



# COVID-19 Harris County Housing Stability Task Force

**Policy Response Team**

Update – 02.05.2021



**LSC**  
HOUSTON

# Purpose of the Policy Response Group

- To review other jurisdictions approaches in preventing evictions and addressing housing instability before and during COVID-19.
- To evaluate which policies or programs should/could be considered at the City, County or State level.
- To prioritize potential policy recommendations from the Housing Stability Task Force that align with the groups goals.

# A few notes...

## **Legal Supports:**

The Access to Justice WG considered both Tenant-Landlord mediation and the Court Navigators concept.

## **Financial Supports:**

The Rent Assistance WG developed recommendations for Rent, Direct and Utility Assistance Programs.

The Task Force recently submitted recommendations for the TX Eviction Diversion Program that can be incorporated into a final report.

## **Housing Supports:**

The Landlord and Property Stabilization Work Group is exploring: Assistance to Small & Medium Sized Landlords, Property Tax Relief, and Affordable Housing Incentives.

| Policies & Programs       | Instability<br><i>(stabilization/prevention)</i>   | Non-payment<br><i>(Prevention/Mitigation)</i>  | Eviction Proceedings  | Rehousing<br><i>(stabilization)</i>  |
|---------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Tenant Protections</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant Protection Acts</li> <li>• <b>Rent Control /Stabilization Ordinance</b></li> <li>• <b>Rent Increase Freeze during Emergency Declarations</b></li> <li>• Adding source of income as a protection in the Texas Fair Housing Act</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amendments to the CDC order</li> <li>• Grace Period Ordinances</li> <li>• Seasonal Moratoriums and Utility Shut offs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>Just Cause Eviction</del></li> <li>• Clean Hands to Bring Eviction Actions</li> </ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eviction Blacklist Ban</li> <li>• Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Law</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Financial Supports</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit/Cap on Late fees</li> <li>• <del>Raise Minimum Wage</del></li> <li>• Eviction Prevention Program</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rental and Utility Assistance</li> <li>• <b>Landlord Assistance</b></li> <li>• <b>Payment plans as mitigation strategy during crises (decided to tie to RA)</b></li> <li>• <b>Eviction Diversion</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant Right to Redemption</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential Assistance for Families in Transition</li> <li>• <del>Landlord mitigation program</del></li> </ul>  |
| <b>Housing Supports</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements to the Rent Registry</li> <li>• Habitability Inspections and code enforcement</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase investments on Housing Counseling</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tax Relief for Small &amp; Medium sized landlords</b></li> <li>• <b>Mortgage forbearance/deferment</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable Housing Trust/Stabilization Fund</li> <li>• <b>Inclusionary Zoning</b></li> <li>• <b>Affordable Housing Incentives</b></li> <li>• <del>NOAH Preservation Strategies</del></li> </ul> |
| <b>Legal Supports</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tenant-Landlord Education</b></li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tenant/Landlord Mediation</b></li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Legal Representation /Right to Counsel</li> <li>* <b>Court Navigators</b></li> </ul>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sealing of Eviction Records</li> </ul>  |

# Next Steps

- The Policy Response team will provide additional comments of support or concern for each of these policies and prioritize the ones that are most important from their point of view.
- If you are not part of the Policy Response team and would like to fill out the google form please let me know.
- **The Policy Response team will be meeting on February 12<sup>th</sup> to agree on policy priorities to move forward that will shared for review to the TF before the next bi-weekly meeting and voted on the 19<sup>th</sup>.**