



Eviction Resolution Pilot Program: Dispute Resolution Center Update February 2022

"You were so kind to me ... You really took your time to listen to me, and not everybody does that. I wanted to be sure to tell you how much I appreciated that."

- Tenant after receiving ERPP services (Feb '22)

"I helped the manager of a low-income apartment complex better understand the program and since then we have been able to work well with the tenants and manager to solve rent owed and other issues. This is helping keep people in their homes and improve communication among the parties."

- DRC ERPP Specialist (Feb '22)

Summary

In April 2021 the Legislature established the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program (ERPP) under E2SSB 5160 (codified in [RCW 59.18.660](#)). The program launched in July 2021 with collaboration among Washington's 21 nonprofit Dispute Resolution Centers (DRCs) and stakeholders including Superior Courts, legal aid partners, rental assistance agencies and landlord and tenant advocates. ERPP engages participants in dispute resolution, legal aid, and rental assistance to sustain housing stability.

DRCs facilitate communication to solve unpaid rent in order to help tenants retain housing and landlords receive rents owed to maintain their properties in the rental market. The centers also serve tenants and landlords statewide by providing access to rental assistance and legal information resources.

DRCs served 28,838 people directly through ERPP since July 2021 and case volumes continue to increase (fig. 1).

Rental assistance application processing delays continue to create program pressure, particularly for DRCs with high case volumes in urban areas. DRCs balance the heavy load of notices for current-month late rent, which are often solved without ERPP assistance, with those for multiple months of arrears that require dispute resolution services. The current-month notices that are paid in full by month's end present a considerable administrative burden. DRCs need more staffing for the program to meet the full demand.

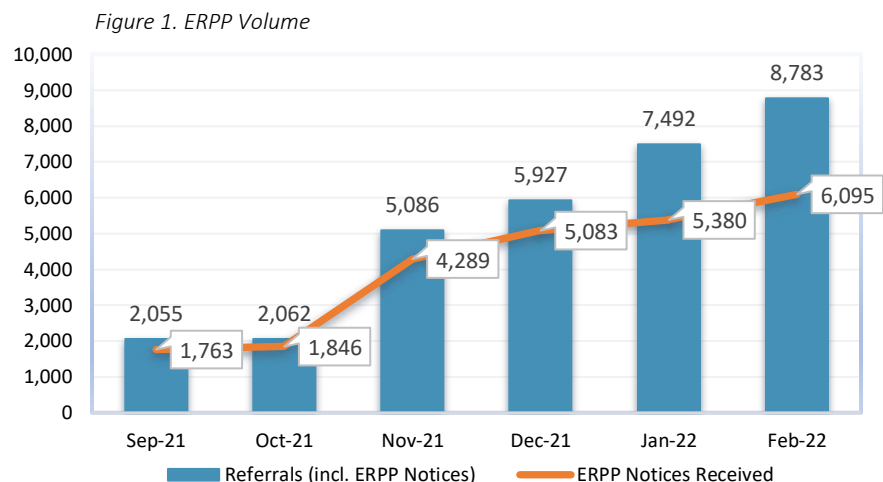
February Updates

Resolution Washington provided DRC ERPP staff with additional resources to strengthen program consistency across the state. As rental assistance declines, rent dispute cases will become more complex to resolve. DRCs facilitate effective communication and creative problem solving between the parties; and they expect this work to become even more necessary as external monetary solutions dwindle.

DRC ERPP Data

DRCs received 13% more ERPP Notices in February compared to January volumes (fig. 1).

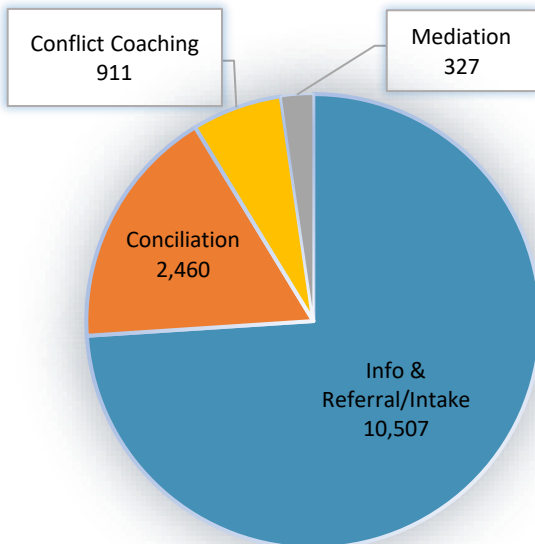
The average statewide tenant response rate was 66% in February, ranging from 25% to 90% by county depending upon numerous factors.



As of February 28, 2022, the DRCs reported the following on cases closed year to date (Jul '21-Feb '22):¹

Service type at case closing:

Figure 2. ERPP Service Types



Entry into the ERPP process typically starts with Information & Referral and/or Conflict Coaching services. Once DRCs provide info and support, many of these cases may be resolved directly between tenant and landlord, or with rental assistance, without further involvement of the DRC needed. Often after receiving referrals the parties do not report an outcome to the DRC. The outcome is known for 31% of Info & Referral service cases and 64% of Conflict Coaching cases. Parties may also move through those stages and/or opt into Conciliation and Mediation services from the DRC.

