Senior Services ARPA Assistance Program
Rockdale County
Funded through American Rescue Plan (ARPA)

Application #22-19

Purpose
The purpose of the Rockdale County Senior Services ARPA Assistance Program is to provide short-term assistance to Rockdale residents aged 55 and up who have been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funding
The funding for this assistance is provided through the ARPA. Assistance may end at any time and is subject to funding availability. All expenditures are subject to approval and must meet the ARPA guidelines.

Qualifications
For assistance through this program, the applicant must meet the following criteria:
- Rockdale County resident
- Aged 60 and up <u>or</u> aged 55 and up and meets Kinship Care qualifications
- Negatively affected by COVID-19
- Meets income eligibility of 200% of the federal poverty level
- Has valid mailing address and telephone number

Applicants can be any resident who meets the criteria listed above. Applicants do <u>not</u> have to be presently receiving assistance from Senior Services or be a member of the Senior Center.

Kinship Care eligible person is identified as a grandparent, step-grandparent or other caregiver who is 55 years of age or older and who has primary custodial care responsibility (formal or informal) for a minor child related by blood, marriage, or adoption. *(DAS, HCBS 200.216.3)*

Types of Assistance
1) Rent Assistance
This support is for persons that are behind on rent due to an economic situation related to COVID. Applicants must be listed on rent/lease agreement. Applicants must have applied for or referred to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Rental Assistance Program prior to being eligible to receive rental assistance through ARPA.

2) Home Repair
Home repair is only for persons who own their home and use it as their primary residence. An eligible repair is one that is needed to maintain the safety and livability of the dwelling and does not exceed the maximum allowed. Projects that would cost more than the maximum to complete are not eligible to be considered. The inability to pay for the repair due to COVID must be established and documented. Homeowners will be required to obtain at least two quotes for the repair from reputable licensed providers. If available, persons applying will be provided with a preferred vendor list for the service they are requesting. Due to the documentation needed, home repair requests will not be processed as an emergency.

3) Transition to Permanent Housing / Prevention of Homelessness

Transitional support is available to homeless or displaced persons that desire to have permanent safe housing to reduce their risk of contracting Coronavirus. To qualify for assistance in this program, applicants must agree to a minimum of six months of case management participation. Transitional support up to $3,000 may include hotel stay, food, supplies, basic clothing, security deposit for an apartment, first month's rent, moving or settlement costs, and transportation assistance to appointments for establishing additional services.

4) Utilities

This support is for persons, due to an economic situation related to COVID, are behind on utility bills and need assistance to bring an account paid to date. A utility is defined as natural gas, electric, or water. Cable, dish, internet, land line telephone, and cell phone bills are not considered utilities. The maximum assistance allowed is $300.

Persons in need of utility assistance will be referred to LIHEAP and LIHWAP. The ARPA funds will only be used for utilities if other sources of funding are not available, other sources not available in timely manner to avoid disconnection, the person does not qualify for LIHEAP or LIHWAP or in the case of an emergency.

- ➢ Persons aged 55 to 59 may apply for utility assistance under ARPA.
- ➢ Persons aged 60 and over will be first referred to the Senior Services material aid program until those funds are no longer available in Rockdale County.
- ➢ Persons under the age of 55 are not eligible for assistance under the Senior Services ARPA support program

Types of Programs

5) Technology Program

Technology program support is for persons who at risk for isolation or loneliness due to the pandemic and or other socio-economic factors that limit the persons access to social engagement. Persons that are screened and eligible for this program will receive a Claris tablet, a year's worth of internet service and training.

Persons interested in the Technology Program apply for service or may be referred by Rockdale Senior Services or another agency. Potential participants must complete a senior HCBS assessment and a technology program screening. The assessment and screening may be conducted by phone or in-person.

The cost associated with this program for a new participant for one year is $887 and $588 for a returning participant. Tablets remain property of Rockdale County if the enrollee withdraws from the program.

6) In-home Wellness/Nutrition Program

The In-home Wellness/Nutrition Program is designed to make a positive impact on those clients who have been primarily housebound during the COVID pandemic. The targeted clients are those that are at-risk and receive either home delivered meals or homemaker services. The program staff person would provide one-on-one nutritional education and low impact wellness activities in the client's home 1x per week or 4x during a 30-day period. The program would operate for a continuous 12-month period. Each participant is eligible to receive up to $100 in wellness aids such as weights, stretch bands, etc.

To Apply for Assistance

Individuals desiring assistance through the ARPA program will need to complete the following steps and submit the information to Rockdale Senior Services.

- Completion of ARPA Application
- Provide documentation
    - Copy of state issued identification (i.e., driver's license or state issued ID card)
    - Proof of residency
    - Proof of income (may include but not limited to bank statements, social security award letter, pay stubs, etc.)
    - Official late, eviction or foreclosure notification
    - Home repair written estimate and photos
    - Other documentation as requested

If needed, applications for service may be completed by phone. However, the final signature on the application must be original. Participants in programs #5 and #6 will not complete an ARPA application but will complete all assessment and screening elements prior to starting.

