

ALAMEDA COUNTY

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Emergency Rental Assistance Program  
224 W. Winton Avenue, Room 108  
Hayward, CA 94544

Release date: Monday, March 15, 2021

## **Request for Information (RFI)**

**from Community- and Faith-Based Organizations to provide  
outreach and engagement services to the  
Alameda County Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)  
as “ERAP Outreach Ambassadors”  
and as  
“ERAP Application Coordinators”**

**This is an Electronic Submission**

**RFI Submittal Deadline:**  
**Monday, March 29, 2021 by 5pm**  
Late submittals will not be considered for funding

**Submit questions to:**  
Casey Farmer, Alameda County Housing and Community Development  
Email: [casey.farmer@acgov.org](mailto:casey.farmer@acgov.org)

## ***Notice of Funding Availability – Alameda County ERAP***

On December 27, 2020 the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 was signed into law, providing over \$2.3 trillion in economic relief nationwide from the COVID-19 pandemic. This statute includes \$25 billion for rental assistance funding for qualified tenants that have been unable to pay rent because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Within Alameda County, the Cities of Fremont and Oakland (with populations above 200,000) and the County on behalf of all other cities and the unincorporated county, received an allocation of funding for Emergency Rental Assistance. Subsequently, the State of California, which also received funding, further allocated funding to the County and its cities to assist in bringing tenants current with their rents.

Alameda County will receive up to \$29 million directly from the federal treasury, and an additional \$32 million from the State of California to address back-owed rent. The County will fund the Alameda County Housing Secure Program, operated by Centro Legal de la Raza, to operate the application database and online web-portal, review applications and cut checks. To perform outreach and engagement activities to get the funds out, the County is issuing this **Request for Information (“RFI”)** and expects to contract with community- and faith-based organizations (“CBOs” and “FBOs”) to perform outreach in hard to reach low income populations. Over the course of several contracting periods, the County will provide small stipend-based grants for outreach organizations and larger contracts for CBO and FBO staff to engage with tenants needing additional one-on-one assistance to complete their applications.

In the first round of contracting, Alameda County will allocate \$100,000 to fund CBOs and FBOs with stipends ranging from \$2,000 to \$5,000 to support outreach and access to hard-to-reach, low-income communities that need access to Alameda County’s Emergency Rental Assistance Program (the “Alameda County ERAP”). The Alameda County ERAP covers all communities in the County except the cities of Fremont and Oakland, which have received separate rental assistance funding. Funded CBOs and FBOs will serve as County’s **“ERAP Outreach Ambassadors”** during the implementation of the Alameda County ERAP from May through December 2021. Funded organizations will be required to attend an orientation training in early May, and report outreach metrics in order to receive the stipend payment. Funds will be administered through the Alameda County Housing and Community Development Department (“Alameda County HCD”).

In the second round of contracting expected in June, Alameda County will allocate an additional \$125,000 for “ERAP Outreach Ambassadors” (above stipend-based program) and an additional \$450,000 to fund several positions to provide application technical assistance support to tenants who are applying for the ERAP Program as **“ERAP Application Coordinators”**. ERAP Application Coordinators will provide one-on-one technical assistance to tenants who need assistance completing the applications. They will also be available to continue working with applicants once an application is submitted to Centro Legal through the online web portal, should there be follow-up application needs (such as additional documentation or pending information). The ERAP Application Coordinators will be instrumental to streamlining the application submittal process and being available to help low income tenants who can benefit from the emergency rental assistance. **See “Grant Opportunity and Scope of Services” section of the RFI for detail on the expected services to be provided by the ERAP Outreach Ambassadors and by the ERAP Application Coordinators.** It is expected that through the Stimulus package signed into law in March, additional funding will become available and potential third and fourth rounds of funding under this program will allow additional opportunities under this RFI.

Given the vital importance of ensuring that the ERAP funds are utilized throughout Alameda County to preserve housing stability for the County’s most vulnerable populations, Alameda County wants to ensure that low-income renter populations who have been negatively impacted by COVID-19 and unable to pay their rent have access to this important funding source.

