Eastside Tenant Circle (fictional): proposal drafts

First draft. Not submission-ready until a person reviews it.

Your first draft

Statement of need

Renters here receive eviction filings with less than two weeks to respond, and most go to court without advice.

What sits underneath it. Most homes here are owned by out-of-area landlords, and the court calendar gives renters days, not weeks, to respond. In the 1960s the city cleared two Eastside blocks for a highway and never rebuilt the housing; most families who stayed became renters. (Source: City planning commission records, 1962 to 1968 (fictional))

In our own intake log, 58 of 90 households who called us last year had a court date within 14 days. (Source: Eastside Tenant Circle intake log, 2025 (fictional)) People closest to the work told us: Tenant leaders say the notice language is the first barrier: people do not know a filing is not yet an eviction.

What the community already brings. Families share rides to court, church members translate notices, and long-time tenants keep a phone tree of who to call. (How we know: Tenant leader meetings and six years of clinic practice; no private stories recorded)

Eastside Tenant Circle (fictional) works in Eastside, a fictional mid-size city. Our clinics act on the response window. They do not change who owns the housing; our repair organizing works on that.

What we have checked.
Most renters who skip their hearing think the filing already means they must leave (How we confirmed it: Asked at three clinics in October 2026; 19 of 31 attendees said this, recorded as a tally only (fictional))

What is different here. Three Eastside blocks where most families have rented from the same out-of-area owners for decades, and where many households speak Spanish or Haitian Creole at home

Barriers people meet. Eviction notices arrive only in English with legal wording, the court gives days rather than weeks to respond, and the closest courthouse is two bus transfers away (Source: County court notice forms and calendar rules, read October 2026; bus route map (fictional))

Executive summary

Eastside Tenant Circle (fictional) requests $40,000 for 12 months to support Know Your Notice clinics. We help renters in three Eastside neighborhoods keep their homes and organize for repairs.

If we hold weekly notice clinics and court-date accompaniment for renters with an eviction filing, then more households attend their hearing with a plan, because people who understand the notice and arrive prepared can ask for time, payment plans or repairs.

Objectives: Households with an eviction filing attend their hearing with a written plan (target 70 by 2027-06-30).

We serve 240 people each year. Our annual budget is $185,000.

Program narrative

Theory of change. If we hold weekly notice clinics and court-date accompaniment for renters with an eviction filing, then more households attend their hearing with a plan, because people who understand the notice and arrive prepared can ask for time, payment plans or repairs.

What we do. Weekly clinics; text reminders the day before court; accompaniment to hearings

What we will count. Clinics held; households seen; hearings accompanied

What changes. Near term: Households attend their hearing with a written plan. Mid term: Households reach an agreement or dismissal instead of a default judgment. Long term: Fewer forced moves in the three neighborhoods.

What we bring. 2 part-time organizers, 6 trained tenant leaders, church hall space, legal aid referral line

What has to be true. Legal aid can take referrals within a week; the court keeps the current calendar Outside forces we watch: Rent increases, court scheduling changes, state rental assistance funding.

Partners. County Legal Aid (fictional) (Takes referrals within a week).

Context and what we are changing.
What keeps it in place: Court rules give renters days to respond, and city code enforcement responds to complaints only.
What this project changes: More renters arrive at court prepared, with a written plan.
What needs funder, city or system change: A longer response window on the court calendar, and proactive code inspections We will track it by court rule and inspection policy changes adopted.

How the measures were chosen: chosen together with the community. Checked by tenant leaders and clinic participants. We heard from tenant leaders; clinic participants; church translators; two landlords who rent locally, and we recorded where views differed.

How we govern. We are resident or member-led. Our board answers to the people we serve, and that accountability is part of how the work is governed. To strengthen financial oversight, we will pay for treasurer training for a current member.

How the work travels. Renters first call a tenant leader or a church translator, not an agency. Word moves through the phone tree and Sunday announcements

What community knowledge changed in this design.
- Tenant leaders, not staff, make the first call after a filing. Why: People do not open a court envelope until someone they trust tells them it is safe to read (Tenant leaders; observed by us).
- Add shared rides to the court-day plan. Why: Families arrive at court on time when a neighbor rides with them (shared without attribution; told to us (self-report)).

