



## **Island County Human Services**

### **COVID-19 Pandemic Funding and Programming for Island County Human Services**

On March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Island County Public Health received notification of the first case of COVID-19 in a county resident. Over the next few weeks cases were discovered across the county as Whidbey and Camano Island joined the rest of the state in trying to limit the transmission and rippling negative impacts brought on by the pandemic. Island County Human Services played a critical role on the front lines of mitigating the serious effects that the virus and associated control measures had on the economic and social fabric of our community. Not only were Human Service staff asked to do more of the necessary work they were already engaged in (now more dangerous and needed than ever), but also gear up and roll out entirely new pandemic-related support structures.

Beyond the talent and determination of Human Services staff, pandemic response work has been crucially supported by a variety of grants from state, federal and regional sources. Island County Human Services secured over 18.3 million dollars from the beginning of the pandemic with some funding grants still open to support county residents in crisis. These crucial dollars helped keep many of our neighbors healthy, housed, safe and solvent as COVID-19 forced people into unpredictable financial circumstances.

#### **Federal Government and Congress Acts**

As our country braced for the coming pandemic, the US Congress passed and signed into law the CARES Act on March 27, 2020. The CARES Act implemented a variety of programs to address issues related to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act was passed by Congress and signed into law on December 27, 2020 that continued many of these programs by adding new phases, new allocations, and new guidance to address issues related to the continuation of the COVID 19 pandemic.

The American Rescue Plan was passed and signed into law on March 11, 2021 and continues many of the programs started by the CARES Act (2020) and Consolidated Appropriations Act (2021) by adding new phases, allocations, and guidance to address continued pandemic related crises and fund recovery efforts as the US begins to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In total, the Treasury Department is responsible for managing over \$1 trillion in American Rescue Plan programs and tax credits.

## Washington State

In May 2020, Governor Inslee announced the state would award \$300M of the States CARES funding to local governments that did not receive direct distribution under the CARES Act. On August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020 Governor Inslee announced an increase of 125M bringing the state total to \$420M with funds being awarded through the state's Coronavirus Relief Funds. The funds are available under the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act") in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

These funds would be provided to cities and counties with populations under 500,000 that were ineligible to receive direct funds under the CARES Act. The State Office of Financial Management determined distributions on a per capital basis. Jurisdictions in Island County received the following distributions.

	Population	Awards
Island County	84,820	\$6,361,500
Coupeville	1,925	\$86,623
Langley	1,195	\$53,775
Oak Harbor	22,970	\$ 1,033,650

### Overview - Island County- COVID -19

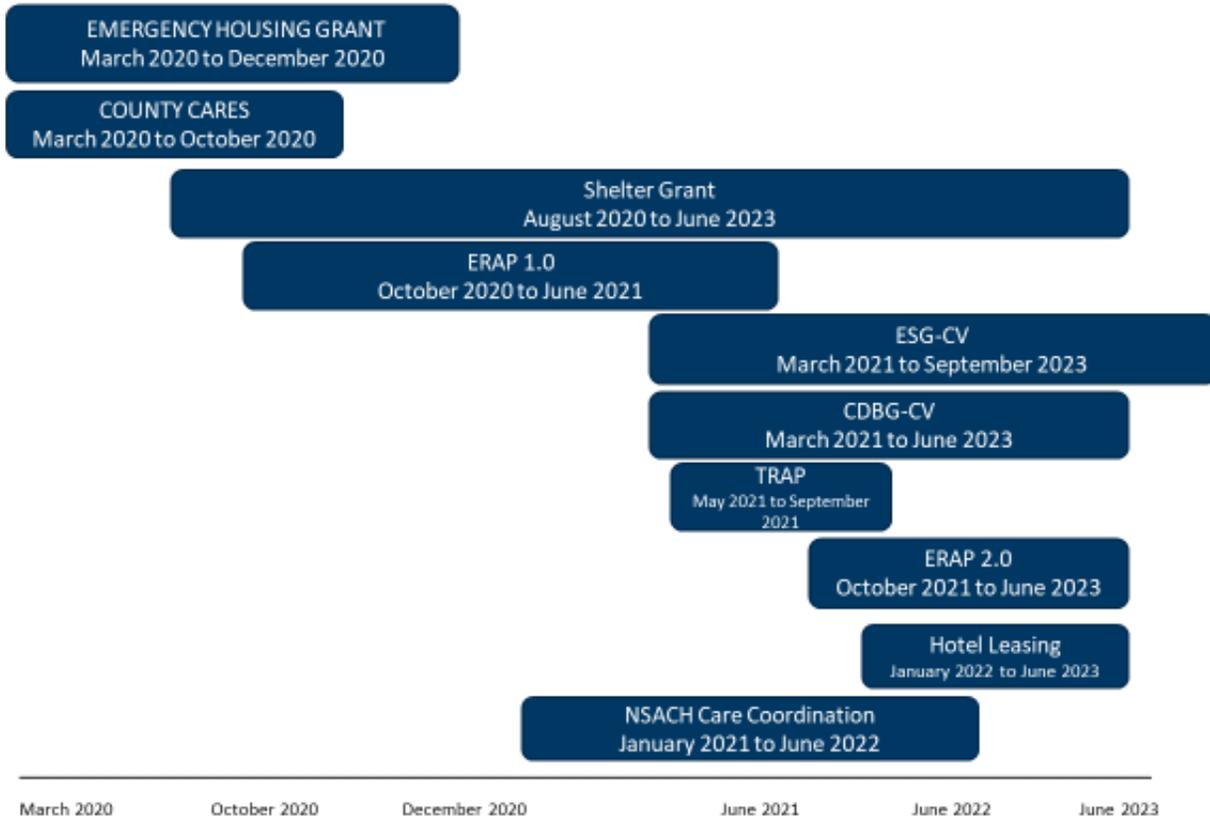
Island County Board of County Commissioners made early decisions on the distribution of the County Cares funding for critical services. Human Services received \$1M and moved quickly to develop housing and behavioral health programs to support the community during this crisis.

