



CITY OF OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Emily Weinstein
Interim Director,
Department of Housing &
Community Development

SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL – Centro Legal De
La Raza Grant Agreement

DATE: 10/12/23

City Administrator Approval

Date: Oct 12, 2023

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That City Council Adopt a Resolution Awarding a Grant of \$1,000,000 for Tenant Legal Services and Emergency Financial Assistance to Centro Legal De La Raza, Inc.

REASON FOR SUPPLEMENTAL

At the Community and Economic Development (CED) Committee meeting on October 10, 2023, Councilmembers requested a supplemental report regarding the FY 2022-23 Agreement between Centro Legal De La Raza (Centro) and the City of Oakland (the City) for tenant legal services and eviction protection. This supplemental report describes the following aspects of the contract between the City and Centro:

1. Scope of work;
2. Outcomes; and
3. Demographics of clients served

Scope of Work Summary

As established in the FY 2022-23 Agreement, the goal of Centro's contract with the City is to enhance the quality of life for low- and moderate-income residents of Oakland by providing assistance to 298 low- to moderate-income Oakland tenants so they can remain housed.

The outcome measures used were developed by the State Bar of California and are consistent for all Centro contracts including those with other funders and jurisdictions. In addition to the quantitative measures, a survey is sent to clients who received legal consultations that asks questions such as:

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- After your consultation, do you better understand your legal options and resources?
- After your consultation, do you feel better prepared to resolve your housing concern?
- Was it easy to contact Centro Legal and receive assistance?
- Did you feel respected by the staff who served you?

This goal of Centro’s contract with the City is supported by the following objectives and projected outcomes:

Table 1: FY 2022-23 Objectives (9-month contract)

Objective	Outcomes
Assess 193 tenants for eligibility to receive housing stabilization services and legal services to reduce displacement and enhance housing stability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve 144 tenants through legal consultation for housing related problems including information about rights and options. • Serve 49 tenants through legal representation. • Provide one-time emergency financial assistance, up to \$15,000 per case, to at least 16 tenants.
Serve 134 tenants through education and outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host 13 “know your rights” workshops. • Serve 134 tenants through workshops.
Serve 105 tenants through case management and housing counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Unity Council will provide service-linkage consultations and enroll eligible clients in one-on-one case management and housing navigation. • Tenants receive connections to support services and assistance finding housing.

Please see **Attachment A** for the detailed Scope of Work and Services Provided.

There is a relationship between staffing/tenant legal services and the emergency financial assistance (EFA). For a tenant receiving EFA, they must also be receiving legal services. Centro (and partners) negotiate a financial settlement with property owners to prevent displacement.

Per guidelines agreed to between the City and Centro (and partners), each EFA grant must be tied to a single precipitating event, and funds are only available to tenants who have household income less than or equal to 50% of Area Median Income. They must also be at-risk of losing

their permanent housing. Eligible uses include past-due rent settlement agreement with a landlord, stays of execution for Unlawful Detainers, utility services, and cleaning assistance as required to maintain the property when age or disability prevents the tenant from performing maintenance to the landlord's specifications. The tenant must be able to show that financial assistance will prevent displacement.

FY 2022-2023 Actual Outcomes

Between October 2022 and June 2023, a collaborative led by Centro Legal De La Raza provided legal consultations, legal representation, case management, housing navigation, and education and outreach to low-income Oakland residents (the collaborative consisted of the following organizations: Eviction Defense Center, East Bay Community Law Center, Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach, Centro, and The Unity Council). These services were instrumental in keeping people stably housed and avoid displacement.

Working as a collaborative allowed each organization to leverage its strengths to provide needed services. The Unity Council and APILO provided education and outreach through tenant rights workshops. The Unity Council provided social services, case management, and housing assistance. Legal services were provided by Centro Legal, APILO, and Eviction Defense Center.

For FY 2022-23, 94% of clients who received legal representation successfully resolved their legal matters and reported improved housing stability. Specifically, they reported the following outcomes:

- avoided an eviction
- avoided homelessness
- had a rent increase rescinded
- received a rent reduction, or
- secured time and/or money to move

90% of clients who received legal consultation report that they are more aware of available resources and legal options, and that their legal consultation better prepared them to successfully resolve their housing issues.

FY 2022-2023 Performance

Below are Centro Legal's goals achieved based on objectives set in the FY 2022-23 contract for tenant legal services and eviction protection.