**The County is seeking to invest in trusted messengers, such as community-, education- and faith-based organizations, coalitions, grassroots programs, and others, to provide outreach to low income renters economically impacted by COVID-19 and engage with those who need assistance to complete their applications. Organizations selected through this RFI to serve as “ERAP Outreach Ambassadors” and as “ERAP Application Coordinators” will be invaluable in this outreach and engagement effort due to their deep connections with their communities and constituencies, and the assistance that they can provide connecting their communities to the ERAP assistance.**

This Request for Information (“RFI”) includes background information on the Alameda County ERAP, the grant opportunity and scope of services, RFI submittal instructions, the County’s review process and evaluation criteria, and the RFI Submittal Form. **We look forward to hearing from you!**

## ERAP Background

On December 27, 2020 the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 was signed into law, providing over \$2.3 trillion in economic relief nationwide from the COVID-19 pandemic. This statute includes \$25 billion for rental assistance funding for qualified tenants that have been unable to pay rent because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In total, the State of California is receiving \$2.6 billion in rental assistance funding from this statute. Of this total, \$1.5 billion will be held by the state and \$1.1 billion will be directly allocated to cities and counties with populations over 200,000. Alameda County will receive a direct allocation of \$29.8 million directly from the federal government, while the cities of Fremont and Oakland are estimated to receive \$7.2 million and \$12.8 million, respectively. **Alameda County's allocation covers all geographical areas of Alameda County except the cities of Fremont and Oakland.** On January 29, 2021 Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law SB 91 (the COVID-19 Tenant Relief Act), extending the statewide eviction moratorium until June 30, 2021 and creating a state rental assistance program. Tenants remain protected by the eviction moratorium so long as they pay 25% of rent owed until June 30. Unpaid rent will be converted to civil debt which landlords may pursue in small claims court. Through SB 91, Alameda County will be allocated approximately \$32 million which may be used in *all geographical areas of Alameda County except the cities of Fremont and Oakland*. The cities of Fremont and Oakland are estimated to receive approximately \$7.7 million and \$13.8 million, respectively, from SB 91. For information about the Fremont and Oakland programs specifically, please contact those cities directly.

## Key ERAP Requirements

ERAP funding through the direct federal allocation to Alameda County must meet these requirements:

- Serve an eligible household, defined as a renter household that is “low-income” (households with incomes that are at or less than 80 percent of the Alameda County Area Median Income) and which qualifies for unemployment or has experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced a financial hardship due to COVID-19; and demonstrates a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability.
- The Alameda County ERAP will prioritize households who are “very low-income” - households with incomes that are at or less than 50 percent of the Alameda County Area Median Income and eligible households who have been unemployed for the 90 days prior to application for assistance.
- ERAP funds may be used for payment of back-rent owed (arrear) and utilities for up to 12 months, as well as forward payments of rent for an additional 3 months, if necessary, to preserve housing stability.
  - The federal program funds can be used to pay up to 100% of arrears rent and utility payments, and 3 months for future costs at a time.
  - The state program funds can be used to pay up to 80% of arrears rent and utility payments, and the landlord must forgive the remaining 20% of arrears rent owed. The state program is limited to paying 25% for future costs. If a landlord refuses to forgive 20%, the household will only receive 25% of the outstanding debt with the balance converted to commercial debt for the landlord to collect.

The federal and state emergency rental assistance programs have limited and strict timeframes for expenditure of funding. Funding allocated through the federal program must be spent by December 31, 2021. Funding allocated through the state program must be spent by August 1, 2021.

