

Multicultural Advisory Committee of the State of Utah's COVID-19 Response

Meeting Minutes

Friday, January 22, 2021 | 3:00 - 4:00 P.M.

Google Meet | Online

Members: Chair Nubia Peña, Co-Chair Byron Russell, Co-Chair Ze Min Xiao, Aden Batar, Juan Becerra, Neelam Chand, Rebecca Chavez-Houck, Dulce Díez, Jake Fitisemanu Jr., Emma E. Houston, Dustin Jansen, Mikelle Moore, Dr. Len Novilla, Asha Parekh, Ming Wang

Absent: Jess Anderson, Marc Babitz, Silvia Castro, Mayra Cedano, Deneiva Knight

Guests: Ramy Ahmed, Michael Andrews, Rozanna Benally-Sagg, Heather Borski, Maegan Castleton, RyLee Curtis, Christina Davis, Anna Gallegos, Michael Gallegos, Jenny Hor, Rossina Lake, Jennifer Leary, Lauren Littlefield, Claudia Loayza, Nate McDonald, Antonella Packard, Gonzalo Peña, Maria Ruiz, Betty Sawyer, Jeremy Taylor, Rocío Torres Mora, Jeannette Villalta, Megan Waters, Marti Woolford, Amy Wylie, Melissa Zito

Welcome – Byron Russell, Co-Chair

Byron Russell welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Utah Housing Assistance Program – Christina Davis

In May 2020, the Utah Housing Assistance Program was formed from federal funding through December 2020. An additional \$7 million has been received for January 2021.

- An application for \$146 million in funding for the rest of 2021 has been made.
 - After each county also applies, an extra \$50 million could potentially be acquired.
- A new centralized application form is being created to streamline the application process.
- The new eligibility requirements have slightly changed:
 - As a federal guideline, household income must be at or below 80% of the median income vs. 100% in the past.
 - A risk of homelessness or household instability must be demonstrated.
 - Proper documentation, such as past due bills, or an eviction notice, is needed.
- Applicants who have been unemployed for more than 90 days, or whose income is at 50% or below the median, will be prioritized.
- Between eviction moratoriums and this funding, no one should be losing their housing, due to the pandemic.
- Using Dr. Joel Arvizo-Zavala's disparity research, in conjunction with rental assistance applications, better decisions can be made on where to best allocate funding.
- Funding is open to all, regardless of legal status.
- Infrastructure is being built for Spanish applications, but other languages would need Google Translate.
- A fact sheet has been created with all pertinent information, and is available on the Department of Workforce Services' website.

Salt Lake County Rental Assistance Program – Mike Gallegos

Salt Lake County is an eligible recipient of Treasury deposits towards rental assistance, due to the population of the county.

- \$215 million has been received as a state, for a 12 month period.
- Resources are targeted for those at 50% of median income or below.
- Under the new program, the need for better outreach to the communities most in need is evident.
 - Looking into organizations that can help with outreach and filling out applications.
- The State of Utah is developing a uniform application system for all counties.
- Rollout was scheduled for February 1st, but may be pushed back while waiting for the technology.
- The State of Utah has provided funding to cover the gap, until the program is rolled out.
- Support needed to follow up with applicants, as in the past, 40% of applications came in incomplete.
- Refugee resettlement agencies can be considered for this funding.
- Project Success Coalition is located in Ogden, but helps Utahns all across the Wasatch Front.
 - Rental assistance has been the most requested form of assistance.
 - Despite receiving a grant, over 30 people are on the waiting list for assistance.
 - Any additional applicants are sent to Ogden Community Action.

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- Rose Park Neighborhood Center received a \$50,000 grant that was spent within two months towards rental assistance.
 - There is major anxiety for those looking for assistance, due to many factors such as being new to government assistance, not being able to complete the application, or pressure from their landlords.

Other Business

- Intermountain Healthcare made a \$2 million contribution towards Community Health Workers.
 - Intermountain Healthcare recognized the value of CHWs, and wanted to ensure their capabilities were expanded, and needs were met.

Action Items

- Share the rental assistance fact sheet within the correct distribution channels to spread the information.

Next Meeting

Friday, January 29, 2021 from 3:00–4:00 P.M. through Google Meet.