In addition to the County CARES funding, the WA State Department of Commerce and the North Sound Accountable Communities of Health began to allocate numerous grants to Island County that provided funding for programs and partnerships providing financial and behavioral health supports.

It is important to note that administration of these grants could not have been accomplished without the committed Human Services staff and partnerships with agencies including Opportunity Council, Ryan's House for Youth, Community Center of Stanwood Camano, Mission Ministries, and Mission Immanuel, Whidbey SeaTac Shuttle, Oak Harbor motel owner.

Name	Amount	Grant Term
1. COVID-19 Outbreak Emergency Housing Grant	\$398,753	3/15/2020 - 12/30/2020
2. County CARES	\$1,000,000	3/15/2020- 10/31/2020
3. Shelter Grant	\$ 449,551	8/1/2020 - 6/30/2023
4. ERAP (Eviction Rent Assistance Prevention)	\$1,632,232	10/1/2020 – 6/30/21
5. ESG-CV-Emergency Solutions Grant	\$454,135	3/1/2021 – 9/30/2023
6. CDBG Community Development Block Grant	\$607,579	3/1/2021 – 6/30/2023
7. TRAP (Treasury Rent Assistance Program)	\$2,673,421	5/1/2021 – 10/15/2021
8. ERAP 2.0 (Eviction Rent Assistance Prevention)	\$10,110,548	10/1/2021 – 6/30/2023
9. Hotel Leasing & RRH	\$567,720	1/1/2022 – 6/30/2023
10. North Sound Accountable Communities of Health	\$439,000	1/1/2021 – 6/30/2022
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$18,332,939</b>

## Timeline of Grants/Programs



### Grant Summaries

#### 1. COVID-19 Outbreak Emergency Housing Grant - \$398,753.00

Purpose: Provide funding to help local governments create housing necessary for quarantine and isolation and additional sanitation to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Commerce directive was simple "Work with local public health jurisdiction and largest city and get going".

In Mid-March of 2020, Human Services staff met with IC Public Health, Whidbey Health, City of Oak Harbor (largest city), and COVID Crisis Emergency Management team to develop a plan with steps and timeline to be approved by Commerce to provide housing for Isolation & Quarantine ready for occupancy by April 2020. Multiple sites were considered and ultimately Human Services negotiated an agreement with a motel owner in Oak Harbor to provide rooms on an as needed basis that substantially minimized our costs.