Table 2: FY 2022-23 (October 2022-June 2023) Performance

Objective	Yearly Goal	Total Served	% of Goal Achieved
193 tenants assessed for eligibility to receive housing stabilization and legal services	193	284	147%
Tenants who received legal consultation	144	179	124%

Tenants who received legal representation	49	22	45%
Serve 134 tenants through education and outreach	144	201	140%
Provide case management/housing counseling to 105 tenants	105	88	84%
Provide emergency financial assistance to 16 tenants	16	0	0*

*Oakland City Council originally directed these funds be allocated to Oakland Housing Secure. Because Oakland Housing Secure is not itself a legal entity, staff returned to Council to revise the resolution to name Centro Legal as the recipient of the Council-directed funds in order to execute the contract. This caused significant delays, and the contract was not executed until August 7, 2023. Now that the contract is in place, Centro Legal can provide the emergency financial assistance through December 30, 2023, with the \$250,000 allocated in the FY 2022-23 Midcycle Budget.

Demographics and Income of Clients Served, October 2022-June 2023

The table below depicts the race and income breakdown of persons served through the FY 2022-23 Centro Legal Agreement with the City for tenant legal services and eviction protection.

Table 3: Demographics of Clients Served October 2022-June 2023

Race	Clients Served	Percent of Total
American Indian/Alaska Native	2	1%
Asian	24	8%
Black/African American	75	26%
Latino/Hispanic	121	43%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0	0
Other	38	13%
White	23	8%
Total	283	

For reference, Black residents comprise 22% of Oakland’s population, and Hispanic/Latinos comprise 27%. Race/ethnicity data for people directly impacted by evictions is unavailable; staff will adjust service targets with such figures if they become available in the future.

Table 4: Economic Status of Clients Served October 2022-June 2023

HUD Income % Area Median Income (AMI)	Clients Served	Percent of Total
Extremely low income (30% AMI)	194	68%
Very low income (50% AMI)	75	26%
Low income (80% AMI)	14	5%
Over 80% AMI	1	Less than 1%
Total	284	

As reported, Oakland residents most in need and at-risk of experiencing housing instability are receiving services under this agreement; the vast majority of clients served in FY23 were extremely low-income with AMI of 30% and below. This is aligned with the strategy of targeting limited resources to those most in need.

Community Outreach

Centro Legal is the lead agency in a collaborative of organizations that provide the services outlined in this contract. Centro has been intentional in building partnerships with additional community organizations to ensure they reach Oakland residents. Through the Collaborative, Centro Legal:

- Built a relationship with East Bay Permanent Real Estate Cooperative (EBPREC), a community-centered development cooperative with deep ties to Black Oakland residents. This relationship helps to build trust, increase visibility, and provide information about Centro's services within Deep East Oakland.
- Fostered a relationship with Parent Voices Oakland (PVO), a parent-led grassroots organization that advocates for affordable, accessible, and quality childcare and serves many Black families in Oakland. This year, Centro provided a training about tenants' rights at an Alameda County Early Care & Education Planning Council (ACECPC) meeting in partnership with PVO and conducted in-person outreach at PVO's Black Wellness Kinship Fair in March 2023 in advance of the eviction moratorium's sunset.
- Coordinated and conducted ongoing trainings for Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) families.
- Provided same-day representation to low-income tenants facing eviction at the Hayward Hall of Justice in a rotation with East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC) and Eviction Defense Center (EDC). These court-based services ensure that they reach tenants most at risk of eviction, including Black tenants in Oakland. Since the lifting of Oakland's eviction moratorium, Centro has seen record numbers of tenants at the court-based clinic.
- Expanded community partnerships with Just Cities, East Oakland Community Development Corporation (EOCDC), Causa Justa:Just Cause (CJJC), Safe Passages, and the Unity Council through Alameda County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. These partnerships help ensure Black Oakland tenants are aware of how to access Centro's services.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt a Resolution Awarding a Grant of \$1,000,000 for Tenant Legal Services and Emergency Financial Assistance to Centro Legal De La Raza, Inc. Staff recommends that the \$1,000,000 FY 2023-24 allocation remains flexible, to be used

for tenant legal services or emergency financial assistance in order to respond to the needs of the Collaborative's clients. In the FY 2022-23 contract, City Council directed the funds be allocated as follows: \$750,000 for tenant legal services and \$250,000 for emergency financial assistance. Whereas the FY 22-23 contract covered a 9-month period, the forthcoming contract will cover a year. Given the need for legal staffing to meet the current eviction wave and the remaining \$250,000 in EFA funds from the prior contract, staff supports retaining flexibility for the FY 23-24 contract.

