



Eviction Resolution Pilot Program: Dispute Resolution Center Update February 2023

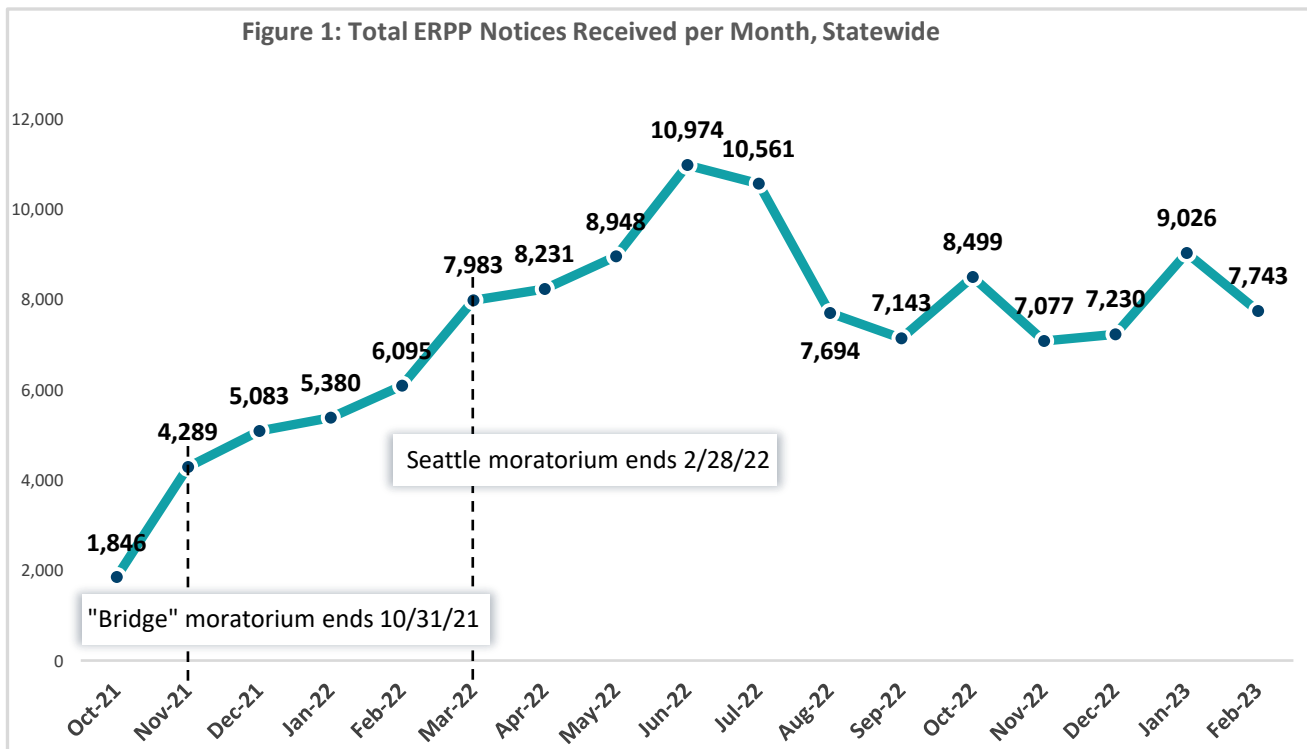
“ I felt respected and seen during the process. It's a little early to tell if our tenant will continue paying rent, but I'm feeling confident about the future because of the support from the DRC. ”

- Landlord after receiving ERPP services

February Outlook/Update

While ERPP partners begin preparations for the program's sunset on June 30th, 2023, demand for services remains high. Pay or vacate rent notices have been steady since August 2022, averaging more than 7,000 per month statewide. While rental assistance resources dwindle, so far the participation rates in conciliation and mediation and the agreement rates of ERPP participants remain steady. DRCs help landlords, property managers and renters resolve their rent disputes and related communication concerns to improve the stability of the landlord/tenant relationship. Participants also benefit from help accessing local resources and negotiation around other aspects of the renter-property owner relationship in addition to resolving rent disputes.

In February, statewide ERPP case volume dropped somewhat compared to January (fig. 1).



- King and Spokane Counties generated more than 50% of the total ERPP February notices received statewide.
- The average statewide tenant response rate was 50% for cases closed in February.

