TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

RESOLUTION 2021-12-8 (4)

Date: December 8, 2021

To: THA Board of Commissioners

From: April Black
Executive Director

Re: Contract with Pierce County for Tacoma Schools Housing Assistance Program

---

This resolution would approve an extension of the contract with Pierce County for the Tacoma Schools Housing Assistance Program (TSHAP).

Background

The Tacoma Schools Housing Assistance Program (TSHAP) provides housing supports in the form of rapid rehousing, diversion, and/or other one-time assistance to Tacoma Public Schools (TPS) students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity and their families. These students are identified as McKinney-Vento by the school district, reflecting a special investment and designation from the federal government.

In June 2019, the THA Board of Commissioners approved Resolution 2019-6-26(1) *authorizing the Executive Director to enter into contract negotiation with Pierce County to administer the TSHAP program. The value of the contract will be up to $400,000 per year for three years. Approval to execute this contract is contingent upon THA securing other sources to pay for supportive services and administrative overhead.*

By the end of 2019, THA was able to secure funding commitments from Tacoma Public Schools, Pierce County Human Services, and Graduate Tacoma. However, THA lacked a sustainable funding source for the supportive services necessary for the program's success.

In March 2020, an $800,000 contract was executed for housing assistance and in August 2020, the contract was amended and increased to $1,192,107. The increase accounted for $335,648 in supportive services and $35,646 to account for 10% cost in administrative fees charged to supportive services. The addition of these dollars was fundraised from private entities (Gates Foundation and the Ballmer Family Foundation) to support the upstart of TSHAP.

Launching in the midst of the pandemic combined with the contracted provider's lack of capacity, high need for training and techincal assistance, and near constant staff turnover resulted in the

program's poor performance. As of August 2021, the program has expended 35% of its funding and has not served an adequate number of housholds for the amount of housing support and administrative oversight committed. Increased technical assistance and accountability structures throughout the pilot's launch have not improved the provider's performance. Futher, administering TSHAP is unnecessarily burdensome for the County and THA because it is almost entirely duplicative of the work both agencies conduct to deploy THA's rapid rehousing program. Both agencies acknowledge that streamlining the programs would improve efficiency.

THA consulted Pierce County and Tacoma Public Schools to determine a path forward. Given the pilot's poor performance and continued provider challenges, we recommend to sunset this contract in 2022 and determine an alternative way to continue to serve this population. This resolution will permit the contract term to extend through the 2021/2022 school year to ensure continuity for TPS families. Near the conclusion of the school year, THA's Department of Policy, Innovation, and Evaluation (PIE), will conduct an assessment of the program to gain insights from the pilot and inform how to better serve McKinney-Vento students and their families moving forward. PIE will explore the following questions and use the rapid rehousing population as a comparison group, when data is available on both programs:

- How many households were served by one-time assistance and/or time-limited assistance? For households served via time-limited assistance, how long are they assisted?
- For household who were unhoused prior to receiving services, at what rate do they successfully lease a unit and how long did it take them to do so? Were they able to secure housing in Tacoma?
- Does a household's income change while receiving assistance?
- Do households remain housed at 6 and 12 months post-participation (as measured by a return to Pierce County's homeless crisis response system)?

THA may explore options including, but not limited to serving TPS McKinney-Vento families through the agency's existing rapid rehousing investment, creating preferences within our portfolio, and/or dedicating Property Based Subsidy investments to prioritize this population.

Recommendation

This resolution recommends adopting Resolution 2021-12-8 (4) to extend the Tacoma Schools Housing Assistance Program through August 31, 2022. At that time, the contract would sunset and THA will work with its partners to determine a plan to continue to serve Mckinney-Vento families.

TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

RESOLUTION 2021-12-8 (4)
(Pierce County Contract for Tacoma Schools Housing Assistance Program)

A **RESOLUTION** of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma

WHEREAS, THA, TPS and Pierce County Human Services share a vested interest to serve families with children and improve outcomes for students and the schools that serve low-income families; and

WHEREAS, The contract has been re-written to extend the term through the 2021/2022 academic year; and

WHEREAS, The contract will be in effect through August 2022; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma, Washington, that:

THA's Executive Director is authorized to extend the Pierce County contract for housing for the Tacoma Schools Housing Assistance Program.

Approved: December 8, 2021

Stanley Rumbaugh, Chair