## Alameda County ERAP Implementation

### Back End Administration

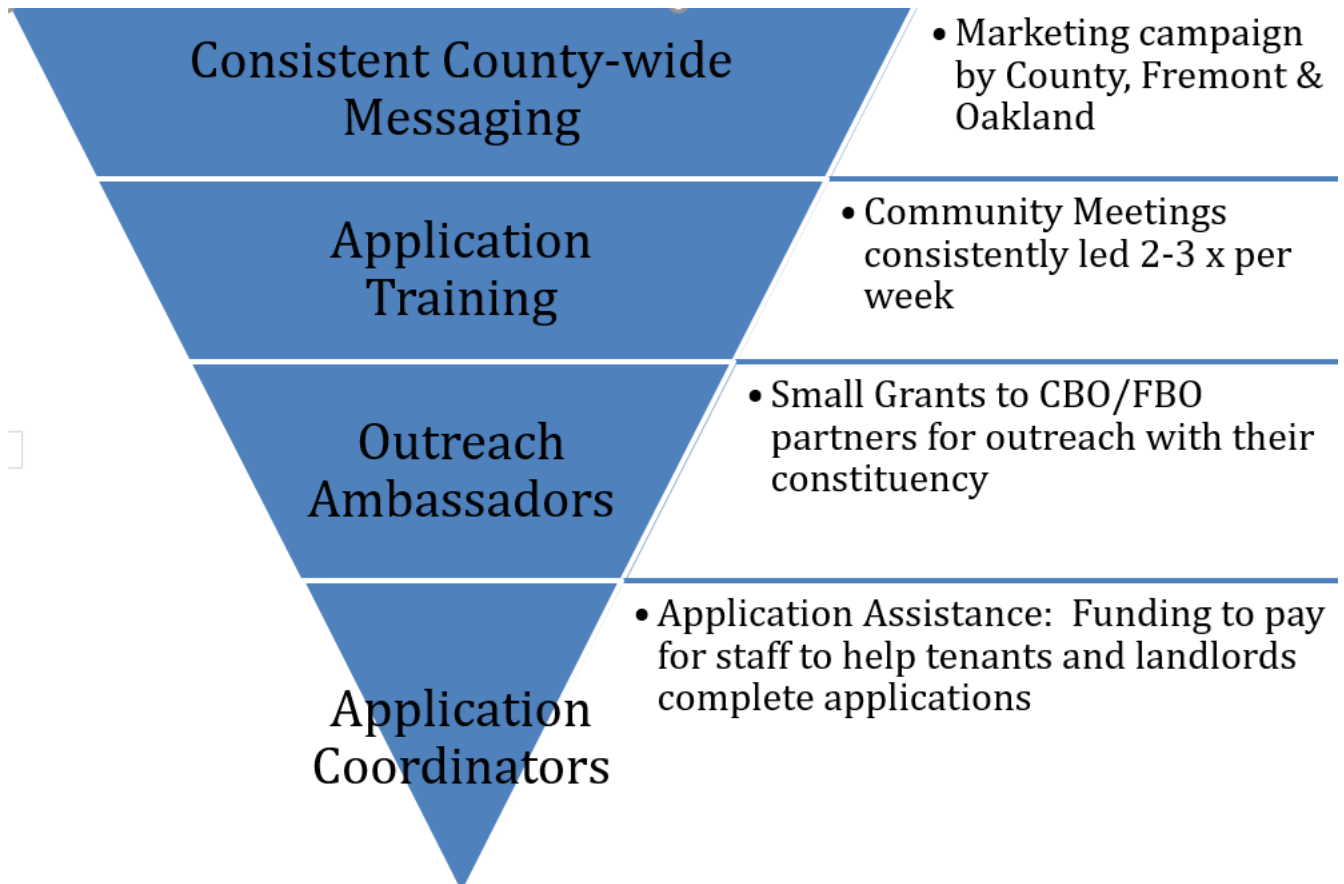
Since 2018, Alameda County has contracted with Centro Legal de la Raza (“Centro Legal”) to implement the County’s Anti-Displacement Program, known as “**Alameda County Housing Secure.**” Alameda County Housing Secure (ACHS) is a collaborative of legal service providers that have partnered to prevent the displacement of the County’s most vulnerable community members, through free legal services to lower income tenants and homeowners disproportionately impacted by the Bay Area housing crisis and COVID-19 pandemic and provision of emergency financial assistance. **Centro Legal will serve as the “back-end” administrator of the Alameda County ERAP**, including managing the Program’s database, processing and approving completed applications, and disbursing grant ERAP payments to eligible applicants. Centro Legal will build and expand upon the ACHS model and utilize its existing program management infrastructure and partnerships. A soft launch of the Alameda County ERAP will begin in mid-March.

### Front End Outreach and Engagement Strategy

Alameda County is also launching a robust “front-end” marketing, outreach and engagement effort to ensure access to the ERAP by the County’s most vulnerable renter households (see graphic next page). The Outreach and Engagement Strategy contains four components – Marketing, Application Training, Outreach Ambassadors, and Application Coordinators. The Marketing and the Application Training components are being contracted separately by the County. **The Outreach Ambassadors and the Application Coordinators are being sought through this RFI.** The goals of each area are described below:

- **MARKETING:** Build broad awareness of the Alameda County ERAP throughout the County through implementation of a robust Marketing Plan that effectively reaches the County’s different geographies and constituencies, using multiple communication methods and tools, collaborative outreach and education efforts.
- **APPLICATION TRAINING/INFORMATION SESSIONS:** Provide regular, easy-to-access application training through information sessions on the ERAP program requirements and how to apply for assistance.
- **OUTREACH AMBASSADORS:** Engage wide variety of community-, education- and faith-based organizations, coalitions, grassroots programs, and other entities to serve as ERAP Outreach Ambassadors, particularly organizations with roots in hard-to-reach communities that will most benefit from the ERAP; use networks to promote availability of ERAP.
- **APPLICATION COORDINATORS:** Contract with organizations to provide staff “Application Coordinators” who will provide one-on-one technical assistance on ERAP application to tenant

applicants in communities most in need of emergency rental assistance and most at risk for not accessing the funds.