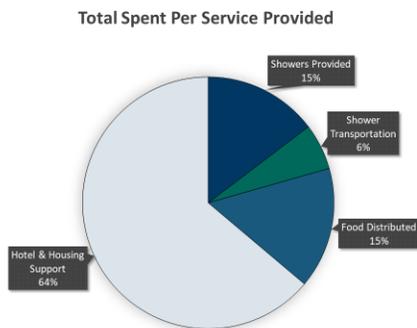
Once the plan was approved by Public health and Department of Commerce, Human Services developed a comprehensive operational plan. An important part of mitigating the spread of the COVID-19 virus

was establishing and maintaining an Isolation and Quarantine hotel for individuals who were either exposed to COVID-19 or had tested positive for COVID-19 and needed to stay away from those they lived with or were unhoused. Island County Human Services Housing Support Center and Outreach Behavioral Health coordinated and developed a program to include several rooms available at a local hotel for this purpose. Policies and procedures were developed for logistics of transportation, intake, food, and management of services for community members needing to stay in this hotel. A total of 244 nights were provided to community members with a total of 15 staff hours needed per night of stay. Below is a summary of those services:

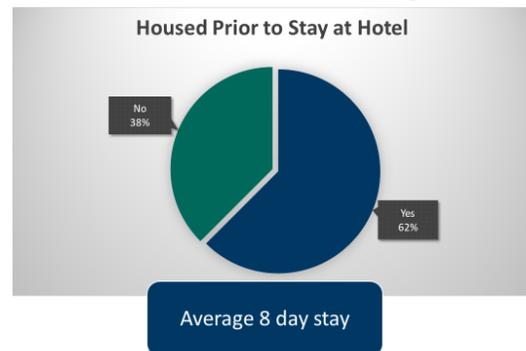


An additional usage of these funds was to provide showers to unhoused individuals who were no longer able to use facilities who had closed during the shutdown, Again, the housing support center and outreach behavioral health developed a shower program, offering showers twice a week. Transportation to and from the showers were provided as well as supplies for showers as well as privacy and safety for the showers themselves. A total of 295 showers were provided from May 2020 – December 2020 with three rotating employees staffing the program for a total number of staff hours. A summary of those services is below:

### I&Q Hotel and Shower Program



### I&Q Hotel and Shower Program



## I&Q Hotel and Shower Program

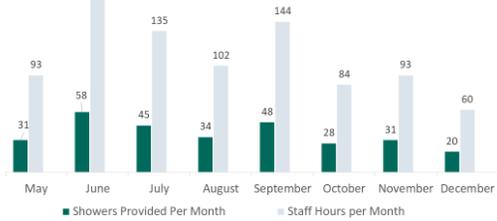
Staff Hours for Housing Support at Hotel per Month 2020 - 2021



Total of 540 staff hours  
Total of 244 nights

## I&Q Hotel and Shower Program

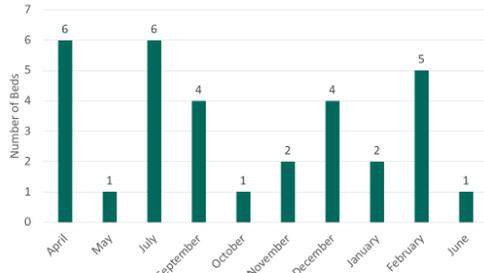
Showers Provided Per Month 2020



Total of 295 showers provided  
Total of 885 staff hours

## I&Q Hotel and Shower Program

Hotel Beds per Month 2020 - 2021



Total of 244 nights

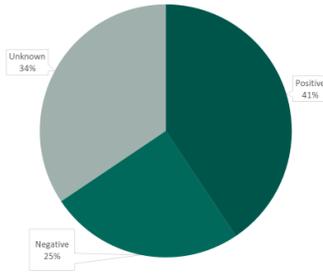
## COVID-19 Outbreak Emergency Housing Grant

### Isolation and Quarantine (I&Q) Hotel and Shower Programs

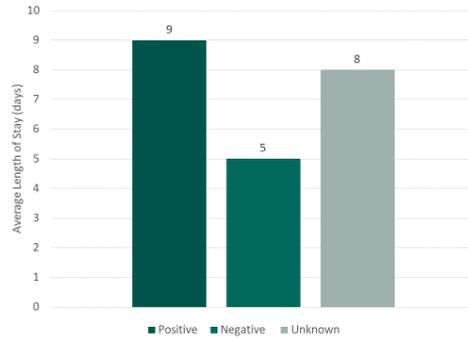
- 32 clients housed in the I&Q Hotel for 244 nights
- 295 showers provided over the course of 48 nonconsecutive days
- Over 1,425 dedicated staff hours

