

City Council – Action Request Form

Date: September 11, 2023

To: Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

From: Patrice Toney, Interim City Manager
Wanda Allen-Abraha, Human Relations/DEI Department Director

Council Action Requested:
Resolution Authorizing an Additional Contribution of \$100,000 to Legal Aid of North Carolina, Winston-Salem Office for Evictions Diversion Right-to-Counsel

Strategic Focus Area: Livable Neighborhoods
Strategic Objective: Support Inclusion of Community Populations
Strategic Plan Action Item: No
Key Work Item: No



Summary of Information:

As a result of the U.S. Supreme Court’s previous ruling regarding the ending of the pandemic eviction moratorium, community stakeholders reference local, statewide, and national data indicate that high rates of evictions continue to increase. There is also continued concern that renters have a lack of access to legal counsel to assist them with diverting eviction.

On September 20, 2021, the City Council approved funding for the Eviction Diversion Right-to-Counsel program in the amount of \$100,000 for the Legal Aid of North Carolina, Winston-Salem Office. This amount was to cover salary, benefits, and other operating expenses.

With the commencement of the new FY 2023-2024, the proposed budget amendment of an additional \$100,000 would enable the Human Relations/DEI Department to administer continued funding for the Eviction Diversion Right-to-Counsel program. The Human Relations/DEI Department will also continue to track and monitor the number of cases handled and final resolution of these cases.

Committee Action:

Committee	FC – 09/12/2023	Action	Approval
For	Unanimous	Against	
Remarks:			

The aforementioned funding will enable the Human Relations/DEI Department and Legal Aid to continue to administer and provide direct legal assistance to low-to-moderate-income tenants who are facing eviction. The goal is to mitigate the number of low-to-moderate income tenants who would be, otherwise, unable to afford legal representation when facing pending eviction actions in court.