



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 5, 2021**

## **ERA Program surpasses \$1 million in community assistance awarded**

Greene County and the partner agencies working to administer the Emergency Rental Assistance Program marked a program milestone this week: more than \$1 million has been awarded to help area individuals whose ability to pay rent and utilities has been impacted by COVID-19. This amount reflects the total awards granted in the two months since the ERA was launched locally.

The six partner agencies, which include Ozarks Area Community Action Corporation (OACAC), Consumer Credit Counseling Services, Community Partnership of the Ozarks, Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri, Council of Churches of the Ozarks and The Salvation Army, collectively have received more than 5,400 calls inquiring about ERA.

The following is an additional breakdown of those calls:

- 1,848 (direct calls and agency call-backs) were screened for eligibility.
- 993 appointments were booked according to each partner agency procedure.
- Of 579 completed appointments, 518 have finalized information from landlords and utility companies.
- 471 awards have been distributed.
- To date, the program has awarded \$1,071,194.92.

Individuals struggling to meet rent obligations as a result of COVID-19 are encouraged to make an appointment with a partner agency to explore if the ERA Program could help.

“This pandemic continues to have an impact that reaches far beyond physical health and wellness. That is why programs like the ERA were developed,” Greene County Presiding Commissioner Bob Dixon said. “These funds are intended to help ease a financial burden and be a resource for recovery.”

Potential applicants are asked to work with one organization and to note the processes for receiving calls and booking appointments vary slightly among participating organizations. To help citizens in determining an agency to work with, those processes are outlined by organization at [greenecountymo.gov/era](http://greenecountymo.gov/era).

In January of this year, Greene County applied for funds as part of the U.S. Treasury Department’s Emergency Rental Assistance Program and received \$8,765,982.70 to distribute to the community per federal guidelines. These funds are part of the second federal \$900 billion COVID-19 relief package that was approved by Congress in December of last year. A key provision of that package is the Rental Assistance Program that set aside \$25 billion to help families and individuals nationwide whose ability to pay rent and utilities has been impacted by COVID-19. The distribution of the funding received is required to be awarded by the end of September and paid by the end of December.

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*Greene County is the State of Missouri’s fourth most populous county, serving more than 275,000 people (2010 census). Its mission is to provide all citizens of Greene County, including those in its cities, a safe and thriving community through excellent customer service, unparalleled dedication, and the efficient use of taxpayer dollars. The Greene County Commission is the executive body of Greene County operating under guidelines established in the Revised Statutes of the State of Missouri. Within that authority the Commission enacts ordinances, resolutions and policies, supervises the activities of county departments, fixes salaries, adopts the annual budget, provides for construction and other services, and conducts hearings on planning and zoning matters.*

**For additional information, contact Donna Barton, Public Information Officer, at 417-844-4311 or [dlbarton@greenecountymo.gov](mailto:dlbarton@greenecountymo.gov).**