## Grant Opportunity and Scope of Services

Alameda County HCD has issued this **Request for Information (“RFI”)** to secure organizations to serve as ERAP Outreach Ambassadors for the Alameda County ERAP. Alameda County HCD will provide stipends to organizations who can demonstrate the ability to conduct outreach to their lower income constituents who have been economically impacted by COVID-19, and which are located in and/or serve clients or have members who live in the Alameda County jurisdictions covered by the Alameda County ERAP funding (i.e., all County jurisdictions except for cities of Fremont and Oakland). RFI submittals must specify to which populations the organization will promote the Emergency Rental Assistance Program participation. To maximize resources, organizations should focus their efforts on the outreach which they are best at conducting.

**Important Note:** Using materials and resources provided through other components of the Outreach and Engagement Strategy (i.e., the Marketing Campaign, Application Trainings, and Application Coordinators Technical Assistance), **organizations selected to serve as ERAP Outreach Ambassadors will be able to focus specifically on outreach within their communities and ERAP Application Coordinators will be assigned to assist those who need help with the application.** They can rely on Alameda County HCD to provide marketing materials and outreach communications content via the Marketing Campaign. The online training presentations will be developed by HCD’s other partner organizations; and one-on-one application technical assistance will be provided by staff through other ERAP Program contracts, including through the County’s contract with Centro Legal.

### Scope of Services for ERAP Outreach Ambassadors

Selected ERAP Outreach Ambassadors will provide services in two areas: 1) Conducting outreach to their targeted constituency through a variety of means; and 2) Hosting the online Application Training with their targeted constituency. These activities and other expected responsibilities are described below:

- **Outreach** - ERAP Outreach Ambassadors will promote, educate, and direct outreach to targeted constituencies to increase awareness and participation in the Alameda County ERAP. This could include, but is not necessarily limited to, hosting information events; adopting a block to distribute information on ERAP; canvassing; distributing ERAP information through electronic and social media to constituents, etc.
- **Hosting Online Application Training** - ERAP Outreach Ambassadors will recruit members of the organization to attend an online ERAP Application Workshop to learn about the Alameda County Emergency Rental Assistance Program and how to complete the application for ERAP assistance. As ERAP Outreach Ambassadors, organizations will publicize the workshop, recruit participants, host and facilitate the online meeting. ERAP Outreach Ambassadors will introduce the ERAP Application Training Organization (HCD is separately entering contracts with the training provider organizations). The Training Provider organizations will actually conduct the training portion of the application workshop, but the ERAP Ambassador organization can help introduce the trainers to the Ambassador Organization’s constituency. ERAP Outreach Ambassadors will be expected to plan and coordinate with the ERAP Application Training

Organization, conduct multiple communications (social, email, text, phone calls) to inform network/clients/constituents about the training, and host the meeting.

- **Attend ERAP Outreach Ambassador Orientation** (anticipated early May 2021; 30 minutes to 1 hour; will be an online/virtual orientation) - Purpose of this orientation is to review ERAP Outreach Ambassadors' responsibilities and answer any questions.
- **Language Access** -- Coordinate with Application Training Organization to ensure that information presented is available in languages spoken by organization's constituency. Organizations submitting to the RFI must specify the primary languages spoken by their constituents on the RFI Submittal Form, and to indicate whether the organization has language interpretation capacity.
- **Track Outreach** – ERAP Outreach Ambassadors will be expected to regularly track and retain documentation of their outreach activities. Evidence of outreach (such as copies of emails sent, text blasts, social media posts, attendee lists, recruited participants in activity, etc.) must be submitted with request for payment at the conclusion of all activities. The outreach activities submitted for payment will be based on completion of the metrics listed in the Stipend Levels table found in **Exhibit A** to this RFI.

#### Amount of Stipend

Organizations submitting through this RFI will be evaluated on the reach of their proposed outreach plans. Stipends ranging from \$2,000 to \$5,000 will be awarded on a tiered basis, based on the reach of the organization's outreach to its constituency. Please review the Stipend Levels table found in **Exhibit A** to this RFI for expected services and activities to be provided under each tier stipend level. In addition to the stipend amount, ERAP Ambassador organizations that are able to provide language interpretation for their constituents may be able to receive an additional lump sum payment for these additional services. Organizations submitting through this RFI should indicate whether they wish to apply for these additional funds.

#### Term of Engagement

Successful organizations will enter into a contractual arrangement with Alameda County anticipated to be approximately six months in duration (May 1, 2021 through November 30, 2021). Alameda County HCD will serve as the main point of contact for the ERAP Ambassador Organizations, including preparing the agreement for approval by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, overseeing the selected organizations' implementation, issuing payments, and ensuring outcomes are met.

#### **Scope of Services for ERAP Application Coordinators**

Selected ERAP Application Coordinator Organizations are expected to provide the following scope of services:

- Provide dedicated staff person(s) at organization who will be available to work one-on-one with tenants who need assistance completing the initial application for submittal through the Centro Legal online web application portal. As an example, Application Coordinators can offer their clients ERAP assistance in coordination with existing programming, such as food distribution programs or schedule individual appointments with clients



- Provide technical assistance to other applicants with incomplete applications.