Data was kept for COVID-19 status for the protection of staff, guests and to determine length of stay. As predicted those individuals who tested positive for Covid-19 stayed the longest period to complete their quarantine period safely. See graphs below:

COVID-19 Test Results Among Hotel Guests



COVID-19 Results and Average Length of Stay



## 2. County CARES Funding and Services Provided - \$1,000,000

Island County was awarded funds through the state’s Coronavirus Relief Funds. The funds were available under the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act”) in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

Human Services staff planned for and developed a program for distribution of financial assistance, including how to qualify, categories to fund, intake forms, referral system and data to collect. Human Services sub-contracted with Opportunity Council to receive qualified applications from the Housing Support Center to finalize payments to landlords, mortgage holders, utility companies, childcare providers and numerous other essential needs.

### *General Categories of Assistance Offered Through the COVID-19 Recovery Program*

- Child and Family Support
- Resource Navigation
- Support and Education
- Housing
- Support to Community Organizations

### *Specific services offered by referral to include (but are not limited to)*

- Housing (rental / mortgage assistance) All referrals sent to Housing Support Services Department
- Housing (homeless) All referrals sent to Housing Support Services Department
- Food support
- Employment / unemployment
- Support paying bills
- Behavioral health support / referral
- Childcare
- Transportation
- Language barriers
- Medical needs
- Insurance needs
- Support groups
- Parenting or homeschooling issues – educational presentations and support for individuals

## School issues (any family member)

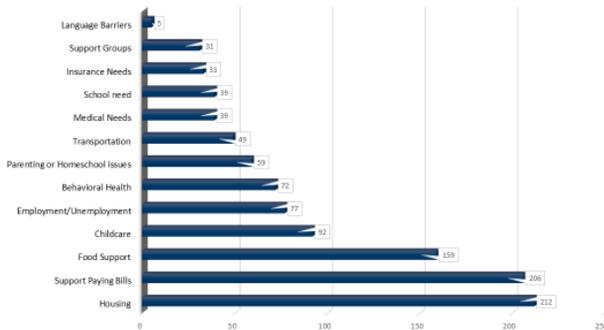
To qualify for these funds, individuals and families were required to be directly impacted by COVID-19. Maximum assistance of \$5000 per household was established and documents and copies of bills to pay were required. The funding was short term and only available from June 1, 2020 through October 31, 2020.

To make CARES Act funds available to as many residents as possible in June 2020 ICHS instituted a COVID-19 online referral system to help community members reach badly needed resources during the pandemic. Dedicated staff received referrals from individuals, neighbors, friends, family, schools, and businesses through a web form or call and then routed those in need to a huge variety of resources. Needs fluctuated throughout the pandemic and included rental and mortgage assistance, utility payments and other essential needs, quarantine and isolation services, employment and unemployment help, behavioral health support, and assistance in paying for medical and other covid related needs.

Following are charts illustrating in three different ways which areas were of most concern to Island County residents reaching out for help during the pandemic.

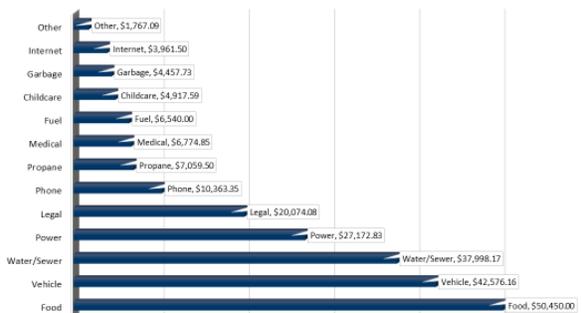
### CARES – All Needs

CARES Requested needs from Online Referral Form



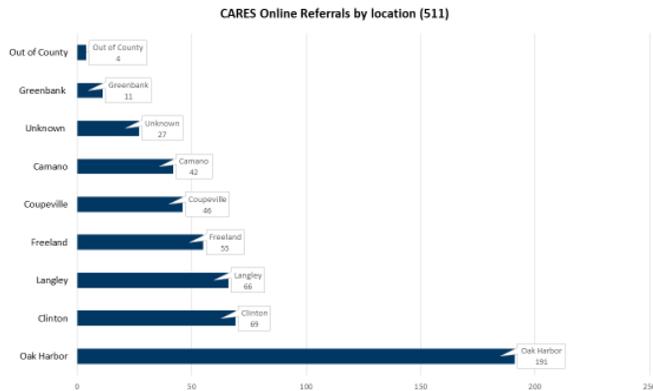
### CARES Essential Needs (Non-Housing)

CARES Essential Needs Breakdown



In addition to online referral form: Housing Support Center Calls: 220 Human Services Helpline: 330

## CARES - Location



Funds were distributed in many ways, to include but not limited to, rent assistance paid to landlords, mortgage payments to lenders, utility payments, childcare, food and gas vouchers, and car repair if needed to maintain employment. Intakes were required and proof of impact by COVID was needed to be served.

