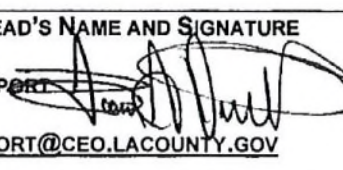
EMAIL: [JCHEW@CEO.LACOUNTY.GOV](mailto:JCHEW@CEO.LACOUNTY.GOV)



**DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE**

FESIA A. DAVENPORT

EMAIL: [FDAVENPORT@CEO.LACOUNTY.GOV](mailto:FDAVENPORT@CEO.LACOUNTY.GOV)



**DEPARTMENT NO. 3 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS**

**PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE**

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE**

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**DEPARTMENT NO. 4 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS**

**PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE**

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE**

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**DEPARTMENT NO. 5 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS**

**PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE**

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE**

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**DEPARTMENT NO. 6 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS**

**PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE**

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE**

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_