Priority

Priority of service will be given to those applicants to be in greatest need or highest level of risk. Veterans, elderly (persons 80 years of age and over), and grandparents raising grandchildren will also receive additional priority status.   All approved applications must have been negatively affected during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Processing Applications

Applications will be submitted to Rockdale County Senior Services for review and processing. Senior Services staff will initially review each application and place on one of three lists:
1) priority, 2) further review to determine need/eligibility, or 3) not considered at this time. Priority applications will be processed first. Priority applications with similar levels of need and status (veteran, elderly) will be processed by date received.

Application follow-up will include a phone call assessment and request for documentation. Persons requesting assistance may submit follow-up documentation through drop box, mail, email or digital photo submission. Digital documentation is accepted during COVID-19 closure to accomplish social distancing and to aid in ease of submission for the senior population.

To assure that applicants successfully achieve sustainability, persons who receive assistance for rent, home repair, transition to permanent housing are to participate in the development of an individual Care Plan. If applicable, applicants may be referred for assessment with other programs that are offered by Rockdale Senior Services or other agencies.

Conditions of Funding

Completing an application for funding assistance does not guarantee that the request will be approved. Funding is based on a number of conditions relating to the application including requested amount, providing requested documents, completion of phone, virtual or in-person interview with the case manager, and the resolution of the specific financial situation. If the financial situation cannot be resolved within the limitations of the funding available, then the request will not be approved. All persons approved for rent, home repair, transition to permanent housing programs will be required to participate in the development of a Care Plan that focuses on financial sustainability.

Recipients are to receive financial support based on their individual needs and situation. Applicants will not all receive the same amount of financial support. Applications are confidential. Rockdale County will not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, or sex in determining the recipients of support or the amount of the support.

No cash or checks will be issued to applicants of this program. All expenditures must be paid directly to a third party (i.e., rental property company, contractor, supply company, etc.) Expenditures will be processed by the Department of Finance according to policies and standard operating procedures.

Processed applications, expenditures, records, and personal information will be maintained according to DHS guidelines for six years. At the conclusion of the retention period, records will be destroyed according to Rockdale County policy.

Maximum Assistance

Assistance through the ARPA program may be received once per year during the entirety of the program. Also, each type of assistance has a maximum amount available per individual/household. Persons seeking assistance will not all receive the same amount of funding as it is based on the situation. All applications are confidential.

Rental Assistance	$3,500	1x per household
Transitional Housing Assistance	$3,000	1x per individual
Home Repair	$3,000	1x per household
Utility assistance	$ 300	1x per household
Technology Program Support	$ 887	per person for 1 year
In-home Nutrition/Wellness Prog.	$ 100	per person

Assistance is to be provided without the duplication of services. It is recognized and understood that multiple funding streams may be needed to assist an applicant over time. However, an applicant may not receive the same type of assistance during the same time period. (i.e., electrical support from LIHEAP and ARPA for May)

Short-term and Long-term Case Management referrals

For applicants that will need short-term (1 to 3 months) or long-term (4 to 12 months) case management, a full assessment will be completed by staff and information will be documented in the DDS data system. Case management services for those that are 60 and above are reimbursable under OAA guidelines and funding.

Time Frame

The Senior Services ARPA program is available beginning March 1, 2022. ARPA funds for this program may be used until December 31, 2023, or until depleted. All Senior Services programs are based on the availability of funds.

Dissemination of Program Information

A multi-prong approach will be used to dissemination the information about the ARPA Support Program. An announcement flyer will be created and approved for distribution throughout the community. The Rockdale Public Relations Department will be asked to place the information on Channel 23, the Rockdale County Website and the Rockdale County and Olivia Haydel Senior Center Facebook pages. Information flyers will be disseminated to Oakhurst, Viewpoint, Mercy Heart and Open Hands clinics and local churches. Ministers will be asked to include the information in their digital announcements and communications with their church members. Flyers will also be sent out via the Senior Services email blast. Homebound seniors will receive flyers and applications during food deliveries. Completed applications may be returned via mail to PO Box 289 or left in the drop box at 1240 Dogwood Drive.

Staffing Needs

Part A

One regular full-time case manager position assigned to Senior Services is needed to operate the ARPA assistance program. The person hired will need flexibility to adjust their schedule based on emergency response needs but will <u>not</u> serve in an on-call capacity. Limited overtime for this position is authorized when approved by the Division Manager. The ARPA case manager will be cross trained in the DDS database and other Senior Services programs in order to best assist applicants with referrals and other services. Other Senior Services support staff may be used to respond to ARPA phone inquiries and process applications when needed. When applicable the ARPA case manager will be assigned to other duties within Senior Services.

The Case Manager position for this program will be supervised for client services, case management training and eTime by the Social Service Manager. The Senior Services ARPA program, documentation and all expenditures will be overseen by the Division Manager.