The Human Services department instituted a live help line in March 2020 to be available to county residents M-F 8-6pm. The phone line was staffed with the behavioral health team, including case managers and counselors. Calls for help included assistance with unemployment benefits, available food resources and other basic needs. It also provided telehealth services to include individual, child and family behavioral health support to address mental health and substance use needs through brief services, help in connecting with health care providers, long term counseling, and other more complex behavioral health needs.

Support groups were offered online for seniors, parents, and essential workers. Support through online talks and presentations were given to community organizations and covered a wide range of topics that addressed other needs that the community identified. Additionally, Island County Human Services distributed 65,000 masks to the following community partners:

All Heart	Help House Food Bank	North Whidbey Fire and Rescue
CADA	Housing Authority	Oak Harbor Fire Dept
Camano Community Center	Human Services Outreach	Oak Harbor Police Dept
Camano Island Fire & Rescue	I.C. Public Health WIC Program	Open Den
Church of Latter-Day Saints	ICHS Outreach	Opioid Outreach
Compass Health	Island County Jail	Opportunity Council
DSHS - Home and Community Services	Island County Superior Court	Opportunity Council Veterans
Early Childhood Program	Island Senior Resources	Parent to Parent
Ebey Academy	Island Transit	Public Health Needle Exchange
Garage of Blessings	Marjie's House	Ryan's House
Gifts from the Heart	Mighty to Save Ministries	
Good Cheer	Mission Ministries	

Sea Mar  
 SeaMar Dental  
 Service Alternatives  
 Sherwood  
 Sno Isle Public Libraries  
 SPIN Café

St Augustine/St Mary's  
 Catholic Church  
 Stanwood Camano Schools  
 Sunrise Services  
 Terry Mobile Home Park  
 The Haven

Town Marshall  
 Town of Coupeville  
 Trinity Lutheran Church  
 Whidbey Homeless Coalition

Importantly, this work began immediately with the advent of the help line in March 2020 and expanded in earnest in June 2020 with the access to CARES funding. Human Services staff worked tirelessly during the first 6 months of the pandemic to assist the community of Island County with essentials to withstand the hardships created by the pandemic, to include loss of employment, school closures, loss of childcare, loss of access to in person assistance along with maintaining the safety of staff and the community we served.

## COVID-19 Summary of County Cares, ERAP 1.0, TRAP, ERAP 2.0 Grants (Rent, Mortgage, Utilities and Other Essential Services)

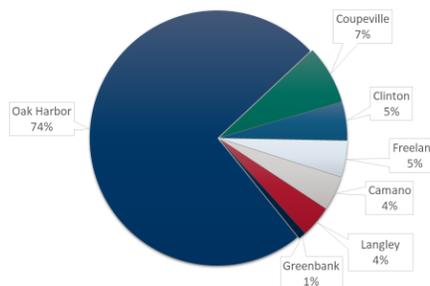
### CARES, ERAP 1.0, TRAP, ERAP 2.0

**Total Households Served – 1,371**

2,301 total rent/utility/essential need/mortgage services provided

<b>CARES</b>	249 provided rental assistance/essential needs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 75 additional provided for essential needs</li> <li>• 53 provided mortgage</li> </ul>
<b>ERAP 1.0</b>	689 provided rent and utilities
<b>TRAP</b>	421 provided rent and utilities
<b>ERAP 2.0</b>	814 provided rent and utilities (ongoing)

### Location of Households Receiving Rental Assistance (All Programs)



### 3. **ERAP 1.0 (Eviction Prevention Rent Assistance): \$1,632,232.00**

**Fund Source-** Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) direct funding to WA state and State Disaster Response Account Funds.

**Purpose:** Funding intended to prevent evictions by paying past due and future rent and utilities while distributing funds equitably.

