

# AUSTIN MUTUAL AID



MARCH 2020-MARCH 2021

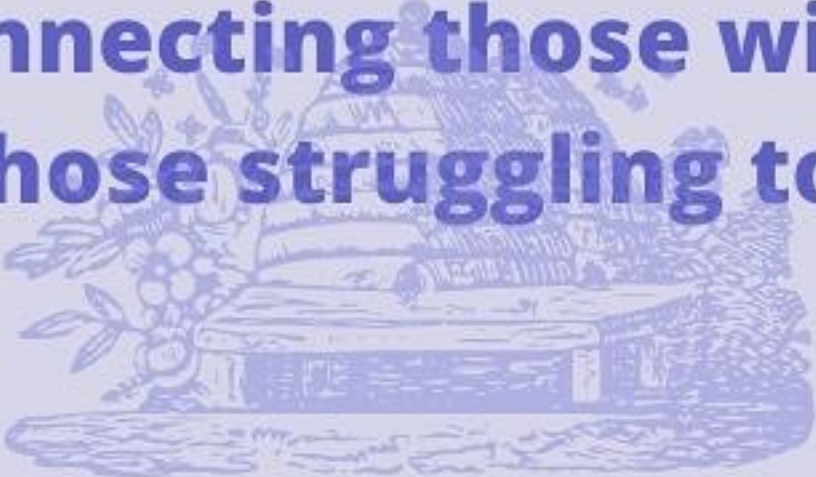
ART BY: N.O. BONZO

# AUSTIN MUTUAL AID HISTORY AND FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY



**Austin Mutual Aid (AMA) was founded March 2020, at the start of the pandemic, in order to counteract the multiple crises affecting vulnerable populations. The predicted economic downturn following the Covid-19 outbreak was yet another crisis on top of the violence of white supremacist culture and the growing inequality here in the United States.**

**Austin Mutual Aid was founded with an explicit emphasis on resource sharing between individuals, connecting those with overflowing pantries with those struggling to buy groceries.**



# **Austin Mutual Aid Mission Statement**

Austin Mutual Aid is a grassroots organization whose mission is to empower and sustain vibrant, joyful, resilient communities. We do this by prioritizing the power of long-term, two-way relationships of exchange. We believe in the principles of solidarity, mutual aid, and autonomous direct action. By working with, listening to, and seeking leadership from impacted communities, especially the most vulnerable and historically under-served members-- we build long-term, sustainable communities that can weather any storm.

## **Mutual Aid not Charity**

Mutual aid is the oldest form of exchange on earth and is a foundation of healthy communities. There is an assumption through mutual aid that a person will repay a gift at some later time in some ambiguous way, either to the giver or to the general community. Giving a birthday present, loaning a neighbor a lawnmower, listening to a friend talk about their breakup, are all examples of mutual aid. These acts of vague debt are what bind people in relationships and is the glue that bonds community together.

# Core Values

**Empowerment    Sustainability    Intersectionality**  
**Relationship Building    Embracing Imperfection**  
**Autonomous Direct Action    Collective Liberation**

# Ethos

**Acknowledgment of Stolen Lands**

**Challenge White Supremacy in Ourselves and in Society**

**Horizontal Power Sharing, Decision Making and  
Collaboration**

**Joy, Art and Wellness are Integral to  
Resilient Communities**

**Charity and Business Models are Antithetical  
to Mutual Aid**

**Commit to Knowing the History**

**Borders, Governments and Laws are  
Fabrications Enforced by Violence**

**Mediation and Conflict Resolution**



# FUNDS SPENT

**Hotel Costs**  
**\$345,003**

- **306 Rooms**
- **467 Unhoused Austinites**
- **Average of 2 weeks**

**Supplies Distributed**  
**\$102,802**

- **Meals for hotels**
- **Bulk water**
- **Gas for drivers**
- **Tents for unhoused neighbors**

**Solidarity Support**  
**\$70,920**

- **For breakdown see the next two pages**
- **Note: Survive to Thrive \$70k listed under "Hotel Costs" total**

**Emergency Aid**  
**\$92,474**

- **57 nominated volunteers in need**
- **8,035 hours donated**

**TOTAL SPENT as of 4/11/2021**

**\$611,199.61**



# SOLIDARITY SUPPORT

**\$210,000**

**Austin Mutual Aid has allocated this amount to be dispersed to local mutual aid groups, orgs, & projects in \$3K micro grants.**

