



EAGLE COUNTY

April 29, 2020

Board of County Commissioners

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Dear Members of the Works Allocation Committee (WAC):

The Eagle County Board of County Commissioners supports the Colorado Human Services Directors Association (CHSDA) appeal to release state held Colorado Works Long Term Reserves. Eagle County, as well as our neighboring counties, has activated our County Emergency Disaster Programs to provide emergency disaster assistance to families impacted by this crisis. These families have been laid off from employment and are experiencing significant housing instability, loss of child care access, increased food insecurity and other urgent needs. This crisis is already making a large financial impact this state fiscal year and will continue into SFY2020-2021. Eagle County strongly encourages that the WAC provide a process by which counties who are spending their local TANF reserves can draw down state TANF reserves, to serve TANF eligible families with disaster relief.

Eagle County has \$247,318 in our TANF reserves, the maximum % of our allocation allowed per SB08-177. We are projecting to fully expend our full allocation of \$624,305 plus our reserves AND will still need to contribute county-only funds to be able to continue serving families if additional funding is not made available. These reserves - both locally held and those held by the state - should be used to directly support families during these critical, stressful, financial tumultuous times. This is the rainy day for which these reserves are held.

Most counties are reluctant to spend locally held reserves without knowing if there will be a process to replenish these funds. This directly impacts families that should be eligible for this emergency support. While it may seem intuitive to not free up state TANF reserves unless counties first use their own reserves, counties cannot demonstrate the need for funds if they are not spending. Eagle County is spending but with no guarantee of funding. Some counties have attempted to "buy" TANF dollars from other counties to pay for our over expenditures, but other counties are reluctant to "sell" because of their anxiety about growing demands and the hope that the state will release reserves.

As we use our local TANF reserves, and our neighbors in Lake and Pitkin Counties fully spend their reserves, we urge you to act now to appropriate additional funds from the state's TANF reserves to support our families most efficiently in this time of need. We suggest that counties impacted by COVID-19 be allowed to draw down funds for SFY 19/20 and SFY 20/21. Helping our most vulnerable families not only helps protect our entire population during this pandemic, but it is the right thing to do to help Coloradans and our communities thrive.

Sincerely,

Eagle County Board of Commissioners

Kathy Chandler-Henry

Chair

Matt Scherr

Commissioner

Jeanne McQueeney

Commissioner