

## We Care

Tri-annual Report to Board, Sept 27, 2021

Emergency Financial Assistance Provided: January – August 2021

Submitted by: Rex Cole, We Care Intake Coordinator

During the COVID pandemic, the availability of government financial assistance programs has increased, but fluctuated greatly. We Care has adjusted and continues to provide significant help to those facing financial crises. We have actively referred people to other resources as they became available, and continued to assist those who were falling through cracks in the social services system. This report compares data of those receiving assistance during the period from January to August in 2021, with the similar period in 2020 (at the onset of COVID), and in 2019 (before COVID). To better identify trends during the pandemic, data from the four-month periods from the beginning of 2019 to present are also examined.

<b>TABLE 1. Households Assisted January - August</b>			
	2019	2020	2021
<b>Requests Processed:</b>			
Inquiries	343	350	300
Applications Received	250	254	219
Applications to Board	202	209	183
Applications Approved	172	181	173
Applications Denied	15	15	2
Apps Held or Withdrawn	18	11	7
<b>People Assisted:</b>			
Adults	211	247	231
Children	174	194	177
Total People	385	441	402
Families with Children	77	89	87
% Approved with Children	44.8%	49.2%	50.3%
<b>Residence of Those Assisted:</b>			
Corvallis	144	165	158
Philomath	18	11	9
Alea	2	3	1
Monroe	7	2	4
North Albany	1	3	1
<b>Assisted Households Recovering from:</b>			
Substance Abuse	31	16	20
Homelessness	26	20	13
Domestic Violence	16	8	13
Criminal Justice	2	0	3
COVID-19 Impact	0	43	44

Surprisingly, the number of households assisted by We Care has not changed much in the January-August time frame over the last three years. The number of requests approved (173) by the We Care board this year was essentially the same as in 2019. Notably, there were only two requests denied this year, far fewer than in previous years. This is largely due to our donors' generosity, which made it possible to deny fewer requests from those in need.

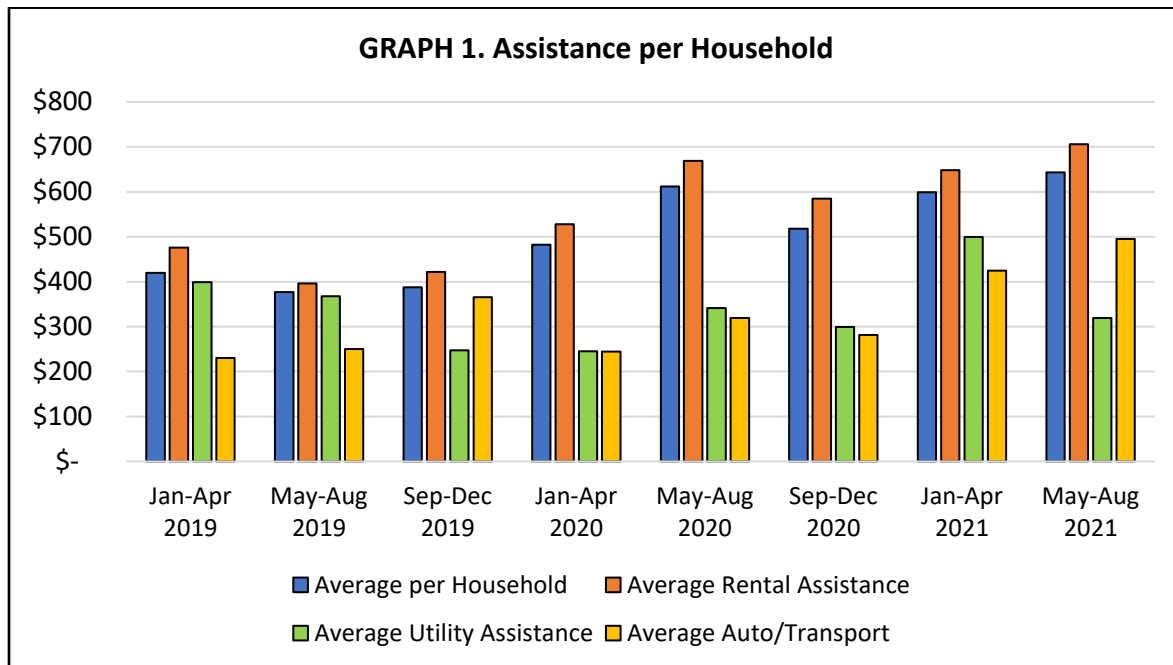
From January through August 2021, 173 households were assisted, which included 87 families with children (177 children). As in previous years, these households were predominantly in Corvallis. Forty-nine of the households are considered "in transition", with members in the process of recovering from substance abuse, homelessness, domestic violence, or the criminal justice system.

In 2021 We Care assisted 44 COVID-impacted households whose needs were not met by existing programs.