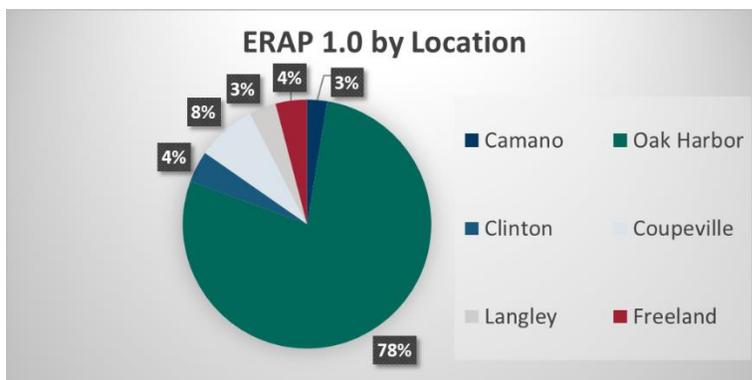
Sub-contracted with Opportunity Council and Community Resource Center of Stanwood-Camano

Criteria: 80% Area Median Income, Pay up to three months of rent that could include one month forward, utility arrears, Specific categories to qualify, no docs required (all self-declaration)

Payments go directly to Landlord and utility companies.

Contract with By & For Organizations required – 5% of total contract. We contracted with PFLAG and Mission Ministries

Began to collect race, ethnicity and gender data.



### 4. **TRAP (Treasury Rent Assistance Program) -\$2,673,421**

**Fund Source** – Funding-Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA)-US Treasury Department

**Purpose** - The Treasury Rent Assistance Program (T-RAP) grant is part of Washington State’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds are intended to prevent evictions that would contribute to the spread of the virus by paying past due, current due, future rent, and utilities, targeting limited resources to those who have experienced financial hardship due to the COVID-19 outbreak and are at risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability

Criteria: 80% area median income limit, required proof of being directly financial impact from COVID-19.

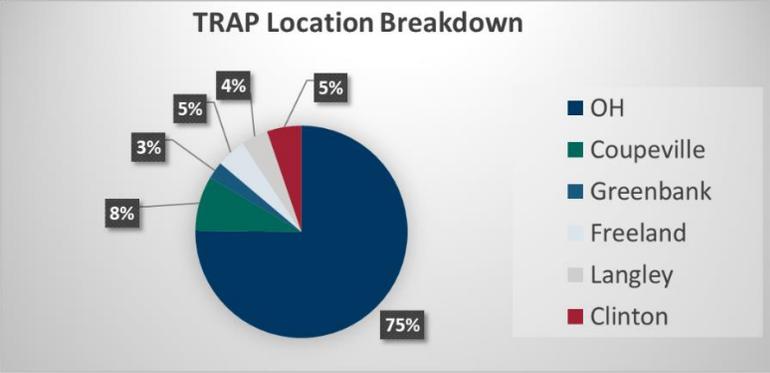
Could pay up to 12 months of rent, including arrears, current month and three months forward.

IC sub-contracted with Opportunity Council, Ryans House For Youth, Community Resource Center of Stanwood-Camano and Mission Ministries.

Because of strict guidelines from Treasury Department, many people on fixed income did not qualify.

Many counties reported this to Commerce and allowed counties to de-obligate funds from this grant

and re-apply to a new grant called ERAP-2.0. Island County chose to do this and all funds de-obligated from the TRAP contract were rolled forward into new ERAP 2.0 contract. Fewer restrictions allowed for more people to qualify.



**5. ERAP 2.0 (Eviction Rent Assistance Prevention) \$10,110,548.00**

**Fund Source** – America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

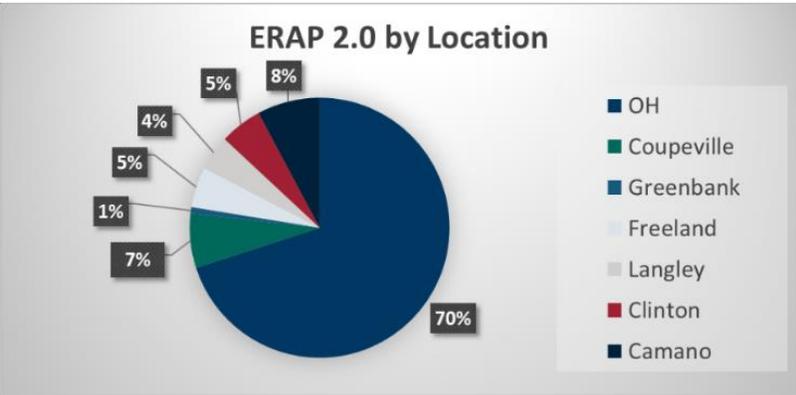
**Purpose** - ERAP 2.0 is intended to prevent evictions that would contribute to the spread of the virus by paying past due, current due and future rent, and targeting limited resources to those with the greatest needs while working to distribute funds equitably.