**We invite groups and orgs to apply for these funds!**



# SOLIDARITY SUPPORT

**Austin  
Needs Water  
20K**

**Carrizo/  
Comecrudo Tribe  
via Indigenous  
Kinship  
Collective  
3K**

**Casa  
De Colores  
3K**

**Black Trans  
Leadership  
Austin  
3K**

**Recycled  
Love  
3K**

**Black Lives  
Veggies  
3K**

**Stop the  
Sweeps  
3K**

**Austin  
Access to  
Activism  
3K**

**FUNDS RAISED**

**GoFundMe**  
**\$903,121.90**  
deposited as of 4/8,  
began 11/2020

**Venmo**  
**\$1,656,766.10**

**Estimated Total**  
**\$2,559,888**  
as of 4/8

ART  
BY  
BUNNIE  
REISS



# SOLIDARITY SUPPORT

**Survive to Thrive - for Hotels**  
**70k**

**Angry Tias & Abuelas**  
**3K**

**Communities of Color United**  
**10K+3K**

**Little Petal Alliance**  
**3K**

**400+1**  
**3K**

**Black Trans Travel Fund**  
**3K**

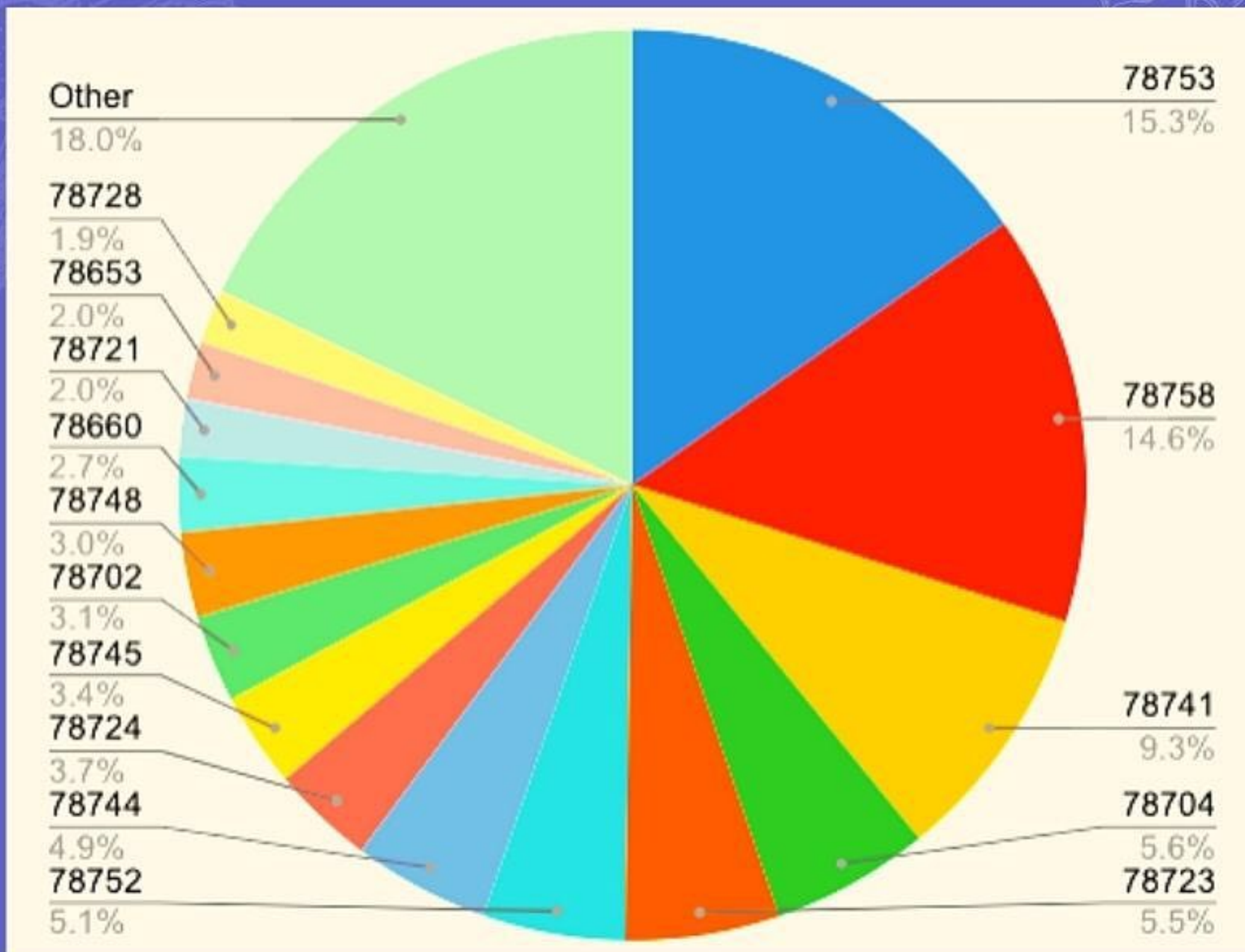
**Black Trans Rent Relief**  
**3K**

**Community Food Drive w/ Vibe Vessel**  
**3K**

**Sidewalk School**  
**3K**

# DISTRIBUTION CENTER DEMOGRAPHICS

## Distribution Zipcodes



**TOP 3 ZIP CODES:** \*data is unknown for ~15% of requestors

**78753**  
- Median Household Income \$38,884  
- 75% of population 25 and older stated they do not have a college degree

**78741**  
- Median Household Income \$30,871  
- 74% of population 25 or older stated they do not have a college degree

**78758**  
- Median Household Income \$43,537  
- 63% of population 25 or older stated they do not have a college degree



## Supply Request Demographics:

Collecting demographic data was not the top priority during the emergency response, thus records are not complete in that regard. Each category indicates the % of recorded responses, this data does not include the first 500 requests or some specific demographics for our unhoused community. Below is data for over 8,000 community members served.

Race (Response: 30%)

70% Hispanic

17% White

11% Black

2% Other/Multiple

Preferred language (Response: 100%)

65% English or other

35% Spanish

Gender (Response: 33%)

83% Female

17% Male

Housing status (Response: 89%)