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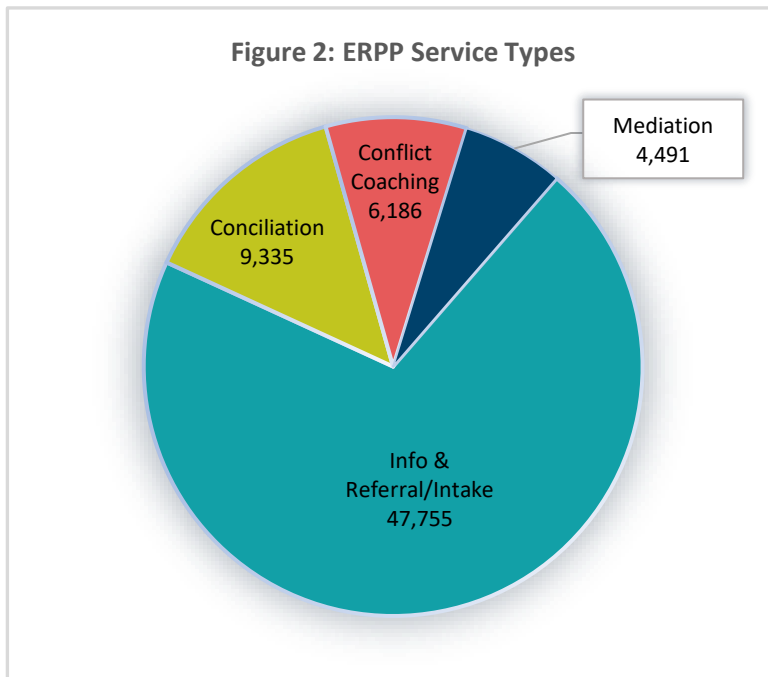


As rental assistance drops from \$675 million in 2020-22 to approximately \$40 million per year in 2023-24, DRCs are adjusting to help tenants and landlords navigate reductions in assistance.

- Current median case duration measured during the November 2021 to February 2023 period was 30 days and cases that required more intensive services, such as mediation and conciliation, took a median of 48 days to close as the participants worked toward resolution.

As of February 28, 2023, the DRCs reported the following on cases closed since the program's launch in July 2021:¹

- The ERPP Notices received represented a combined total of **146,709** tenants and landlords. Many of these are quickly resolved without a certificate of participation needed, for example with current-month rent paid within a few days, assistance through information and referral, or with rental assistance. DRCs provide additional dispute resolution services for the remaining cases.
- DRCs also help parties with housing disputes in cases where the landlord does not want to issue a notice or tenants request conflict coaching without involving the landlord. More than 2,500 people have been served directly through this voluntary participation in DRC landlord-tenant services.
- **67,767** cases were closed and completed (depicted by service type in figure 2); and **28,543** certificates were issued.²



Entry into the ERPP process typically starts with Information & Referral and/or Conflict Coaching services. Once DRCs provide information 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 46% of Info & Referral service cases and 63% of Conflict Coaching cases. Parties may also move through those stages and/or opt into Conciliation and Mediation services from the DRC.

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 Note the volume of cases closed at any given time is lower than the total number of ERPP notices received by DRCs. Some notices are for cases currently in progress. In some cases a landlord may issue more than one notice to a tenant and those may be combined into a single case to support client service. Additionally, some current month's rent notices are resolved upon confirmation of rent payment before a case can be opened.

“

I am extremely appreciative of y'all for helping me out, I love having a roof over my head.

- Tenant after receiving ERPP services

”

- The overall settlement/agreement rate was **75%**.³
- Where outcomes were known, DRCs reported that in **94%** of mediations and conciliations the tenancy was preserved upon case closing.
- **570** tenants were served using an interpreter due to clients' limited English proficiency or preference.
- **3%** of tenants had legal representation during the conciliation stage and **8%** of tenants had legal representation during formal mediation. DRCs provide legal resources information to all tenants and facilitate access to legal aid where requested by the tenant.

Demographics of the ERPP clients surveyed statewide during July 2021 through February 2023 were the following:⁴

- Race/Ethnicity: 54.6% White; 22.4% Black/African American; 7.1% Other; 4.7% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander; 3.9% Multiracial; 3.7% Asian; 3.0% American Indian/Alaska Native; 0.6% Indian/South Asian.
- Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino/a: 27.9%; Hispanic or Latino/a: 7.9%; No Response: 64.2%.
- Annual Household Income: 43% was at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL); 31% was at 101-200% of FPL; 16% was at 201-300% of FPL; 11% was above 300% of FPL.

