

# News Release



Oregon Housing and Community Services

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## State reopens portal for the Oregon Emergency Rental Assistance Program for limited time

*More than 36,000 Oregon households have received over \$256 million in rental assistance relief due to hardship from pandemic*

**SALEM, Ore.** — Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) today began again accepting new applications for the Oregon Emergency Rental Assistance Program (OERAP). This will be a limited reopening of at least three weeks, based on availability of funds. The agency estimates there are enough funds to support 6,700-9,300 additional renters, who will be [prioritized based on those who have the most need](#), not on a first-come, first-served basis. OHCS was forced to pause the intake of applications on December 1 because the agency did not have sufficient federal funds to serve additional renters.

“We are grateful that the Oregon Legislature and Gov. Brown came together to provide more resources for rental assistance and eviction prevention programs, which will keep thousands more Oregonians stably housed during this critical time,” said OHCS Executive Director Margaret Salazar. “During the pause in accepting new applications, several OERAP system improvements were also implemented that we hope will make the application process and payments more accessible to renters, community partners and landlords. We appreciate the time and energy partners spent in providing valuable feedback that helped bring along these improvements.”

To serve the most households, applications are being offered for first-time assistance only, and the program will not be offering utility assistance. Tenants seeking utility assistance may access additional Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) resources at the local level from community action agencies. Renters who submit new applications can access protections from eviction for nonpayment of rent while their application is being reviewed and processed. OHCS will begin processing these new applications and paying out funds in about three to five weeks. Applications for tenants who applied **before** the OERAP application pause on Dec. 1,



2021, will be processed **before** applications received on or after Jan. 26, 2022, as directed by the Oregon Legislature.

### **Important information for tenants**

- Tenants can apply for OERAP at [oregonrentalassistance.org](https://oregonrentalassistance.org) or contact a local community action agency. Applying for OERAP is now easier because the application has been streamlined and simplified based on feedback.
- Tenants can use this simple [checklist](#) to gather their documents in advance.
- During testing, we have identified sections in non-English applications where the translation from English is not complete. We are working with the vendor to correct this issue. All applications are fully functional and can be submitted, but applicants may see phrases that are not fully translated. **Paper applications in languages other than English are fully translated and can be found [here](#).**
- Applications received on or after Jan. 26, 2022, will be paid after prioritization criteria has been applied based on remaining funding available and are not guaranteed.
- This will be a limited reopening of at least three weeks, based on availability of funds.
- Tenants who submit new applications can access protections from eviction for nonpayment of rent while their application is being reviewed and processed. Tenants must show proof to their landlord that they applied for the program to receive the protections.
- OHCS will begin processing and paying out new applications in about three to five weeks.
- Tenants at immediate risk of eviction should apply for rental assistance right away to access safe harbor protections and also contact a legal organization.
  - Oregon Law Center's Eviction Defense Project: 888-585-9638 or [evictiondefense@oregonlawcenter.org](mailto:evictiondefense@oregonlawcenter.org)
  - Oregon State Bar: 503-684-3763 or [legalthelp@oregonstatebar.org](mailto:legalthelp@oregonstatebar.org)

### **Progress and updated numbers**

OHCS announced that as of Jan. 25, 2022, OHCS and local program administrators (LPAs) have paid \$256.3 million in federal emergency rental assistance (ERA) to 36,632 households, up from \$243.6 million and 34,900 applicants last week, through the Oregon Emergency Rental Assistance Program (OERAP). OHCS has spent out 88% of all federal ERA dollars available for rental assistance.

OHCS and its processing partner, Public Partnerships LLC (PPL), have made significant strides in the past several weeks to speed up application processing. Currently, 265 PPL staff are focusing on processing applications. In the past week alone, PPL paid 1,891 applications. This is in addition to the applications processed by LPAs working across the state to finish paying out ERA 1 funds.

To date, OHCS and LPAs:



- Paid \$256,339,282 to landlords and tenants to help 36,632 Oregon households, which is 88% of ERA 1 and 2 funds. Supported an estimated 94,676 people in households served.
- Are currently reviewing 5,543 applications for payment.
- Need applicant or landlord response for 5,676 applications.

Visit the [OERAP dashboard](#) for more data.