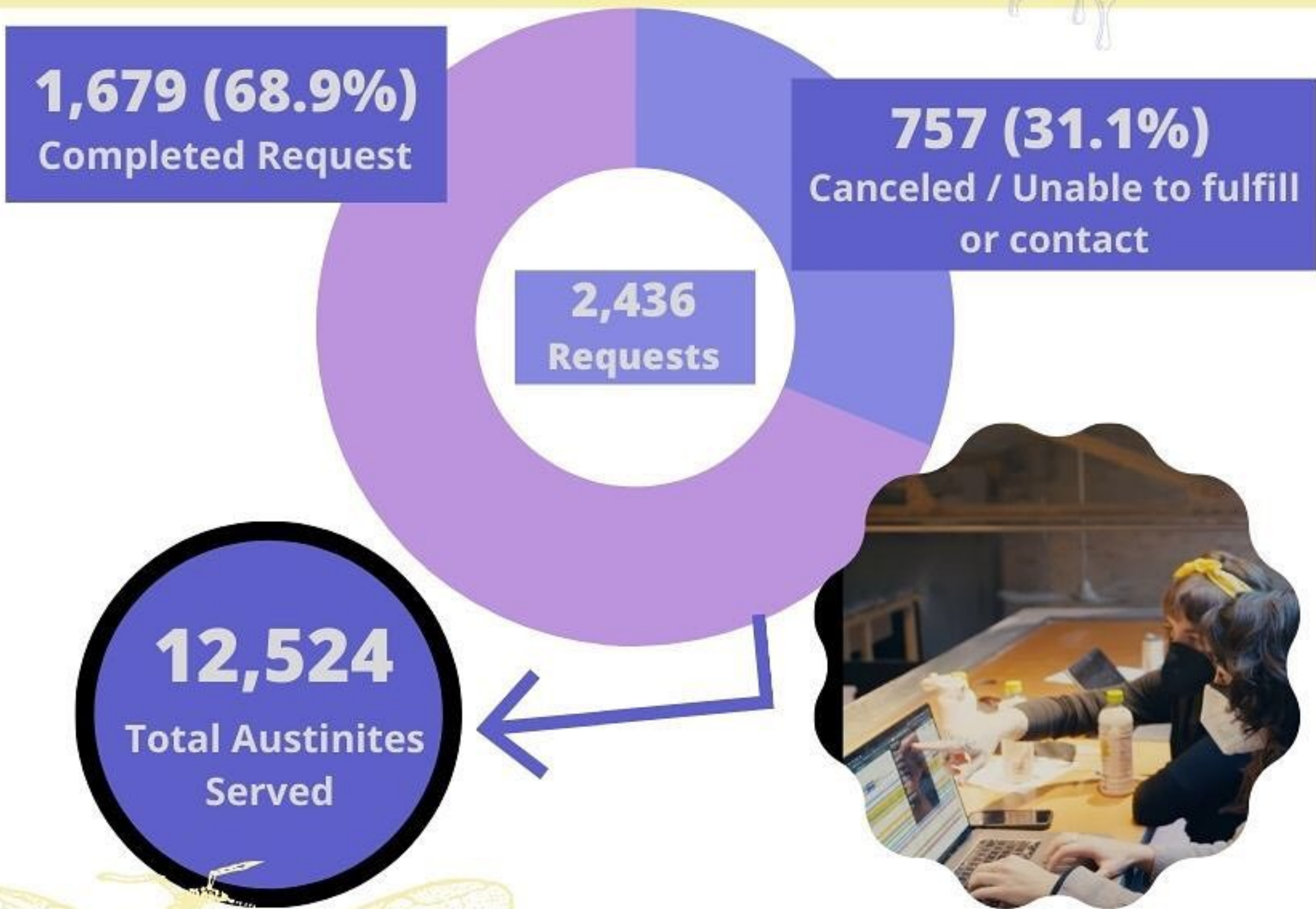
63% Housed

28% Unhoused or Unstable Housing

9% unknown

# DISTRIBUTION SITE METRICS

## Care Package Requests



Requests were submitted through an online form. Dispatchers then called each requestor to do a needs assessment and build out a custom care package.

# DISTRIBUTION



Clothes

Cleaning Supplies

Winter Gear

Tents

