

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 27, 2022

Media Contact:

Shannon Wiggins
Public Information Officer
404.270.7126 (office)
470.382.8501 (cell)
swiggins@EastPointCity.org

MAYOR
Deana Holiday
Ingraham

**COUNCIL
MEMBERS**

Ward A
Sharon D. Shropshire
Lance C. Robertson

Ward B
Karen René

Ward C
T. Starr Cummings
Myron B. Cook

Ward D
Joshua B. Butler, IV
Stephanie Gordon

CITY MANAGER
Deron King

The City of East Point Human Services Division Celebrates Great Success

Program Coordinator Yolanda Johnson Helps 360 East Point Residents in Need During Pandemic

EAST POINT, GA- As the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have financially impacted millions of Americans, the City of East Point has created a Human Services initiative to provide essential services to those in need. In September 2021, the city implemented a Human Services Division to address the critical service needs of underserved members of the East Point community. This grant funded initiative, led by Program Coordinator Yolanda Johnson, has provided vital resources to 360 low-to-moderate income-based individuals. To date, Johnson has provided clients with the following assistance:

Assistance	# of Clients
Rental	125
Mortgage	25
Homeless	42
Medical Bills	1
Utilities	130
Credit Repair	8
Emergency Shelter	28
Home Ownership	1

The Human Services Division is currently funded by three grants: the Emergency Solutions Grant, American Rescue Plan Act, and the Fulton County Community Development Block Grant. Funds from the Emergency Solutions Grant address four areas: homeless prevention, street outreach, emergency shelter, and rapid rehousing. Funds from the Community Development Block Grant provide rental and mortgage payment assistance. Monies from the American Rescue Plan are used for a more extensive case management initiative called The Empowerment Plan Program. The Empowerment Plan is a six (6) to twelve (12) month program which affords clients the opportunity to establish goals and move toward self-sufficiency. Individuals work with Johnson, who serves as their Support Coach, to move past obstacles that may hinder their success. Participants are required to attend “meetings at least once a month to have a conversation about their goals,” said Johnson. Clients are asked to establish both short-term and long-term goals, and they are provided tools to help complete their goals.

The Human Services Division works with several organizations located in and around the metropolitan-Atlanta area to offer these services. The East Point program has partnerships with Gateway Center, Hope Atlanta, the Calvary Refuge Center, Nicholas House, Mini City, Harmony Plaza apartments, Family Life Ministries, Fulton Atlanta Community Action Authority, and MARTA. These collaborations have successfully helped so many individuals rebuild their life.

Office of Communications

2757 East Point Street East Point, Georgia 30344 | 404-270-7126 | www.eastpointcity.org



The Human Services Division works tirelessly to remove barriers that impede their clients' success in obtaining housing and financial wellness. This was exemplified when Johnson helped an individual apply for his birth certificate and driver's license so he could seek employment. "He doesn't have transportation and has a few barriers that prohibit his ability to move forward. However, we have a pool of resources that are working in his favor," said Johnson. These resources are saving the lives of individuals, both young and elderly, by providing immediate solutions in dire situations.

Another instance of the Human Services Division providing emergency assistance is when four homeless youth were found living in nearby woods. The Division provided the group with emergency shelter in addition to transportation, clothing, food, and employment. The youth have been placed in an apartment and are currently enrolled in the Empowerment Plan Program. This type of case management has been beneficial in various ways for many applicants.

Participants of the Empowerment Plan Program are also offered credit repair and financial literacy assistance. This type of aid helps clients understand budgeting and financial wellness, in addition to repairing their credit. The program was particularly useful for an applicant whose rental application was previously denied by several leasing offices due to credit issues. She enrolled in the Empowerment Plan Program's financial literacy and credit repair courses and within two months she was approved for an apartment. The client is now housed in a safe and stable environment.

The services provided by the Human Services Division are immensely advantageous, not only to individuals seeking emergency assistance but also to landlords who are rapidly rehousing the homeless. "Landlords are actually applauding the City of East Point for being so fast with the turnaround in funding," Johnson said. The Human Services Division works diligently to provide rental and mortgage payment assistance for clients and landlords typically receive funding within two months.

Johnson is moved by the testimonies she has received from her clients and looks forward to continuing to build the Human Services Division and meet the needs of the East Point community. Within the next few months, she intends to meet with her strategic planning committee to discuss partner relations, funding opportunities, and develop a volunteer program. For more information about the Human Services Division, individuals can contact Yolanda Johnson at communityresources@eastpointcity.org or (404) 559-6386.

Photo Captions

- *Yolanda Johnson, Program Coordinator for the East Point Human Services Division*
- *Individual applying for a driver's license and birth certificate*
- *Yolanda Johnson takes photo with rehoused youth*
- *A screenshot of a client notifying Yolanda Johnson that they've received a key to their new apartment*
- *Client Services Graphic from September 2021- June 2022*

###

About The City of East Point

The City of East Point is approximately 13.8 miles with a population of over 38,000. Located southwest of Atlanta, East Point is conveniently located minutes away from Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. This quaint urban community's prime location, numerous retail, and great restaurants make it an attractive place for a "live-work-play-shop-stay" environment because there's no point like East Point.

Office of Communications

2757 East Point Street East Point, Georgia 30344 | 404-270-7126 | www.eastpointcity.org



For more information about the City of East Point visit www.eastpointcity.org. Also like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/cityofeastpoint/ and follow us on twitter @cityofeastpoint, snapchat @cityofep1, or instagram @cityofeastpoint.

Office of Communications

2757 East Point Street East Point, Georgia 30344 | 404-270-7126 | www.eastpointcity.org

