

PRESS RELEASE

April 20, 2021

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Aiming to solve an urgent and unmet need in our community: Jesse Tree creates new Security Deposit Assistance Program, funded by grant from the Idaho Women's Charitable Foundation.

Jesse Tree, a Treasure Valley nonprofit dedicated to eviction and homelessness prevention, has launched a new Security Deposit Assistance Program aimed at helping people who are losing their rental housing, are living in hotels or motels, or doubled up with friends and family members. The organization received a \$30,000 grant to start the program from the Idaho Women's Charitable Foundation (IWCF).

Funding from the Idaho Women's Charitable Foundation will go toward creating and providing housing navigation services and security deposit assistance to low-income tenants. Jesse Tree staff will work with tenants to assist them with identifying housing and then pay the deposit, which can equal up to two months of rent. The program can also pay for application and cleaning fees. "The goal of the Idaho Women's Charitable Foundation is to foster educated philanthropy through collaboration and pooled resources to positively impact our community," said Christine Avey, IWCF Board President. "Our members selected Jesse Tree's Security Deposit Assistance Program as a grantee this year because of the imminent need in our community that this project addresses and the strong work Jesse Tree does to prevent homelessness."

Jesse Tree hears from hundreds of Treasure Valley families experiencing a housing crisis each month. Many households are being forced to make unplanned moves and even live with friends or in hotels temporarily while looking for another place to live. In the past, Jesse Tree focused on rental assistance as the primary form of financial aid and many tenants went unserved because they were in need of security deposit assistance to get through their housing crisis. The Security Deposit Assistance program will allow Jesse Tree to serve the population of people who would not otherwise qualify for assistance.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Treasure Valley was facing a housing crisis in which many longtime residents were being priced out of their homes or apartments. The crisis has continued as many of our neighbors are needing to find new housing in a shrinking rental market. More and more rentals are being renovated or sold to homeowners; as a result, there

are less rentals available. Affordable rentals are even more scarce. For low-income households, there were only 44 affordable, available housing units for every 100 households (United Way Community Needs Assessment, 2021).

This program has already benefited our community. For example we recently served Theresa, a single mother, who was served an eviction notice due to her inability to pay rent. While she was working with a Jesse Tree case manager, she found a new place to live that was more affordable and closer to her son's school. Jesse Tree worked with Theresa to secure a mediation agreement in eviction court, allowing her to avoid a judgment on her record, with a reasonable move out date. The agreement gave her time to pay her security deposit and move into her new apartment. Jesse Tree paid the security deposit and first month's rent, setting Theresa and her son up to be much more financially secure.

Such a resource is needed in our community now more than ever as the pandemic continues on and as the Treasure Valley housing crisis grows.

Please share the below flyer so that tenants in the Treasure Valley in need of this resource know how to access it.

Jesse Tree is here to help keep you housed!

If you are at risk of losing your housing and living in Ada or Canyon County, Jesse Tree can provide you with rental and security deposit assistance. We will also work to connect you to resources you need to stay housed.

We are able to help you if:

1. You are living in housing or hotels in Ada or Canyon County;
 - If you are living outside , in your car, or at a shelter, Jesse Tree cannot assist you and you should call Our Path Home directly for assistance at 208-495-4240. Families with children under 21 can also contact Navigation by calling +211 and asking to speak to a Navigator.
2. You are behind on rental payments, or are in need of security deposit assistance to move; and
3. Your income was under 80% AMI over the last 30 days (see chart below).

How to apply to Jesse Tree:

- Call or text Jesse Tree at 208-383-9486 with your name, phone number, and the city you live in,
- Submit this short questionnaire: www.jesstreeidaho.org/apply, or;
- Come by Jesse Tree's office at 1121 W Miller Street, Boise Idaho 83702.

From there, a Jesse Tree case manager will support you in getting your application completed.

The last 30 days of your gross income must be at or below:

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6
Last 30 days of income	\$3,517	\$4,017	\$4,521	\$5,021	\$5,425	\$5,825