**Criteria** – 80% Area median income, Could pay all arrears going back to March 2020, current month and three months forward and utility arrears.

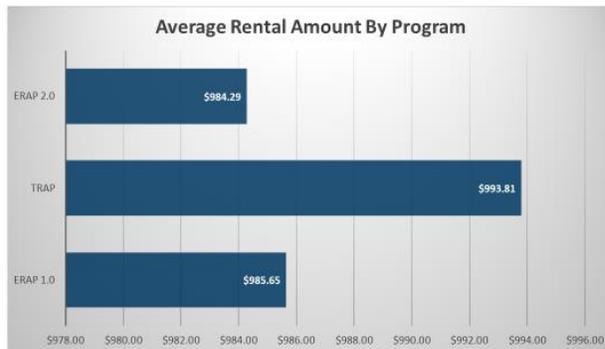
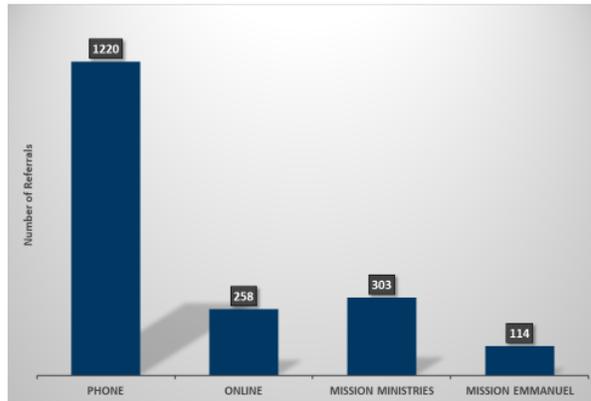
Sub-contracted with Opportunity Council, Ryans House For Youth, Community Resource Center of Stanwood-Camano, Mission Ministries and Mission Immanuel.

Performance requirement – 10% of rental assistance should go to youth/young adults  
And increase rent assistance to marginalized populations.

Governor Inslee lifted the Eviction Moratorium in July 2021 and established a Bridge to the moratorium allowing counties time to establish and Eviction Rent Pilot Program with Superior Court and Dispute Resolution Center to minimize pressure on courts for evictions, requiring all evictions for non-payment of rent to first go through this system to resolve issues between landlord and renter.



## ERAP 1.0, TRAP, & ERAP 2.0 by Referral Type



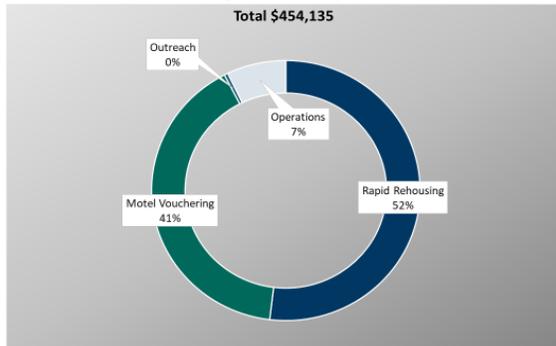
### **6. ESG-CV-COVID Emergency Solutions Grant- Motel Vouches and Rapid Rehousing- \$454,135.00**

**Fund Source** – The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act of 2020 (CARES Act) provided for supplemental appropriation of Homeless Assistance Grants under the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG).

**Purpose**- The Emergency Solutions Grant COVID-19 (ESG-CV) funds are to be used to prevent, prepare for and respond to the Coronavirus pandemic.

This grant had a broad selection of uses. IC established programs for those unhoused or those at risk of homelessness and established a motel voucher program and Rapid Rehousing program. Rapid Rehousing would provide case management to assist with housing search and long- term rental assistance up to one year. This program prioritizes families with children, seniors at greater risk of COVID-19 and other vulnerable households.