### Amount of Contract

The contracts for the Application Coordinator Program will be staff-based, FTE-based contracts. The amount of the contract shall be based on the organization's proposed staffing plan and salary ranges for the proposed number of staff to be assigned to serve as Application Coordinators through the program. The County anticipates selecting several organizations to serve as Application Coordinators.

### Term of Engagement

Successful organizations will enter into a contractual agreement with Alameda County anticipated to be approximately seven months in duration (May 1, 2021 through November 31, 2021). Alameda County HCD will serve as the main point of contact for the ERAP Application Coordinator organizations, including preparing the agreement for approval by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, overseeing the selected organizations' implementation, issuing payments, and ensuring outcomes are met.

## **RFI Submittal Requirements, Other Procedures and Instructions**

### **RFI Submittal Due Date**

Submittals in response to this RFI are due no later than **5 pm on Monday, March 29, 2021**. Late submittals will not be accepted. Hard copies will not be accepted.

### **How to Apply**

The completed submittal and all required additional materials must be submitted electronically as PDF documents and emailed to Director of Outreach, Casey Farmer at [casey.farmer@acgov.org](mailto:casey.farmer@acgov.org).

Organizations are strongly encouraged to email their completed submittal materials in advance of the deadline to avoid technical issues. It is important to note on page one of the RFI Submittal Form whether your organization is applying for the ERAP Outreach Ambassadors Program, or the ERAP Application Coordinators Program, or both.

### **RFI Submittal Organization**

Submittals must include the following materials:

- 1) Completed and signed **RFI Submittal Form** (found as **Exhibit B** to this RFI)
- 2) Signed W-9 Form

### **RFI Submittal Requirements**

RFI Submittal responses are to be straightforward, clear, concise and specific to the information requested. Organization must provide responses to all information requested for the submittal to be considered complete. Submission to this RFI is at the organization's expense and no part of the costs of preparation shall be reimbursed by the County. RFI Submittals in whole or in part, are NOT to be marked confidential or proprietary. County may refuse to consider any submittal or part thereof so marked. Submittals in response to this RFI may be subject to public disclosure. County shall not be

liable in any way for disclosure of any such records. Please refer to the County's website at: <http://www.acgov.org/gsa/departments/purchasing/policy/proprietary.htm> for more information regarding Proprietary and Confidential information policies. Under California Public Records Act, all documents submitted in response to this RFI are considered part of the public record and will be made available to the public, upon request, following the application deadline.

## **How to Submit Questions**

Questions should be emailed to Casey Farmer, Director of Outreach ([casey.farmer@acgov.org](mailto:casey.farmer@acgov.org)). HCD will respond to all questions via email. All contact during the RFI application and evaluation phases shall only be through the designated email for the RFI ([casey.farmer@acgov.org](mailto:casey.farmer@acgov.org)). Organizations shall neither contact nor lobby County staff or evaluators during the evaluation process. Attempts by organization to contact and/or influence evaluators may result in disqualification of the organization from this RFI process.

## **Revisions to RFI**

If it becomes necessary to modify any aspect of this RFI, HCD will prepare an addendum and email it to each organization included on the email listservs used for original distribution of this RFI.

## **Modifications to Submittals**

Organizations may not modify their submittal at any time after the due date, except in direct response to a request from HCD for clarification. Any submittal and proposed information items must be valid for at least 180 days after submission.

## **Expense of Preparation**

HCD is not responsible for any expense incurred in preparation of submittals or taking any action in connection with the process, or for the costs of any services performed in connection with submittal, interviews, or approval process.

## **Reservation of Rights**

HCD reserves the right to conduct any investigation of the qualifications of any organization submitting through this RFI that it deems appropriate, negotiate modifications to any of the items submitted, request additional information from any submitting organization, extend the deadline, reject any or all submittals, and waive any irregularities. HCD retains the right to negotiate the terms and services in any submittal. HCD retains the right to cancel this process, extend the deadline, re-start the process or not select any provider.

## **Interviews**

HCD reserves the right to conduct interviews in connection with responses submitted in response to this RFI. As such, all entities responding to this RFI should be prepared to participate in a video phone call (Zoom or similar format) upon request by HCD.

## Right to Waive Irregularities

HCD reserves the right to:

- 1) Withdraw this solicitation at any time without prior notice and, furthermore, makes no representation that any contract will occur and that funds will be awarded to any respondent to this solicitation;
- 2) Waive any irregularities in the RFI process and to reject any and all submissions not in the best interest of Alameda County;
- 3) Request additional information and material;
- 4) Fund any submittal at any amount in order to further Alameda County’s goals and objectives on homeless issues; and
- 5) Retain all documents submitted in response to this RFI.