Staffing cost include salary, benefits, and technology needs. The position is a grade 18 and has a minimum salary of $35,401.74 ($17.02 an hour). With 23% benefits, the position cost is $43,544.14 annually. The case manager's technology needs include a county cell phone with mobile hotspot and a laptop computer. One-time expenses for office space setup will also be required.

Part B

One regular full-time home health aid assigned to Senior Services is needed to operate the In-home Nutrition/Wellness program. Work hours would be conducted during the normal 7:30 am – 4:00 pm schedule. The Social Service Manager will serve as supervisor for the Home Health Aid, and the Division Manager oversees the overall ARPA program and all expenditures. The grade 13 position has a minimum salary of $25,461.91 ($12.24 per hour). With 23% benefits, the position cost is $31,318.15 for a 12-month period. The home health aid would be provided a county cell phone with a mobile hot spot.

Funding Requested for Program

	Assistance & programs	Salary	Other (tech, uniforms, office, supplies)
2022	$248,839	$59,203	$10,023
2023	$275,000	$60,420	$ 2,000
Totals	$523,839	$119,623	$12,023
3% overhead	$ 20,272		
Program Amount Requested			**$675,757**

Assistance and other funding not used within the indicated year will roll over to the next calendar year through 2024. No funding is available after 2024. Salary expenditures are an estimated cost and do not roll over from year to year. Grant funded full-time staff person may receive benefits that are approved by Rockdale County Talent Management.

Reference Tables

Rockdale County – Key Numbers

Average rent (2021)	$1,211 *(up 12% from 2020)*
Average square footage for rental	1,042 sq.ft.
Apartment Rent $701-$1,000	16% of units
Apartment Rent $1,001-$1,500	78% of units
Apartment Rent$1,501-$2,000	6% of units
Average monthly utility costs	$101.40
Age: 65 years and up	14.9% of county population
Veterans	6,764
Percent in Poverty	15.2%
Median household income (July 2020)	$63,549 (average household size 2.81)
Per capita Income	$29,952

2021 Federal Poverty Levels

Number in Household	FPG 100%		FPG 200%	
	Year	Month	Year	Month
1	$12,880	$1,073	$25,760	$2,147
2	$17,420	$1,452	$34,840	$2,903
3	$21,960	$1,830	$43,920	$3,660
4	$23,500	$2,208	$53,000	$4,417
5	$31,040	$2,587	$62,080	$5,173
6	$35,580	$2,965	$71,160	$5,930
7	$40,120	$3,343	$80,240	$6,687
8	$49,660	$3,722	$89,320	$7,443
*Add additional person	$4,540	$378	$9,080	$757

Technology Program Risk Factors

Order of prevalence	Risk Factors
1	Feeling of loneliness
2	Need help with internet to use
3	Income level <200% FPL
4	Social Isolation
5	No access to internet
6	Lives alone
7	Is a Caregiver
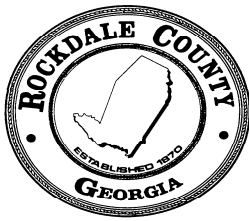
Senior Services ARPA Assistance Application
Funded by ARPA
Rockdale County

Completion of this application does not guarantee approval. Please do not call about the application status as this will delay processing. Return application by mail to Rockdale Senior Services PO Box 289 Conyers GA 30012 or place in drop box at the Olivia Haydel Senior Center at 1240 Dogwood Drive.

All persons applying must be Rockdale County residents, aged 55 or above, and must have been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

PLEASE PRINT   Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____   Zip Code _____

Phone _____Alternate phone _____

Email address *(if available)* _____

Date of Birth _____/_____/_____   Age _____   Veteran: yes   no

Household size _____   Head household: yes   no

Grandparent raising grandchildren (in home): yes   no

Monthly Income $_____   Source(s) of income: _____

_____

Resident status *(circle one)*:   rent   own   other *(describe)*_____

Are you presently receiving assistance from another agency/source: yes   no
(if yes, name source & type) _____
Note: Answering yes does not disqualify application

What type of assistance are you requesting *(check most important)***:**

- ☐ Rental assistance
- ☐ Assistance with utilities costs
- ☐ Home repair
- ☐ Transition to permanent housing (for homeless or displaced persons)
- ☐ Technology program

Why are you requesting assistance? (explain) _____

_____

_____

_____

What has caused your situation? (i.e., loss of job, medical issue, living situation, etc.)

_____

I declare with my signature that the information listed is factual and true. I understand that false statements can result in denial of this application. I understand that I must provide documentation concerning identification, residency, income, bills, bank statement, utility late notice, rent late or eviction notice and other as requested to qualify for assistance. *(Attach copies only to application – Do NOT attach originals).* I understand to qualify for assistance through this funding I must have been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Check applicable items attached: *if unable to make copies please check here* ☐

<u>Programs Item Required</u>

- ☐ Copy of picture ID — rental, utilities, home repair, transition, technology
- ☐ Proof of income — rental, home repair, transition
- ☐ Late notice/bill/letter — rental, utilities
- ☐ Copy of bank statement (last 2 months) — rental, home repair