## Emergency Solutions Grant COVID 19 (ESG-CV)



### 7. CDBG - Community Development Block Grant Funds- Mortgage and Utilities- \$348,879.00

**Fund Source-** Commerce received additional CDBG Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

**Purpose-** Based on the CARES Act, the purpose of CDBG COVID-19 funding is to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

No Coordinated Entry requirement with this grant. Island County sub-contracted to Opportunity Council to administer this program. Applicants apply directly to Opportunity Council.

Criteria: 80% Area Median Income limit, maximum \$10,000 per household. Documents required. All payments direct to lenders.

- **CDBG-CV Grant Total for Mortgage and Utility Assistance: \$541,541**
- **Households Served: 51 Households Served**
- **Total Spent as of 6/30/2022: \$253,791**

### 8. Shelter Grant – \$449,551

**Fund Source – Home Security grant as appropriated by Legislature**

**Purpose:** Funds provided for equitable and creative approaches to develop or expand shelter beds or programs and ensure racially equitable access.

### 9. Hotel Leasing & RRH Funds and Services Provided - \$567,720

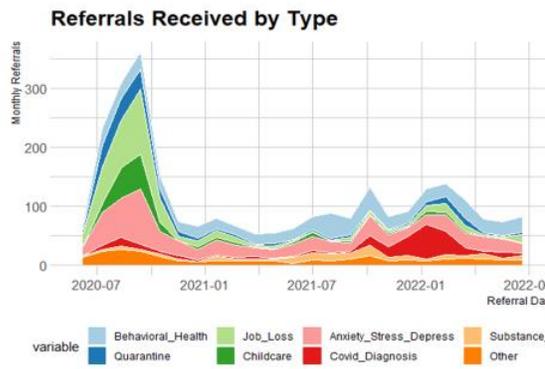
**Fund Source – Consolidated Homeless Grant (CHG)**

**Purpose -** The Consolidated Homeless Grant (CHG) provides resources to fund homeless crisis response systems to support communities in ending homelessness.

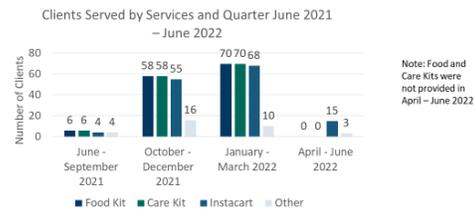
### 10. North Sound Communities of Health Community Coordination - \$439,000

As part of our ongoing Covid response, Island County Human Services has provided food and care kits as well as grocery delivery to residents who are isolating and quarantining at home since (date). We receive referrals for services from the state of Washington through our regional NSACH for individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 and perform outreach to determine needs so individuals can remain in their home for the entire isolation period. These services include delivery of food and care kits and arrangement for grocery and other essential needs delivery. Additionally, we provide continuing care coordination for other needs related to the impact of COVID-19. These services continue. The data summarizing these services are below:

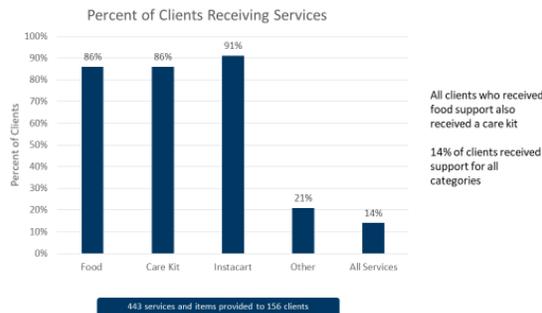
**Online Referrals Received for Non- Housing Service  
June 2020 - Present**



**COVID-19 Care Coordination Services  
Provided  
June 2021 – June 2022**



**COVID-19 Care Coordination Services Provided  
June 2021 – June 2022**



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The numbers provided in this report represent individual stories. Each person served had to pick up the phone, send an email or submit a referral online and ask for help. Each of our staff listened to the stories which all included helplessness and fear. Each person’s story included many phone calls and emails as documents were collected to verify eligibility for programs or access needed services. The stories are as varied as the numbers and our staff have carried them all.

As we have reflected on the work completed over the past 2 years it has given us some PTSD remembering how fast things changed. The numbers don’t reflect the fear, trauma, and anxiety felt by

all of us during the early months of the pandemic. Our office may have been closed to the public, but most of our staff came to the office every day. Everyone else has pulled together, come to work every day, and done more than we ever thought possible.