Program Background

In April 2021, the Legislature established the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program (ERPP) under E2SSB 5160 (codified in [RCW 59.18.660](#)). [Resolution Washington](#) and [Washington Courts](#) contain further background and details of the program, including 1-minute ERPP videos in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

“

We worked with a woman who was planning on moving out of her apartment into her car because she could not afford rent or a repayment plan. We held a meet & confer with her and the landlord and they were able to work out a move out plan that would eliminate her past due amount and allow her the time to move in with a friend.

- DRC ERPP staff

”

³ The rate is based on cases where the outcome was known, such as in conciliations, mediations, and where the DRC was notified that the dispute was resolved through rental assistance.

⁴ Excludes “No Response” and “Unknown” categories, except for Hispanic/Latino Origins, which includes “No Response.” Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.



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serving Chelan & Douglas counties

February 2023

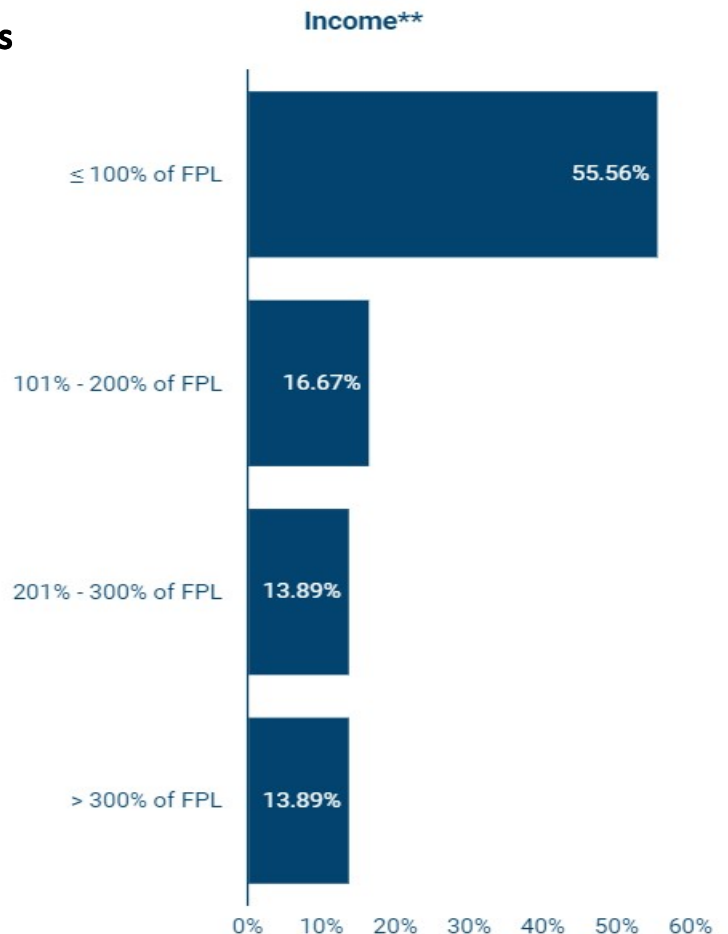
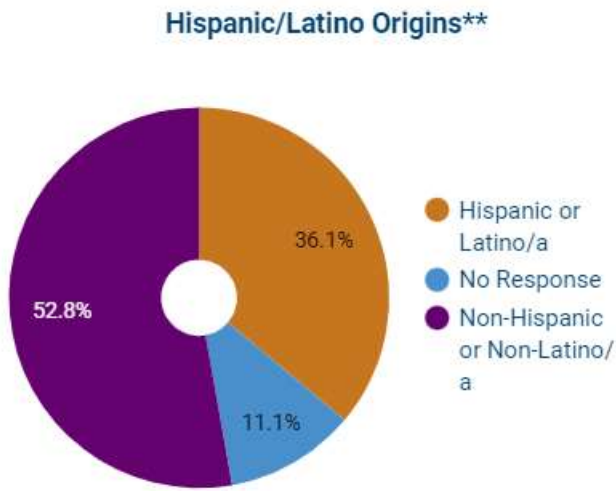
The Eviction Resolution Pilot Program is a proactive method for helping landlords and tenants resolve nonpayment of rent cases through rental assistance, dispute resolution, and legal aid. The landlord and tenant may be able to access rental assistance, work out a payment plan, or create a plan to move out without an unlawful detainer action.

