



**Hidalgo County • Department of Budget & Management**  
American Rescue Plan Act

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## **Project Description**

**Project Name:**

Economic Development Community Navigators

**Project Number:**

ARPA-23-110-345

**Department Name:**

County Judge's Office

**ARPA Expenditure Category:**

3: Public Health-Negative Economic Impact: Public Sector Capacity

**ARPA Eligibility Category:**

3.4: Public Sector Capacity: Effective Service Delivery

**Project Description:**

The final rule aims to promote and streamline the provision of assistance to individuals and communities in greatest need, particularly communities that have been historically underserved and have experienced disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 crisis.<sup>1</sup> For historically marginalized populations (those excluded from mainstream health, economic, and/or educational resources) all the general challenges encountered with the pandemic certainly apply, but there are additional barriers. The greatest is communication—getting information or access to available resources is typically more difficult for people with multiple barriers. Research has noted that Hispanics were disproportionately harmed by the economic fallout as a result of the effects of the COVID 19 virus; they accounted for 23 percent of the initial job loss.<sup>2</sup> The coronavirus did not discriminate based on race, but without action, its economic fallout will continue to disproportionately affect residents of Hidalgo County which is predominately Hispanic. To that end, Hidalgo County will enlist personnel to serve as community navigators to promote and streamline the provision of programs and services that address or mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. Hidalgo County is committed to ensuring that the community receives the support needed to access community resources and relief programs due to the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Hidalgo County Economic Development Community Navigators, Administrative Assistant IV and Eligibility Specialist III, will work closely under the supervision of the Director of Economic Development to develop programs, outreach and engagement resources that will positively impact marginalized populations.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of the Treasury. (2022). Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. *Federal Register*, 87(18), p. 4444

<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/latinos-face-disproportionate-health-economic-impacts-covid-19/>



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Recognizing that eligible households often face barriers to accessing public benefits or services that improve health and economic outcomes, the interim final rule included as an enumerated eligible use in disproportionately impacted communities, public benefits navigators to assist community members with navigating and applying for available federal, state, and local public benefits or services.<sup>3</sup> Treasury has determined that this impact of the pandemic is widely experienced across many jurisdictions and programs or services to increase awareness and uptake of assistance programs would respond to the pandemic’s negative economic impact in all communities. As such, in the final rule, this use is eligible for any impacted household or class of households, not only in disproportionately impacted communities.<sup>4</sup> ...recipients may use funds for administrative costs to improve the efficacy of public health or economic relief programs through tools like program evaluation, data analysis, and targeted consumer outreach.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Fiscal Impact:**

Estimated Budget: \$150,000.00

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<sup>3</sup> Department of the Treasury. (2022). Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. *Federal Register*, 87(18), p. 4362

<sup>4</sup> Department of the Treasury. (2022). Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. *Federal Register*, 87(18), p. 4363

<sup>5</sup> Department of the Treasury. (2022). Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. *Federal Register*, 87(18), p. 4387