**Many thanks to Forever Eternal Moments photo studio and the Long Center for providing AMA with our emergency distribution spaces! Shout out to Arepa Dealers for all the help too!**

Photos by Marshall Tidrick and Vice News



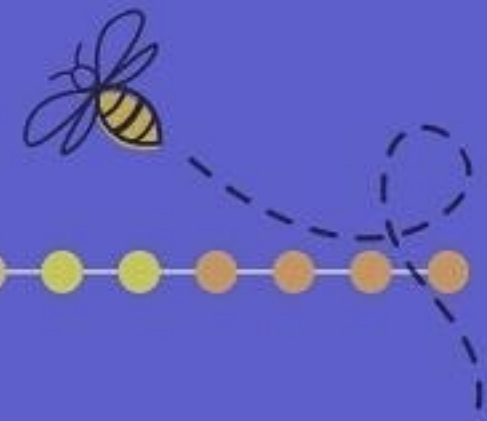
Food



Hygiene Products  
& Diapers



# TIMELINE

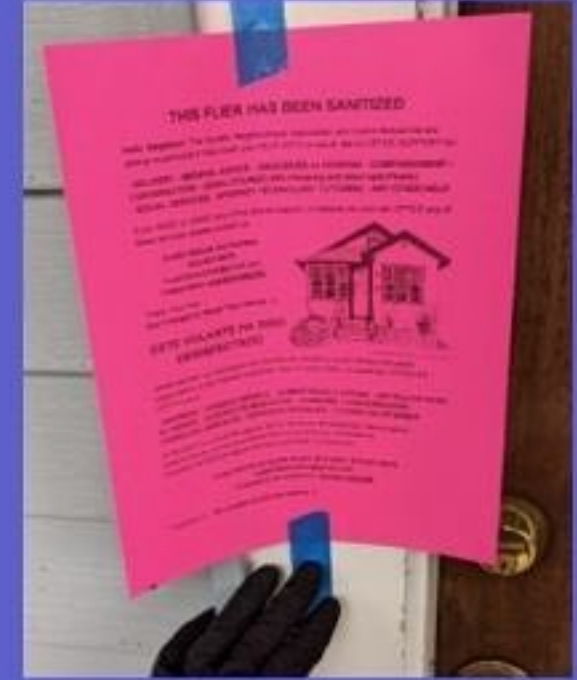


## March, 2020



Austin Mutual Aid (AMA) founded.