Summary

No cost pre-filing resolution options for tenants and landlords fills a gap in our community’s housing stability. Wenatchee Valley DRC’s case volume temporary decreased in February. Although support for housing and homelessness are still available throughout Chelan and Douglas counties, the **broad opportunities for rental assistance offered through Chelan Douglas Community Action Council have ended.**

Wenatchee Valley DRC demographics

start of ERPP to present

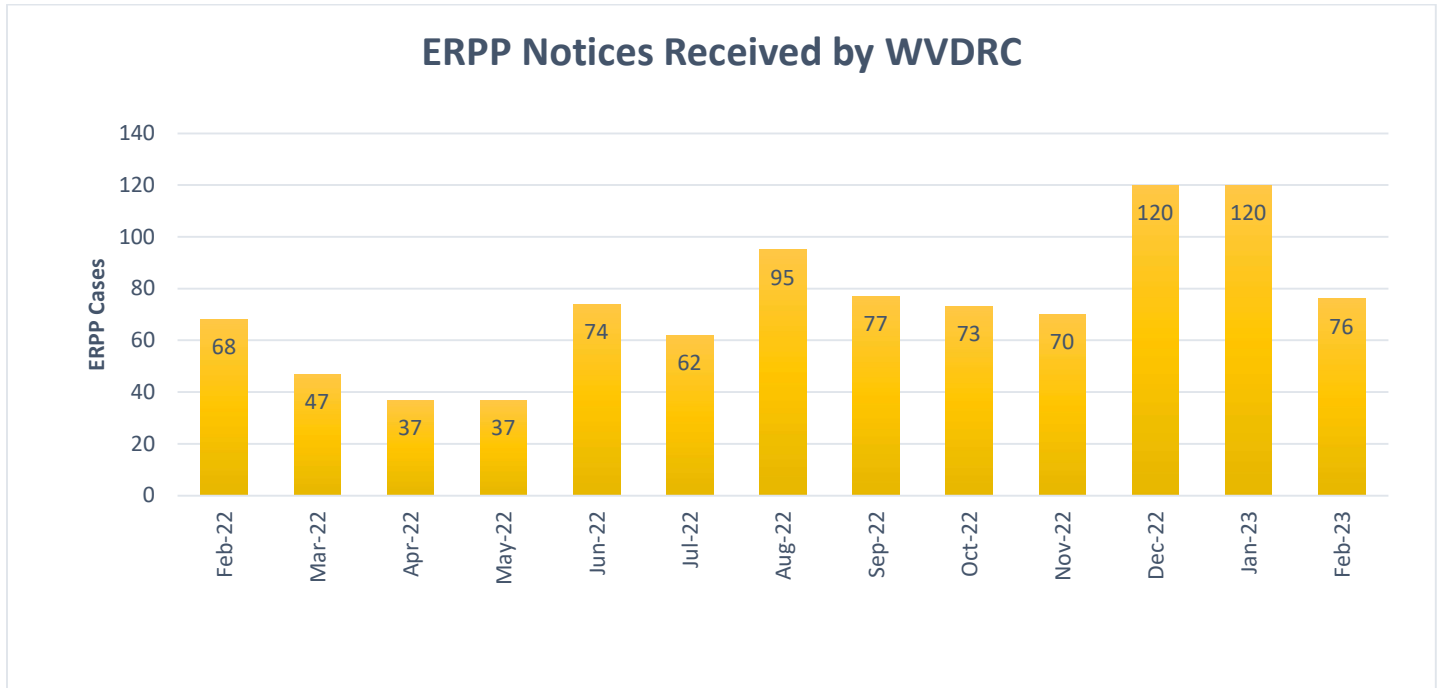


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WVDRC Data as of February 28, 2023



CLOSED Cases November 2022 thru February 2023

| Date DRC Received Notice (Monthly) | Nov, 2022 | Dec, 2022 | Jan, 2023 | Feb, 2023 | Total (Disposition) |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|
| Disposition | 70 | 89 | 93 | 67 | 319 |
| Tenant Declined ERPP | | | | 1 | 1 |
| No follow-up from LANDLORD | 4 | 8 | 10 | 3 | 25 |
| Other | | 4 | 6 | 3 | 13 |
| Mediated No Agreement | | | | 1 | 1 |
| No response from TENANT | 8 | 10 | 8 | 6 | 32 |
| Mediated Agreement | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 3 |
| ERPP no longer needed | 41 | 47 | 57 | 48 | 193 |
| Resolution by Rental Assistance | 16 | 19 | 12 | 4 | 51 |

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