Selection or rejection of a Submittal does not affect these rights.

## Estimated Implementation Schedule

Deliverable	Dates
RFI released	Monday, 3/15/21
<b>RFI Submittal deadline</b> (Note: late applications will <b>not</b> be considered)	<b>Monday, 3/29/21 by 5pm</b>
RFI Submittals Review Period	3/30/21 through 4/7/21
Notice of Funding Award/Non Award for ERAP Outreach Ambassadors and for ERAP Application Coordinators	Friday, 4/9/21
Deadline for Submission of Appeals	Friday, 4/16/21
Board of Supervisors Meeting to Approve ERAP Ambassador Organizations and ERAP Application Coordinator Organizations	late April
ERAP Outreach Ambassador Organizations and ERAP Application Coordinators Commence Activities	May 1, 2021
ERAP Outreach Ambassador Orientation and ERAP Application Coordinators Training Occur	Early May 2021
ERAP Outreach Ambassador and ERAP Application Coordinators Implementation Period	May - November 2021
ERAP Outreach Ambassador and ERAP Application Coordinators Contracts End Date	November 30, 2021

## Application Review and Funding Process

### Minimum Eligibility Requirements

- Organization must be a 501(c)(3) (or have a fiscal sponsor) or be a governmental agency.
- Organization must provide a completed W-9 form or be a current vendor with Alameda County.
- Organization must be located in Alameda County. Organizations headquartered outside of Alameda County must demonstrate successful experience, a local partnership, or expertise in serving the proposed constituency of Alameda County residents identified in the organization's application.
- Organizations cannot discriminate based on race, color, national origin, citizenship status, creed, religion, religious affiliation, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, veteran status, or any other protected status under applicable law.

RFI Submittals will be reviewed by County staff and/or consultants for completeness, meeting minimum eligibility requirements, and competitiveness. Incomplete submittals may not be accepted. Staff may ask clarifying questions of organizations and include this information in the review process. Organizations that do meet the minimum eligibility requirements may be rejected, may not be rated, and may not be considered for selection.

### Selection Criteria

Each complete submittal will be evaluated based on selection criteria described below. Those organizations that demonstrate the experience and ability to meet the scope of services and best meet the needs of the County for successful implementation of the Alameda County ERAP will be recommended to the Board of Supervisors for funding award.

Qualification of organizations under this RFI will be performed by County staff and/or others who have expertise or experience in emergency rental assistance and/or other housing program design, county-wide outreach and engagement planning and implementation, technical assistance programs, and community-based organizing efforts implemented in Alameda County. In addition, HCD will consult with city staff from jurisdictions in the Alameda County ERAP geographical areas to ensure that the final set of recommended organizations for the ERAP Outreach Ambassadors and Application Coordinators includes a broad range of organizations that will most successfully provide outreach to constituencies eligible for the ERAP assistance in all the geographical areas of the County covered by the Alameda County ERAP funding, and organizations with the qualifications and capacity to provide application technical assistance. HCD will notify submitting organizations of the qualification outcome. HCD intends to distribute organizational stipends under the ERAP Outreach Ambassadors Program to organizations throughout the jurisdictions of the County covered through the Alameda County ERAP (all County areas except Fremont and Oakland, which have their own separate ERAP programs). The goal of this geographical distribution is to ensure that the ERAP Ambassadors selected will best meet the County's needs to ensure that Alameda County ERAP target populations are served throughout the geographical areas covered by the Alameda County ERAP.

**The Selection Criteria have been established to prioritize funding for organizations that:**

- Demonstrate a clear understanding of how the proposed activities will advance community knowledge about the Alameda County Emergency Rental Assistance Program and the County’s goal of ensuring that the funds are widely accessed by lower income renter populations that have been unable to pay rent as a result of loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Demonstrate their organizational connection to, and trusted relationship working with, the target population for the ERAP funds (lower income renters who need emergency rental assistance due to income losses associated with the COVID-19 pandemic).
- Demonstrate a robust outreach plan and organizational capacity to engage with their constituencies to deliver on the expected scope of services for ERAP Outreach Ambassadors.