AMA organizers checked on neighbors utilizing flyers and a hotline.



The first Mutual Aid Kiosk built in East Austin.



## Mid-March, 2020

DIY hand washing stations installed at unhoused encampments around Austin.



## Late-March, 2020

AMA forms relationships with Stop the Sweeps (STS) and ATX Camp Support.



April, 2020



COVAID platform initiated to streamline resource and service requests and offers throughout Austin.

July, 2020



Beat the Heat water, tents and tarps were distributed by AMA &/or ATX Camp Support organizers daily to 13+ camps for 700+ unhoused neighbors.



June, 2020

"Beat the Heat"

Gofundme campaign launched.



Campaign raised \$25k for water, tarps, tents & paid a \$125 stipend weekly to a recently unhouse organizer. (These funds not included in "Funds Spent" page)





**Aug, 2020**

An additional stipend of \$125/wk added to pay for an organizer to assist in running AMA's IG account and other logistics.



**Aug - Sept, 2020**

AMA volunteer cleanup days at Riverside Camp.



**Nov 14, 2020**

"Kick the Cold" Gofundme campaign launched.



We raised funds for water, tents, sleeping bags and other material support.

**Feb 9, 2021**

**Polar vortex on its way**

AMA publicly pressured the city to open emergency winter shelters.



Hundreds of AMA followers contacted the city manager, city council & mayor to insist that all 2,500 unhoused people be sheltered during the storm.



## Feb 11, 2021

With only 182 winter shelter beds available, it became alarmingly clear that the city had no plan.



## Feb 13, 2021

Kick the Cold Gofundme pre-storm, approx \$36k raised and spent.



## Feb 14, 2021

### **Polar vortex hits Austin.**

The Community Resiliency Trust (CRT) called an emergency meeting. Multiple orgs present incl city officials, the mayor, an unhoused representative & two AMA organizers.



One AMA organizer left to head to camps under the impression that 2500 city-funded hotel rooms would soon be available. The other AMA organizer stayed at the meeting for 10 hrs producing 108 rooms initially funded by Survive to Thrive.

## Feb 14-15, 2021

AMA, and individuals from multiple orgs incl Austin Community Advancement Brigade, ATX Camp Support, Little Pedal Alliance, CRT, STS and more transport unhoused individuals to hotels.

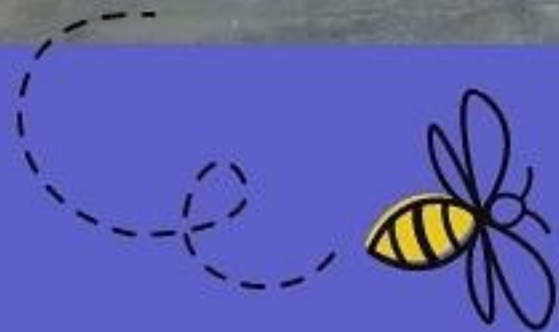


The next rooms booked were bought on volunteers personal credit cards and refunded by AMA. Initial bookings mostly 4 to 5 days long.

