

# CITY COUNCIL RESEARCH DIVISION

## LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY



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**Bill Type and Number:** 2020-276

**Introducer/Sponsor(s):** Council Members Bowman, Freeman, Gaffney, Carlucci, Cumber, Salem, Diamond, Newby, Boylan, Morgan, and White

**Date of Introduction:** May 26, 2020

**Committee(s) of Reference:** NCSPHS, F, R

**Date of Analysis:** May 28, 2020

**Type of Action:** Appropriation, agreement authorization, Procurement Code exception, designation of oversight agency and emergency passage

**Bill Summary:** This bill is an appropriation of \$1,000,000 from CARES Act Grant funds previously appropriated by 2020-235-E to the COVID-19 Senior and Disabled Financial Assistant program, to provide financial assistance to senior citizens (72 years or older) and non-dependent residents with SSA-defined disabilities that are on a fixed income that experienced increased expenses or a decrease in income during the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds can be used for food, supplies, home healthcare, utilities, transportation, and other expenses necessary as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The agreement between the City and Fidelity National Information Services is authorized in order to distribute payment cards to recipients. Pursuant to Section 126.107(g) (Exemptions), Part 1 (General Regulations), Chapter 126 (Procurement Code), *Ordinance Code*, such procurement is exempted from competitive solicitation because the supplies or services are to be provided by those specifically prescribed within authorizing legislation that appropriates the same. The Finance and Administration Department and Office of Economic Development will provide oversight and monthly reports. One cycle emergency passage is requested to respond to the immediate financial need.

**Background Information:** The purpose of this bill is to provide funds for financial relief for low income seniors and non-dependent residents with SSA-defined disabilities that are on fixed incomes to assist with costs during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as increased expenses for cleaning supplies, personal protection materials, costs of home delivery of groceries, meals prepared at home that normally would have been at community centers, utility costs due to increased amount of time at residences, transportation expenses for safety concerns and reduction in JTA services. These residents have financially suffered from COVID-19 but were not eligible for the City's VyStar Assistance Loan Program nor the Mortgage, Rent, and Utility Assistance Program. For 6 months after the effective date, the City will make a one-time payment of \$300 to approved applicants.

Eligibility criteria for applicants: Must reside in Duval County; Must attest that the individual did not qualify for or receive funds from the City of Jacksonville VyStar Assistance Loan Program; Must attest that the individual did not qualify for or receive funds from the City of Jacksonville Mortgage, Rent and Utility Assistance Program; Must attest that the individual is a senior citizen (72 years or older) and/or a non-dependent with disabilities as defined by the Social Security Administration; Must have experienced a reduction in income or an increase in expenses due to the COVID-19 pandemic; Income did not exceed \$30,000 in 2019; Must sign a certification that you have received the debit card; Must sign a certification that you meet all eligibility requirements. (\*SSA Disability: The law defines disability as the inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment(s) which can be expected to result in death or which has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months.)

**Policy Impact Area:** Senior and Disabled Financial Assistance program

**Fiscal Impact:** Appropriation of \$1,000,000 from CARES Act funds previously appropriated in 2020-235-E

**Analyst:** Hampsey