<b>ERAP Outreach Ambassadors Selection Criteria</b>
<b>ORGANIZATION CONSTITUENCY ALIGNMENT</b> - Organization’s constituency is aligned with the populations targeted to benefit most from the Alameda County ERAP (lower income renters impacted by COVID-19, loss of income resulting in not being able to pay rent).
<b>ORGANIZATION EXPERIENCE AND TRACK RECORD</b> - Organization has an established track record working and engaging with populations most likely to benefit from ERAP assistance and those populations live in an area covered by the geographical areas included in the Alameda County ERAP.
<b>ORGANIZATION’S PROPOSED OUTREACH ACTIVITIES</b> - Organization’s proposed outreach activities are in alignment with ERAP Outreach Ambassadors Scope of Services.
<b>ORGANIZATION’S CAPACITY</b> - Organization has demonstrated capacity to undertake the ERAP Outreach Ambassadors Scope of Services in terms of types/methods of access to their constituency (e.g., listservs usage, social media usage, mailings, canvassing). Organization demonstrates effectiveness reaching targeted populations during the COVID-19 pandemic.
<b>ACHIEVABLE TIMELINE</b> - Organization is able to commit to starting ERAP Outreach Work in early May 2021. Organizational outreach should be concentrated between May and June 2021 but can extend through contract term. Organization is able to undertake recruitment to ensure at least 50% of outreach and hosted training information sessions are completed by 6/30/21.

### ERAP Application Coordinators Selection Criteria

**ORGANIZATION CONSTITUENCY ALIGNMENT** - Organization's constituency is aligned with the populations targeted to benefit most from the Alameda County ERAP (lower income renters impacted by COVID-19, loss of income resulting in not being able to pay rent).

**ORGANIZATION EXPERIENCE AND TRACK RECORD** - Organization has an established track record providing technical assistance to applicants for housing programs including emergency rental assistance and other publicly-funded community development programs. Organization has a track record working with populations that live in an area covered by the geographical areas included in the Alameda County ERAP.

**ORGANIZATION'S PROPOSED APPLICATION COORDINATION PROGRAM**- Organization's proposed technical assistance and application coordination plan submitted with the RFI meets the Scope of Services for Application Coordinators.

**ORGANIZATION'S STAFFING CAPACITY** - Organization has demonstrated capacity and experienced staffing to serve as an ERAP Application Coordinator organization.

**ACHIEVABLE TIMELINE** - Organization is able to commence work in May 2021 and provide staffing through November 2021 for this program.

### Notice of Recommendation to Award/Not Award

At the conclusion of the RFI response evaluation process, all submitting organizations will be notified by email of the contract award recommendation(s), if any, by HCD. The document providing this notification is called the **Notice of Recommendation to Award/Not Award**. The Notice of Recommendation to Award/Not Award will provide the name of the organization being recommended for contract award, if any, and the names of all other parties that submitted responses. At the conclusion of the RFI response evaluation process, debriefings for unsuccessful organizations will be scheduled and provided upon written request and will be restricted to discussion of only that submittal. Under no circumstances will any discussion be conducted with regard to any other submittals. The submittals shall be made available upon request no later than 5 business days after the Notice of Recommendation to Award/Not Award is issued.

## Protest/Appeals Process

The following is provided in the event that applicants wish to protest the application process or appeal the recommendation to award a contract once the Notice of Recommendation to Award/Non-Award have been issued. Protests submitted prior to issuance of the Notice of Recommendation to Award/Non-Award will not be accepted by the County.

- 1) Any protest by any applicant regarding their own application must be submitted in writing to the Alameda County Housing and Community Development Department, HCDadmin@acgov.org, before 5:00 p.m. of the FIFTH (5th) business day following the date of issuance of the Notice of Recommendation to Award/Not Award, not the date received by the Applicant. A protest received after 5:00 p.m. is considered received as of the next business day.
  - a. The protest must contain a complete statement of the reasons and facts for the protest based on the information submitted in the application.
  - b. The protest must refer to the specific portions of all documents that form the basis for the protest.
  - c. The protest must include the name, address, email address, fax number and telephone number of the person representing the protesting party.
  - d. The County or its designee will notify all applicants of the protest as soon as possible.
  
- 2) Upon receipt of written protest, HCD Department Head or his or her designee will review and evaluate the protest and issue a written decision. HCD, may, at its discretion, investigate the protest, obtain additional information, provide an opportunity to settle the protest by mutual agreement, and/or schedule a meeting(s) with the protesting applicant and others (as appropriate) to discuss the protest. The decision on the protest will be issued at least ten (10) business days prior to the Board hearing or County award date. The decision will be communicated by e-mail and will inform the applicant whether or not the recommendation to the Board of Supervisors in the Notice of Recommendation to Award is going to change. A copy of the decision will be furnished to all applicants affected by the decision. As used in this paragraph, an applicant is affected by the decision on a protest if a decision on the protest could have resulted in the applicant not being an apparent successful applicant.
  
