

**The Emergency Rental
Assistance Request For
Information webinar
will begin at
11 AM**



Federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program: Request for Information (RFI) Webinar February 10, 2021

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Agenda for Today's Webinar

- Panel Introductions
- ERA Program and Funding Overview
- RFI Process
- Upcoming Engagements
- Informal Question & Answer Session
 - FAQ will be posted to OHCS' ERA webpage
 - What is currently known may look different than official Treasury guidance as we receive more information



Rent Assistance Resources

- Supporting Tenants Accessing Rental Resources (STARR)
- Landlord Compensation Fund
- Emergency Rental Assistance Program
- And more!

What is the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program?

- The Emergency Rental Assistance program makes available \$25 billion to assist households that are unable to pay rent and utilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Grantees use the funds to provide assistance to eligible households through existing or newly created rental assistance programs.



Why an RFI?

- The need for increased and extended rent assistance in Oregon is substantial, even with the additional programs operating concurrently (with separate funding sources)
- Want to learn and explore multiple mechanisms for serving those experiencing housing instability
- Use of RFI to inform RFA:
 - What we know v. what we do not know yet (Treasury guidance)
 - Prepare the system for implementation as quickly as possible

OHCS' ERA Vision and Values

- Ease of application, low barrier
- Consistency of program administration across the state
- Clear and consistent information for clients and the public
- Equity and racial justice
 - Centering BIPOC tenant voices
 - Serving undocumented households
 - Affirmative outreach to BIPOC communities
- Stabilizing households and holistic approach

OHCS' ERA Vision and Values

- OHCS to add value where we can: software, training, federal compliance, communications, convening partners
- Geographic equity: inclusive of rural communities and jurisdictions that received their own allocations from US Treasury
- Retain funds in Oregon – meet spending deadlines
- **Overall: Balancing expediency with intentionality**

ERA Program Overview – Eligible Activities

- Eligible activities:
 - Rent/rental arrears
 - Utilities and home energy costs/arrears
 - Generally, may not exceed 12 months*
 - "Other" expenses related to housing due to pandemic**

*grantee may provide additional 3 months of service, not to exceed 15 months

**Waiting for additional guidance from US Treasury

ERA Program Overview - Renter Household Eligibility

- Renter Household Eligibility:
 - Renter households with incomes no more than 80 percent of area median income (AMI) who meet the following conditions:
 - One or more individual in the household has qualified for unemployment benefits or has experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced other financial hardship due directly or indirectly to the coronavirus outbreak; and
 - One or more individual in the household can demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability.
 - **Prioritization** of 50% AMI or below and HHs with unemployed member

ERA Program Overview – Reporting Requirements

- Reporting Requirements:
 - The number of eligible households that receive assistance
 - The acceptance rate of applicants for assistance;
 - The type(s) of assistance provided to each household;
 - The average amount of funding provided per household;
 - Incomes of eligible households by income tier (less than or equal to 30 percent of AMI, between 30 and 50 percent of AMI, between 50 and 80 percent of AMI);
 - The average number of monthly rental or utility payments that each household received;
 - Disaggregated data by gender, race and ethnicity of primary applicant

ERA Program Overview – Fiscal Requirements

- Fiscal Requirements
 - 65% must be obligated by 9/30/21
- The Treasury Department will recapture any funds not obligated by grantees as of September 30, 2021; and
- Funds can be used until December 31, 2021

ERA Program Overview – Funding Available

- Statewide, Oregon received approximately \$280M in ERA dollars for 2021
 - Portland, metro area counties, Lane and Marion counties received their own allocations adding up to \$76M
- OHCS received approximately **\$204M**
 - Different than CRF/CVRRP funds, which were allocated to DAS
 - OHCS received ERA Program funds directly
- Statewide regional allocations



ERA Funding Formula

- Formula details
 - Preliminary thoughts on Need Factors:
 - Renter Households at or below 80% AMI
 - Severe Rent Burden
 - Low-Wage Job Loss due to COVID
 - BIPOC Renters
 - Energy Burden
- Regional allocations
 - Direct funding to particular cities/counties will be factored in the formula and allocation structure



Request for Information (RFI) FYI's

- Eligibility of RFI respondents:
 - Must have experience running rent/utility assistance programs
 - Public or Private Non-profit (e.g., homeless services provider; faith-based organization)
 - Local government

Request for Information (RFI) FYI's

- Provider Preparedness:
 - Capacity – use previous rent assistance program experience to consider/determine what you could take on as a potential grantee
 - Type of applicant – will you collaborate and submit a joint application or will you apply as an independent applicant?
 - ERJ impact – disproportionate impact of COVID and housing instability on our communities of color and rural areas; how can you support ERJ values and goals in this work?
 - Technology – OHCS will be providing the software system; consider what you need to be successful in the use of this platform

Request for Information (RFI) Details

- A Request for Information was issued by OHCS on February 5, 2021 to obtain information from service providers that have experience administering an Emergency Rental Assistance program.
- Information gathered from the RFI will be used to develop a Request for Application (RFA) to disburse federal grant funds to experienced organizations.
 - Responses to the RFI will be used for general information purposes only and will not be considered binding on any party.

Request for Information (RFI) Details

- OHCS encourages a collaborative approach to meet the qualifications of grant funding.
 - Respondents must provide a description of relevant experience for their organization and partner organization if collaborative effort.
 - Experience should be relevant to the RFI (use Attachment B “Cover Sheet” to describe each relevant engagement).
 - Respondents must also provide a written narrative responding to each question listed in Section 5.0 “RFI Questions”.
 - Narrative responses should be limited to 3 pages (6 double-sided pages).

Request for Information (RFI) Details

- Responses to the RFI are due at 3:00PM (PST) on Monday, February 15, 2021 and must be submitted to OHCS.Contracts@oregon.gov.

***All electronic submissions must be received and time stamped by or before 3:00PM (PST).**

Request for Information (RFI) Details

- The RFI is available on both OHCS' Procurement and ERA Program webpages:
 - Procurement Opportunities: <https://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/procurement/Pages/procurement-opportunities.aspx>
 - ERA Program: <https://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/housing-assistance/Pages/emergency-rental-assistance.aspx>

Upcoming Engagements

- HSC Subcommittee
 - Friday, February 12th at 10 AM
 - Lessons and trends from 2020 rental assistance
 - Discussion of regional allocations
 - More meetings to be scheduled at the direction of Chair Hall
- Return this RFI! Your response will inform our next steps



ERA Administration: Next Steps

- OHCS launch software solution, adding module from LCF
- RFI and RFA:
 - RFI released 2/5, casting wide net (please share!)
 - RFI Webinar today, 2/10
 - Request for Applications (RFA) to ensure coverage:
 - Likely to go live end of February
 - Grant agreements executed end of March
- Onboarding and Training

Question and Answer ?

Closing

Thank you for attending!

OHCS' ERA website: <https://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/housing-assistance/Pages/emergency-rental-assistance.aspx>

- Recording link and slides will be posted this week
- Chat questions --> FAQ