**TABLE 2. Assistance Provided by Category: January – August**  
(Number = Number of Households)

Category	2019		2020		2021	
	Number	Dollars	Number	Total \$	Number	Total \$
Rent	88	\$ 38,261	113	\$ 85,888	111	\$ 75,061
Rental Deposit	14	\$ 6,217	19	\$ 17,037	12	\$ 6,120
Utility bills	41	\$ 15,957	26	\$ 8,610	30	\$ 12,460
Storage rent	8	\$ 1,423	5	\$ 1,599	4	\$ 923
Auto & Transport	19	\$ 4,550	17	\$ 5,829	24	\$ 10,961
Healthcare	4	\$ 925	6	\$ 5,265	5	\$ 1,315
Other	6	\$ 1,252	5	\$ 4,141	2	\$ 487
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>\$ 68,585</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>\$ 128,368</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>\$ 107,326</b>

Although the number of households receiving We Care assistance has not changed dramatically in the last three years for the January-August time period, the dollar amount provided has increased significantly (Table 2). The amount of assistance provided in 2021 is down slightly from 2020. This is likely due to a temporary increase in demand at the beginning of 2020 when COVID was negatively impacting incomes, but COVID-related assistance programs were not yet in place. The total amount of assistance provided in January-August 2021 is up 56% from that provided in pre-pandemic 2019.



The trend is clear: during the COVID pandemic the average amount of assistance required to help a family escape a financial crisis has increased dramatically, from around \$400 pre-pandemic (2019) to around \$600 during the pandemic (Graph 1). Rental assistance continues to be the predominant type of assistance provided by We Care, and fluctuations in the average amount of assistance provided per household largely reflects fluctuations in the average amount of assistance provided to households needing help with rent.

In most four-month periods, assistance with utility bills was the second largest category of assistance We Care provided (Table 3). Like rental assistance, the average amount of utility assistance provided by We Care also fluctuated from 4-month period to 4-month period (Graph 1, previous page). However, fluctuations in the amount of utility assistance provided does not show a consistent trend, nor does it correlate with the average assistance provided per household. The existence of other utility assistance programs and the moratoriums on utility shut-offs during the pandemic is likely affecting the number and amount of utility assistance requests We Care is receiving.

	Jan-Apr 2019	May-Aug 2019	Sep-Dec 2019	Jan-Apr 2020	May-Aug 2020	Sep-Dec 2020	Jan-Apr 2021	May-Aug 2021
Rent	\$ 20,451	\$ 17,810	\$ 26,585	\$ 36,432	\$ 29,431	\$ 44,437	\$ 36,952	\$ 38,109
Rental Deposit	\$ 1,618	\$ 4,599	\$ 3,147	\$ 3,185	\$ 7,526	\$ 3,702	\$ 2,375	\$ 3,745
Utility bills	\$ 11,180	\$ 4,777	\$ 3,705	\$ 3,186	\$ 4,434	\$ 7,777	\$ 7,994	\$ 4,467
Storage rent	\$ 722	\$ 701	\$ 90	\$ 1,599	\$ -	\$ 841	\$ 140	\$ 783
Auto & Transport	\$ 2,302	\$ 2,248	\$ 1,463	\$ 1,953	\$ 2,870	\$ 1,970	\$ 5,515	\$ 5,445
Healthcare	\$ 335	\$ 590	\$ 500	\$ 1,714	\$ 1,965	\$ 571	\$ 87	\$ 1,228
Other	\$ 342	\$ 910	\$ 1,693	\$ 625	\$ 2,708	\$ 230	\$ 257	\$ 230
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 36,948</b>	<b>\$ 31,637</b>	<b>\$ 37,183</b>	<b>\$ 48,694</b>	<b>\$ 48,934</b>	<b>\$ 59,528</b>	<b>\$ 53,320</b>	<b>\$ 54,007</b>

### **Thanks to New Intake Volunteers**

During the summer, We Care’s Intake Coordinator, Rex Cole, took a three-month sabbatical to welcome a new grandson in California. In his absence, Susie Zarembo filled in as interim Intake Coordinator, and four new and recently trained volunteers fielded calls in the We Care office, interviewed applicants, and performed the various intake functions. Special thanks to Susie and these intrepid new volunteers, Judy Gough, Patricia Lacy, Patti Irvine, and Laurie Labbitt Perry for doing a great job helping those who came to We Care looking for compassion during difficult times. These volunteers delivered.

Unfortunately, both Judy and Laurie decided to pursue other challenges in September, and we wish them well. This means that we now have a need for additional intake volunteers. Our current structure requires a three-hour commitment to be in the We Care office once each week. Training is provided. If you would like more information about becoming a We Care intake volunteer, please leave a message for Rex at 541-243-8029.