



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACTS

Tulsa County CARES: Jarrel Wade, jwade@tulsacounty.org

City of Tulsa: Carson Colvin, ccolvin@cityoftulsa.org

Restore Hope: Sandi Cox, sandi@schnake.com

**Applications open for second round of Emergency Rental Assistance Program in
Tulsa County**

*Restore Hope Ministries to distribute nearly \$20 million in rent and utility assistance for
households financially impacted by COVID-19*

March 15, 2021 (Tulsa, OK) – Restore Hope Ministries has been selected by the City of Tulsa and Tulsa County as the lead agency to administer \$19.6 million in critical federal funding to provide much needed rent and utility relief to Tulsa City and County residents. The Emergency Rental and Utility Assistance Program (ERAP), under guidelines set forth by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, will help landlords and tenants by paying past due rent, utilities (water, gas, and electric) and, in some cases, forward rent for up to three months to ensure housing stability.

“Given the current economic crisis caused by COVID-19, many of our neighbors have found themselves in dire situations,” said Jeff Jaynes, Restore Hope Ministries executive director. “We are eager to provide relief to those facing the eviction crisis and help keep families in their homes. Housing stability is a critical component to the recovery of our local economy — for tenants as well as landlords.”

Qualification requirements to receive assistance include:

- City of Tulsa and Tulsa County residents over 18.
- Household income at or below 80 percent of the area median income (*estimated area median income can be found on [this website](#)*).
- Experiencing difficulty with housing.
- Experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, experienced a financial hardship due to COVID-19, or have qualified for unemployment benefits since March 13, 2020.

The application opened this morning and extends through Dec. 31, 2021 (or until allocated funding is exhausted). Applicants can learn more about the program and apply online at erap.restorehope.org. Applications will be prioritized based on federal guidelines and data collected related to risk of eviction, homelessness, as well as other local priority criteria.

Since May 2020, Restore Hope has provided more than \$3.9 million in rent and bill payments for 1,600 families (4,110 individuals) in Tulsa County. This assistance, a 1,300 percent increase over previous rent relief provided by Restore Hope, was made possible by generous support from the Tulsa Area COVID-19 Response Fund (through the Tulsa Area United Way and the Tulsa Community Foundation), federal CARES Act funds from the State of Oklahoma, the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies, and donations from many other foundations and individuals.

According to the Eviction Lab, Tulsa County has the 11th highest eviction rate in the United States, and the situation has only grown worse as the pandemic has devastated many families' economic situations. Restore Hope is eager to provide landlords and tenants with immediate relief, as well as promote systemic change and long-term recovery.

"Tulsa County CARES identified several crucial spending priorities to avoid further disaster through this pandemic," Tulsa County Commissioner Stan Sallee said. "In addition to providing for people experiencing hunger and keeping small business employers from shutting down, we decided there is no better use of funds than helping families stay in their homes. This program will help some of the most vulnerable people in our County, and keeping them in housing will avoid more costly scenarios down the road. We're proud to partner with Restore Hope and the City of Tulsa in offering this assistance to all Tulsa County residents in every municipality."

"We are excited to work with our community partners on this effort to help our neighbors in need and distribute funds as quickly as possible to Tulsans who might face possible eviction or utility disruption due to COVID-19," Mayor G.T. Bynum said, "This investment in our citizens will ensure we are creating a more resilient city and working toward economic stability in the future."

"Tulsa is still seeing many neighbors in need of assistance being disproportionately impacted during this COVID-19 pandemic," City Council Chair Vanessa Hall Harper said. "The ERAP allows us to help those families facing some of the biggest hardships keep a roof over their heads, as well as keep their utilities on, as we continue to recover from this crisis."

###

About Restore Hope Ministries

Founded in 1978, Restore Hope Ministries seeks to restore families in financial crisis to economic and spiritual vitality. By reducing hunger, preventing homelessness, and promoting hope, Restore Hope works every day to fight poverty and restore hope for families in need in Tulsa County. To learn more about

Restore Hope, go to www.restorehope.org or follow us at @RHMTulsa on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook.

About Tulsa County CARES

Tulsa County established Tulsa County CARES to lead prevention and protection efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Tulsa County initially received \$113.6 million from the U.S. Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to reimburse expenses and replenish critical resources throughout Tulsa County's municipalities, government agencies, small businesses and nonprofit organizations. The CARES Act provided additional funding in late 2020 to assist families and individuals at risk of eviction. To learn more, visit: <https://tulsacountycares.org/>.

About City of Tulsa COVID-19 Relief

In August 2020, the City of Tulsa received \$30.9 million in reimbursements for public safety expenses from the State of Oklahoma's Coronavirus Relief Funds to address the needs of vulnerable Tulsans and ensure the city's resilience through local community and economic development programs. The City has been awarded \$12 million from the U.S. Department of the Treasury to assist landlords and tenants with rent and utility payments to help offset negative financial impacts from the pandemic. To learn more, visit: www.cityoftulsa.org/cares and follow the City of Tulsa on Twitter and Facebook.