Following City Council approval, staff will negotiate a scope of work for tenant legal services and emergency financial assistance similar to the FY 2022-23 contract with an emphasis on measuring impact and outcomes.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Kelly Hoffman, Project Manager, 510-220-2134.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Weinstein

Emily Weinstein (Oct 12, 2023 13:27 PDT)

Emily Weinstein
Interim Director, Department of Housing and
Community Development

Attachment A – Scope of Work, FY 2022-2023

Services to be Provided:

1. **Legal Services and Housing Stabilization:** Contractor shall provide the following legal services to eligible low-income tenants to reduce the risk of displacement. Contractor shall work with each client to summarize steps the Contractor and/or client intend to take to reduce the client's risk of displacement. The needs of each client will vary and therefore the Contractor shall tailor each housing stabilization strategy to the client's particular situation. A housing stabilization strategy may include various types of services and assistance, which may include services or assistance funded or provided by sources other than the City of Oakland or this Agreement. Contractor shall use its best efforts to complete the steps identified in the housing stabilization strategy for Contractor to perform. When deemed appropriate and necessary by Contractor, Contractor shall assist client with completing the steps identified in the housing stabilization strategy.
2. Contractor shall provide short-term, limited legal services ("Legal Consultation) the scope of services provided by Contractor do not include ongoing or fuller scope of legal representation. Contractor shall obtain the client's informed consent to such limited services, confirming that neither the attorney nor the client expects that the attorney will provide continuing representation in the matter. Such services may include:
 - Advice and counsel.
 - Assistance completing forms or preparing correspondence.
 - Other short-term, limited assistance aimed at preventing displacement, such as providing support for individuals representing themselves in existing litigation, assistance with reviewing contracts, letters, etc.
3. **Emergency Financial Assistance:** Contractor shall provide emergency financial assistance in the form of grants, when Contractor determines that such assistance is necessary and appropriate to stabilize housing. Financial assistance shall be provided in accordance with the emergency financial assistance guidelines established during the Program Development Phase and the program budget.

Tenants may request Emergency Financial Assistance funds to pay for any of the following:

- Past due rent
- Settlement agreement with landlord
- Stays of execution for UD' s
- Utility services (including setting up and turning back on)
- Cleaning assistance as required to maintain the property when age or disability prevents the tenant from performing maintenance to the landlord's specifications

Recruitment

Centro Legal de la Raza and partner organizations; Eviction Defense Center (EDC), East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC), Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach (APILO) and The Unity Council (TUC) will be responsible for outreaching clients. Outreach activities can include the following:

- Flyers
- Postcards
- Event tabling
- Website page
- Social Media placements.

Submission of Records

The Subgrantee shall submit to the Department of Housing and Community Development on a quarterly basis copy of the following records (if applicable):

1. Summary of client intake data, including information on referrals made.
2. Sign-up sheets.
3. Attendance records.
4. Enrollment records.

The Subgrantee shall maintain for monitoring and review by City staff the following records required to determine the eligibility of activities:

1. Time sheets of program staff whose salary costs are paid by this agreement.
2. Records of client selection, enrollment, and participation/attendance.
3. Records providing a full description of each activity of each activity undertaken or services provided.

Quarterly Monitoring Reports

The Subgrantee shall submit quarterly reports on the progress of the program to the Department of Housing and Community Development. The reports shall be submitted by the fifth (5th) day of the month following each reporting period ending September 30th, December 31, March 30th, and June 30th. The report shall include the following information for each reporting period:

1. A narrative summary of activities carried out during the period and year to date (YTD)
2. The number of clients served during the reporting period and YTD:
 - Number of households served
 - Race and ethnicity demographics of persons served
 - Income levels of households served
 - Of those served, the number of beneficiaries:
 - With new or continuing access to a service or benefit.
 - With improved access to a service or benefit; or
 - Received a service or benefit that is no longer substandard.

3. Grantee agrees to submit Performance Outcomes Data on an Excel spreadsheet for rental assistance provided, documenting:
 - Applicant Unique Identifier (Please do not include SSI# or Tenant full name)
 - Amount of Rent Arrears Paid
 - Amount of Prospective Rent Paid
 - Amount of Utilities Arrears Paid
4. The number of hours worked by staff whose salary costs are paid under this Agreement.
5. Any problems encountered or anticipated and attempts to resolve them.

Release of funds shall be contingent upon compliance with these reporting requirements and upon certification by the Project Administrator that the Subgrantee has met the programmatic terms and conditions of the Agreement.