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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. Johns County Launches New Rental Assistance Program

ST. JOHNS COUNTY, Florida, November 20, 2023 – As the holidays approach, the U.S. Department of the Treasury has provided St. Johns County with \$2,150,000 of emergency rental assistance to help low-income renters catch up on past due rent and utilities, specifically as they recover from housing instability experienced during and after the pandemic.

St. Johns County Emergency Rental Assistance (SJC ERA) can provide qualified households with up to 18 months of total assistance, including back rent and utilities, and up to three months of future assistance. Qualified renters in the middle of an eviction proceeding get expedited assistance. Registration for the program is open for tenants and landlords at www.sjc-era.com.

St. Johns County engaged Capital Access Inc., a grants management consultant, to serve as program manager for SJC ERA. Capital Access processed 18,000 grants for rent, mortgage, and small business assistance during the pandemic for counties and cities in Florida and Pennsylvania.

Capital Access provides a team of experienced case managers who can help tenants and landlords throughout the application process. Online applications are available by going to www.sjc-era.com.

"Once an application is complete and the grant agreement is executed, we can issue payment directly to the landlord within 48 hours," Capital Access CEO Jeremy Newberg said. "Many renters still face financial challenges that started during the pandemic. SJC ERA can help them catch up on past-due rent and utilities. Landlords benefit because they can recover past due rent, which helps the overall St. Johns County economy."

The County set a goal to expend 100% of the rental assistance grants by the end of 2023. Tenants and landlords are encouraged to apply at www.sjc-era.com while funds remain available.

How the program works:

- SJC ERA will pay for past-due rent and utilities and up to three months of future eligible housing/utilities expenses, totaling up to 18 months of assistance for qualifying applicants. Qualifying past-due rent can go as far back as April 1, 2020.
- No more than one application per household.
- Grant funds are paid directly to the landlord/property manager and the utilities company.

- Funds will be distributed on a "first-come, first-qualified, first-approved" basis until program funds are depleted.

Summary of Eligibility Criteria:

- Must be a renter living in St. Johns County
- Applicants must have experienced disruption and/or loss during or due to the effects of the pandemic.
- Case Managers will help applicants determine evidence of housing instability.
- Eligible applicants must earn 80% or less of the area median income (AMI) for their household size.
- Applicants get the highest priority for processing if:
 - The total household income is less than 50% AMI;
 - Households with a person unemployed for at least 90 days before the date of the complete application;
 - Currently in an eviction proceeding;
 - There are members of the household who are children under 18 years old or seniors over the age of 60.

HUD INCOME LIMITS 2023 ST. JOHNS COUNTY								
Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Very Low Income (50%)	\$31,000	\$35,400	\$39,850	\$44,250	\$47,800	\$51,350	\$54,900	\$58,450
Low Income (80%)	\$49,600	\$56,650	\$63,750	\$70,800	\$76,500	\$82,150	\$87,800	\$93,500

Residents are encouraged to apply early as funds are limited. Application Specialists are available to assist. People with language and/or physical challenges can request assistance with application submission.

Residents are encouraged to apply now as funds are limited. Online applications are available by going to www.sjc-era.com. If an applicant needs help with the application, has a language or accessibility need, or has questions, please email info@sjc-era.com or call **904-204-8989**.

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