What people closest to the work know, shared with consent.
- People do not open a court envelope until someone they trust tells them it is safe to read (Tenant leaders; Leader meetings over six years of clinics, 2026-03-10; observed by us; holds for The three Eastside blocks we work in).
- Families arrive at court on time when a neighbor rides with them (shared without attribution; Two report-back nights, tallied by hand, 2026-10-14; told to us (self-report); holds for Hearings at the county courthouse).

Case for support

Renters here receive eviction filings with less than two weeks to respond, and most go to court without advice.

Eastside Tenant Circle (fictional) has done this work for 6 years. We help renters in three Eastside neighborhoods keep their homes and organize for repairs.

If we hold weekly notice clinics and court-date accompaniment for renters with an eviction filing, then more households attend their hearing with a plan, because people who understand the notice and arrive prepared can ask for time, payment plans or repairs.

Your support of $40,000 makes this possible: organizer time, tenant leader stipends and court-day reminders.

After this grant: We are adding a city outreach contract and a monthly donor circle of tenant alumni.

What keeps it in place: Court rules give renters days to respond, and city code enforcement responds to complaints only.
What this project changes: More renters arrive at court prepared, with a written plan.
What needs funder, city or system change: A longer response window on the court calendar, and proactive code inspections We will track it by court rule and inspection policy changes adopted.

Three Eastside blocks where most families have rented from the same out-of-area owners for decades, and where many households speak Spanish or Haitian Creole at home

What is different about us. We are renter-led: four of seven board seats are held by current tenants, and our clinics meet in the church hall people already use

Letter of inquiry

Dear Riverbend Community Foundation (fictional) team,

Eastside Tenant Circle (fictional) would like to request $40,000 for Know Your Notice clinics under Housing Stability Fund. Your published priorities include housing stability for renters in the county. You may know our work through our joint clinic night with their grantee County Legal Aid (fictional).

Renters here receive eviction filings with less than two weeks to respond, and most go to court without advice.

If we hold weekly notice clinics and court-date accompaniment for renters with an eviction filing, then more households attend their hearing with a plan, because people who understand the notice and arrive prepared can ask for time, payment plans or repairs.

The request pays for organizer time, tenant leader stipends and court-day reminders. We will track: Clinics held; Households attending hearing with a written plan; People who would send a relative or neighbor to a clinic; Households still in touch six months after their hearing.

We would welcome a conversation about fit.

Sincerely,
Dana Ortiz, Executive Director (fictional)
Eastside Tenant Circle (fictional)

Cover letter

Dear Riverbend Community Foundation (fictional) team,

Please find enclosed Eastside Tenant Circle (fictional)'s application for Housing Stability Fund, requesting $40,000 for Know Your Notice clinics.

We help renters in three Eastside neighborhoods keep their homes and organize for repairs. Each year we serve 240 people in Eastside, a fictional mid-size city.

The application responds to each requirement in the order listed. Questions can go to Dana Ortiz, Executive Director (fictional).

Thank you for your consideration.

Dana Ortiz, Executive Director (fictional)

Budget justification

Part-time organizers (2 × 20 hours/week): $31,200. Basis: 2 people × 20 hours × 52 weeks × $15/hour.
Tenant leader stipends: $7,200. Basis: 6 leaders × $100/month × 12 months. Why this place needs it: Renters call a tenant leader before they call any agency; the leaders carry the trust the clinics run on.
Text reminder service and printing: $1,600. Basis: Vendor quote, September 2026.
Total of the lines entered: $40,000.

Costs this context points to that are not priced yet:
- [Interpretation and translation: amount and basis]
- [Transportation (fares or rides): amount and basis]
- [Community measure validation sessions (stipends, food, space): amount and basis]

Partner letter request

Dear County Legal Aid (fictional) team,

Eastside Tenant Circle (fictional) is applying to Riverbend Community Foundation (fictional) for $40,000 to support Know Your Notice clinics. The application is due 2026-09-30.

Would you write a short letter of support that confirms your role: Takes referrals within a week? Please describe only what you have agreed to do.

A one-page summary is below so the letter matches the application.

If we hold weekly notice clinics and court-date accompaniment for renters with an eviction filing, then more households attend their hearing with a plan, because people who understand the notice and arrive prepared can ask for time, payment plans or repairs.

Thank you,
Dana Ortiz, Executive Director (fictional)

Donor thank-you and update

Dear [donor name],

Thank you for standing with Eastside Tenant Circle (fictional). Here is what your support made possible

so far.