When outcome is known, settlement/agreement rates for the individual services (fig. 2) are:

- Information & Referral: 89%
- Conflict Coaching: 77%
- Conciliation: 80%
- Mediation: 79%

- 28,838 people were directly served
- 73 tenants were served using an interpreter due to clients' limited English proficiency

Where outcomes were known, DRCs reported that:

- 94% of tenants continued their tenancy
- 6% resulted in the planned termination of the tenancy with tenants making other housing plans

Demographics of the ERPP clients surveyed during July 2021 through February 2022 were the following (data reflects all demographics received, approximately one-third of all ERPP clients):²

- Race/Ethnicity: 61.6% White; 15.4% Black/African American; 9.2% Other; 4.2% Multiracial; 3.8% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander; 3.4% Asian; 2.0% American Indian/Alaska Native; 0.4% Indian/South Asian
- Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino/a: 61.9%; Hispanic or Latino/a: 13.2%; No Response: 24.9%
- Annual Household Income: 43% was at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL); 32% was at 101-200% of FPL; 15% was at 201-300% of FPL; 10% was above 300% of FPL

¹ A few early cases may fall outside of ERPP due to cases covering rent owed from months prior to attestation (see Proclamation 21-09).

² Excludes "No Response" and "Unknown" categories, except for Hispanic/Latino Origins, which includes "No Response."



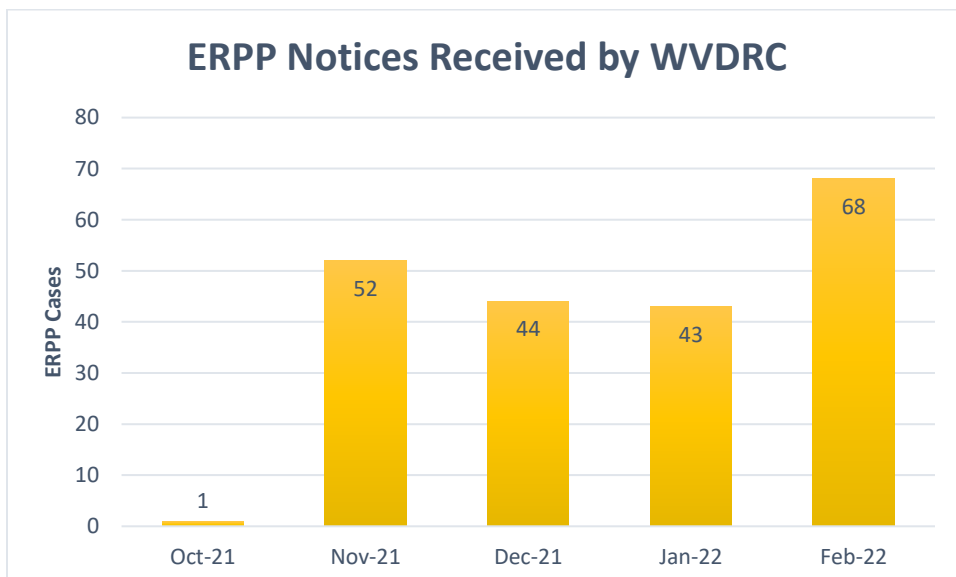
Eviction Resolution Pilot Program: Wenatchee Valley Dispute Resolution Center Update *serving Chelan & Douglas counties*

February 2022

Summary

In February 2022, Wenatchee Valley Dispute Resolution Center experienced a significantly higher volume of ERPP cases compared to previous months. The most common resolution reason continues to be through rental assistance, tenant payment, or information/referral support from Wenatchee Valley DRC. Of the six cases that have been mediated or conciliated, Wenatchee Valley DRC mediators have been successful five times in assisting the clients in negotiating an agreement. Out of the 208 cases to date, 19 certificates of participation have been issued; a certificate allows the landlord the option to proceed with an unlawful detainer (eviction) action in superior court for non-payment of rent.

WVDRC Data as of February 28, 2022



Recent survey responses from volunteer mediators on why they think it is important to provide mediation services to our community?

- To start a conversation between the clients so they can better understand each other's perspectives and come up with a customized agreement.
- People affected by mediated decisions are better off because of the control the disputants have over the decision-making process.

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Closed Cases October 2021 thru February 2022

Date DRC Received Notice (Monthly)	Oct, 2021	Nov, 2021	Dec, 2021	Jan, 2022	Feb, 2022	Total (Disposition)
Disposition	1	52	44	43	61	201
Mediated No Agreement			1			1
No response from Tenant		3	6	4	4	17
Mediated Agreement		4			1	5
ERPP no longer needed		33	18	21	27	99
Resolution by Rental Assistance	1	12	19	18	29	79

ERPP Case Closed Possible Dispositions

RESOLVED	NOT RESOLVED (ERPP CERTIFICATE ISSUED)
Rental Assistance	No response from tenant (at least 3 attempts)
Intake, referral	No tenant engagement within process timeframe
Tenant-Landlord resolved outside of DRC	Tenant declined ERPP services
Mediated/conciliated agreement	Mediated, no agreement reached

	Date DRC Received Notice (Monthly)	Oct, 2021	Nov, 2021	Dec, 2021	Jan, 2022	Feb, 2022	Total (ERPP Case Status)	Total (County)
County	ERPP Case Status	1	52	44	43	68	208	208
Douglas	Case Closed, Certificate Issued		1	1	3	3	8	92
	Case Closed, Resolved		23	17	24	18	82	
	Confirmation (no ERPP) pending					2	2	
Chelan	Case Closed, Certificate Issued		2	6	1	2	11	116
	Case Closed, Resolved	1	26	20	15	39	101	
	Closing Certificate Pending					2	2	
	Scheduled (mediation, conciliation)					1	1	
	Rental Assistance pending					1	1	

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