**Feb 15, 2021**

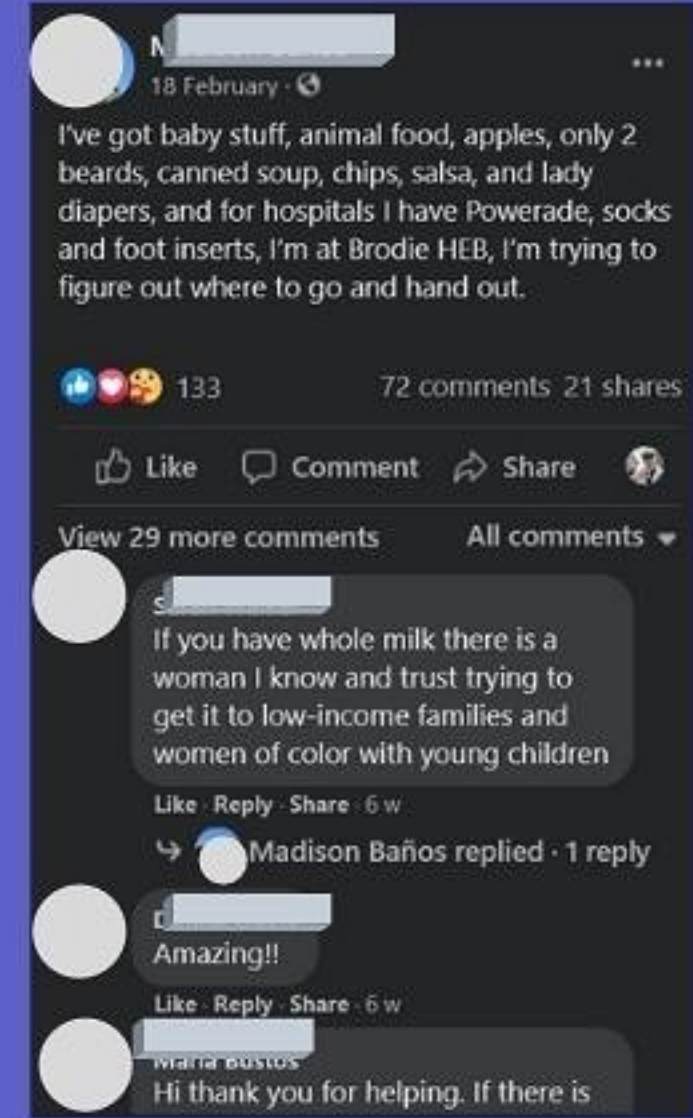


Messaging and media of a bustling distribution center & organizers working with the unhoused caused AMA Instagram, Facebook, Venmo & Gofundme to gain attention.



**Feb 15, 2021**

AMA's Facebook Group gains 4k members providing a busy exchange of resources & emergency direct aid between community members.



**Feb 17, 2021**



Emergency disbursement team set up to rapidly disperse funds and reimbursements.

**Feb 19, 2021**



AMA gave Survive to Thrive \$70,000 for hotel bookings made during the storm.

## Feb 15 - 24, 2021

AMA distribution center at Forever Eternal Moments fills requests every 4.5 to 6 mins. Families receive water, groceries, toiletries & supplies.



## Feb 23, 2021

AMA sends Austin Needs Water \$20,000 to continue their collaborative work delivering hundreds of thousands of gallons of water to Austin residents.



## Feb 19, 2021

AMA organizers extend hotel reservations based on promises made by the city about long term housing opportunities.



## Late Feb, 2021

It became clear that the city had no plans to reimburse the \$340,000 spent on hotels for the unhoused.



Since the storm, only one city official, Ann Kitchen, offered to meet with Austin Mutual Aid. AMA declined, with a message crafted by Stop The Sweeps, due to the council woman's combative position towards the unhoused.

**Feb 24, 2021**

Distribution center moves to the Long Center with better access for drivers, room for multiple pallets of water and goods, admin and distribution space for Austin Needs Water and walk up for low-income families and the unhoused.



**Mar 9, 2021**

The last hotel rooms paid for by AMA are checked out.

These were supported by multiple groups, including those in and outside of ATX Camp Support, with food and resources.



**Mar 1, 2021**

A commercial bank account is set up under Austin Mutual Aid.



AMA becomes a TUNA - Texas Unincorporated Non-profit Association & receives an EIN.

**Mar 12, 2021**

AMA distribution center pauses operations as the agreed upon time frame that the Long Center offered their space comes to an end.





# ATX CAMP SUPPORT

una red autónoma, no jerárquica y poco estructurada de varios grupos e individuos que trabajan con personas sin hogar en Austin





# THE COMMUNITY:

## Community Resilience Trust

A network of primarily BIPOC community orgs and individuals working to make Austin an equitable city

## Mutual Aid / Anarchist

- ATX Free Fridge
- ATX Guerrilla Plumbers
- Austin Access to Activism
- Austin Needs Water
- Woodward Mutual Aid
- Little Petal Alliance
- Inside Books Project
- Treasure City Thrift
- Homie Happy Hr

## Local Organizations

- Casa Marianella
- Yellow Bike Project
- Survive to Thrive
- Peace in Austin

- CCU
- BTLA
- The Challenger
- Red Beans Austin
- SAFE
- TOOF
- 400+1
- AJC

## Unaffiliated Individual Organizers

+ so many more!