Clinics held: 22 clinics (goal 48).
Households attending hearing with a written plan: 52% of households seen (goal 70).

What we are hearing: Tenant leaders say the notice language is the first barrier: people do not know a filing is not yet an eviction.

What comes next: We are adding a city outreach contract and a monthly donor circle of tenant alumni.

With gratitude,
Dana Ortiz, Executive Director (fictional)

Organization profile

Eastside Tenant Circle (fictional)

Mission. We help renters in three Eastside neighborhoods keep their homes and organize for repairs.

Where we work. Eastside, a fictional mid-size city. We have done this work for 6 years.

Who we serve. 240 people each year.

Annual budget. $185,000.

Program. Know Your Notice clinics: If we hold weekly notice clinics and court-date accompaniment for renters with an eviction filing, then more households attend their hearing with a plan, because people who understand the notice and arrive prepared can ask for time, payment plans or repairs.

Governance. 5 voting board members. 1 of 3 listed filings marked filed.

Contact. Dana Ortiz, Executive Director (fictional)

We are resident or member-led. Our board answers to the people we serve, and that accountability is part of how the work is governed. To strengthen financial oversight, we will pay for treasurer training for a current member.

What is different about us. We are renter-led: four of seven board seats are held by current tenants, and our clinics meet in the church hall people already use

Funder progress email

Subject: Eastside Tenant Circle (fictional) progress update: Housing Stability Fund

Dear Riverbend Community Foundation (fictional) team,

A short update on Know Your Notice clinics.

Results so far:
Clinics held: 22 against a target of 48 (46% of the way).
Households attending hearing with a written plan: 52 against a target of 70 (49% of the way).
People who would send a relative or neighbor to a clinic: not yet measured.
Households still in touch six months after their hearing: not yet measured.

Spending to date is $10,100 against a budget of $8,750. [Reason for the difference]

Our next report is due 2027-01-15 and Dana Ortiz owns it.

We are glad to talk any time.

Dana Ortiz, Executive Director (fictional)

Evaluation and measurement plan

Know Your Notice clinics will be measured three ways, and each result is labeled by how we know it.

Measures the funder requires.
- Households attending hearing with a written plan (% of households seen): baseline 35, target 70, from Follow-up log (aggregate), quarterly. Required by the funder; defined by Riverbend Community Foundation reporting form (fictional); how it is observed: Organizer checks for a written plan at the follow-up call; observed by us.

Measures defined with the community.
- People who would send a relative or neighbor to a clinic (% of people asked): baseline unknown, target [target], from Follow-up question, tally only, quarterly. Defined with the community; defined by Tenant leaders at the March 2026 planning meeting (fictional); checked with Clinic participants at two report-back nights; how it is observed: One question at the follow-up call, asked by a tenant leader; tally only; told to us (self-report).
- Households still in touch six months after their hearing (households): baseline unknown, target [target], from Phone tree contact log (aggregate), quarterly. Defined with the community; defined by Tenant leaders and long-time phone tree members (fictional); checked with Clinic participants at two report-back nights; how it is observed: Phone tree log of who answered a check-in call; counted, no names reported; verified in a record.

Our own counts.
- Clinics held (clinics): baseline 0, target 48, from Clinic calendar, monthly. Our own count; how it is observed: Count of clinics on the calendar; verified in a record.

Who chose the measures: Chosen with the community; checked with tenant leaders and clinic participants.

We report what we observed or verified in records separately from what people tell us, and we mark our own interpretations as interpretations.

These measures show whether things changed. They do not by themselves show that the program caused the change.

Note to the funder: what makes this award workable

Dear Riverbend Community Foundation (fictional) team,

We want this partnership to work for both of us. Based on our own numbers and context, these changes would reduce the risk of carrying this award:

- Offer an advance, a partial advance or monthly reimbursement so the award does not depend on cash we do not hold.
- Help change what our project cannot change alone: A longer response window on the court calendar, and proactive code inspections

Thank you for considering them.

Dana Ortiz, Executive Director (fictional)

What is still missing

- Interpretation and translation: amount and basis
- Transportation (fares or rides): amount and basis
- Community measure validation sessions (stipends, food, space): amount and basis
- donor name
- Reason for the difference
- target