- 3) The decision of HCD on the protest may be appealed to the Auditor-Controller's Office of Contract Compliance & Reporting (OCCR) located at 1221 Oak St., Room 249, Oakland, CA 94612, Fax: (510) 272-6502. The applicant whose application is the subject of the protest, all applicants affected by HCD's decision on the protest, and the protestor have the right to appeal if not satisfied with HCD's decision. All appeals to the Auditor-Controller's OCCR shall be in writing and submitted within five (5) business days following the issuance of the protest decision by HCD, not the date received by the Applicant. An appeal received after 5:00 p.m. is considered received as of the next business day. An appeal received after the FIFTH (5th) business day following the date of issuance of the decision by HCD shall not be considered under any circumstances by the County or the Auditor-Controller OCCR.
  - a. The appeal shall specify the decision being appealed and all the facts and circumstances relied upon in support of the appeal.

- b. In reviewing protest appeals, the OCCR will not re-judge the application(s). The appeal to the OCCR shall be limited to review of the procurement process to determine if the contracting department (HCD) materially erred in following the application process or, where appropriate, County contracting policies or other laws and regulations.
  - c. The appeal to the OCCR also shall be limited to the grounds raised in the original protest and the decision by HCD. As such, an applicant is prohibited from stating new grounds for a protest in its appeal. The Auditor-Controller (OCCR) shall only review the materials and conclusions reached by HCD and will determine whether to uphold or overturn the protest decision.
  - d. The Auditor's Office may overturn the results of an application process for ethical violations by procurement staff, county selection committee members, subject matter experts, or any other County staff managing or participating in the application process, regardless of timing or the contents of a protest.
  - e. The decision of the Auditor-Controller's OCCR is the final step of the appeal process. A copy of the decision of the Auditor-Controller's OCCR will be furnished to the protestor, the applicant whose application is the subject of the protest, and all applicants affected by the decision.
- 4) The County will complete the protest/appeal procedures set forth in this paragraph before a Recommendation to Award a Contract is considered by the Board of Supervisors for the Core Service Area for which the applicant applied.
- 5) The procedures and time limits set forth in this paragraph are mandatory and are each applicant's sole and exclusive remedy in the event of protest. An applicant's failure to timely complete both the protest and appeal procedures shall be deemed a failure to exhaust administrative remedies. Failure to exhaust administrative remedies, or failure to comply otherwise with these procedures, shall constitute a waiver of any right to further pursue the protest, including filing a Government Code claim or legal proceedings.

### **Contract Preparation and Staff Recommendation to Board of Supervisors**

At the conclusion of the RFI evaluation process, including any protest/appeals periods (if applicable), HCD staff will work with the recommended organizations to finalize the terms and conditions of the contractual agreement between the organization and the County for the particular scope of services (ERAP Outreach Ambassadors or ERAP Application Coordinators). Staff will prepare the form of agreement and a letter to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors containing the recommendation for the stipend award.

### **Awarding a Contract**

- 1) During the initial period of any contract or other form of agreement which may be awarded to Contractor, the County may review the application, the contract, any goods or services provided, and/or meet with the Contractor to identify any issues or potential problems.



Thereafter, the County will monitor services on an on-going basis with periodic on-site or remote file review at the discretion of the County.

- 2) The County reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, whether:
  - a. Contractor has complied with all terms of this RFI; and
  - b. Any problems or potential problems with the proposed goods and services were evidenced which make it unlikely (even with possible modifications) that such goods and services have met or will meet the County requirements.
- 3) If, as a result of such determination, the County concludes that it is not satisfied with Contractor, Contractor's performance under any awarded contract and/or Contractor's goods and services as contracted for therein, the Contractor may be notified that the contract is being terminated. The County will have the right to invite the next highest ranked Applicant for the scope of work to enter into a contract.
- 4) Applications will be evaluated by a committee and will be ranked in accordance with the RFI. Award may not necessarily be made to the Applicant with the lowest price.
- 5) The County reserves the right to reject any or all responses that materially differ from any terms contained in this RFI or from any Exhibits attached hereto, to waive informalities and minor irregularities in responses received, and to provide an opportunity for Applicants to correct minor and immaterial errors contained in their submissions. The decision as to what constitutes a minor irregularity shall be made solely at the discretion of the County.
- 6) The County reserves the right to award to a single or multiple Contractors.
- 7) The County has the right to decline to award this contract or any part thereof for any reason.
- 8) Board approval to award a contract is required.
- 9) Any application/submittals that contain false or misleading information may be disqualified by the County.
- 10) A contract must be negotiated, finalized, and signed by the recommended awardee prior to Board approval.
- 11) Specific contract terms and conditions will be negotiated with each selected applicant.

## **LIST OF EXHIBITS**

EXHIBIT A – Stipend Levels Table

EXHIBIT B – RFI Submittal Form