

CITY COUNCIL RESEARCH DIVISION LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY



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Bill Type and Number: Ordinance 2023-803

Introducer/Sponsor(s): Council Member Boylan

Date of Introduction: November 14, 2023

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

Date of Analysis: November 16, 2023

Type of Action: Appropriation of contingency funds; waiver of section of the Ordinance Code to allow for direct contract; designation of oversight department

Bill Summary: The bill appropriates \$1,000,000 from the Special Council Contingency Fund to the Subsidies and Contributions to Private Organizations Account to provide funding to United Way of Northeast Florida, Inc (“United Way”). The funds shall be used for an eviction diversion program. The bill provides for carryover of funds to the FY 24-25 year and waives the section of the Ordinance Code requiring a competitive bid process in contracting with nonprofit entities, allowing for a direct contract with United Way.

Background Information: Inflation has strongly affected the housing rental market, and many renters are struggling to make ends meet as a result. Jacksonville has specifically suffered, as the City ranks in the top ten among large cities in most measures relating to rising housing costs. As a result, United Way has received an unprecedented number of requests for emergency rental and utility assistance, and many homeowners and renters are facing eviction.

While housing assistance programs are common in the area, eviction cases move more quickly through the judicial system at a speed that makes it difficult for tenants to receive this assistance. Many tenants are unable to take advantage of community resources available to them. The aim of this program, administered by a partnership between United Way, Jewish Family and Community Services, Jacksonville Legal Aid, and the Fourth Judicial Circuit, is to expedite the identification of tenants eligible for housing assistance and to distribute communication of eligibility requirements and means to contact the facilitator of this assistance alongside eviction summons. The grant outlines that \$950,000 of funding through the contract between the City and United Way will be used for rent and utility payments made directly to landlords and utility companies for purpose of diverting eviction cases, and \$50,000 will be used for administrative costs.

Section 118.107 of the Ordinance Code requires that all City funds appropriated to nonprofit organizations be subject to a competitive evaluated award process.

Policy Impact Area: Housing assistance & eviction diversion

Fiscal Impact: This bill appropriates \$1,000,000 from the Special Council Contingency Fund to provide for housing assistance.

Analyst: Webb