



INCREASE IN SHARE EMERGENCY/ DEPOSIT CREDIT

Public Utilities Department

Board of Public Utilities
March 8, 2021

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ISSUE

Approve an increase of the Sharing Households Assist Riverside's Energy (SHARE) Program's Emergency/Deposit Credit from \$150 to \$250 due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic.



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LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Assembly Bill 1890 –

Adopted in 1996; created the Public Benefits fund program and granted authority to publicly owned utilities to spend Public Benefits Charge funds for low-income assistance programs, energy efficiency and conservation programs, renewable energy, and research, development and demonstration projects.



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BACKGROUND

1. SHARE was established by RPU in 1989

Originally funded from direct customer contributions



2. City Council Approved Enhancement July 21, 2020

- \$15 per month electric bill credit (up to \$180 per year)
- \$2.75 per month water bill credit (up to \$33 per year)
- Funding for the term of the contract will be \$2.8 million
- \$2,550,000 – direct customer assistance
- \$250,000 – County Administration fee



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DISCUSSION

1. To alleviate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on RPU's low-income customers, RPU staff proposes to increase the SHARE emergency/deposit credit from \$150 to \$250 for the duration of the state emergency.
2. Many low-income customers are continuing to work during the COVID-19 pandemic and do not qualify for the Emergency Recovery Assistance Program (ERAP).
3. The financial need for assistance experienced by customers is greater than the \$150 provided by the emergency/deposit credit. The original amount has not been increased in over 30 years.



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RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Public Utilities recommend to the City Council the authorization of an increase to the Sharing Households Assist Riverside's Energy Program's Emergency/Deposit Credit from \$150 per year to \$250 per year for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic State of Emergency.



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