



Eviction Resolution Pilot Program: Dispute Resolution Center Update July 2022

“ I think what you guys are doing is quite amazing. Since the pandemic everything got shut down and everybody got flipped upside down...It's amazing that there are people out there who are trying to help.

- Tenant after receiving DRC services ”

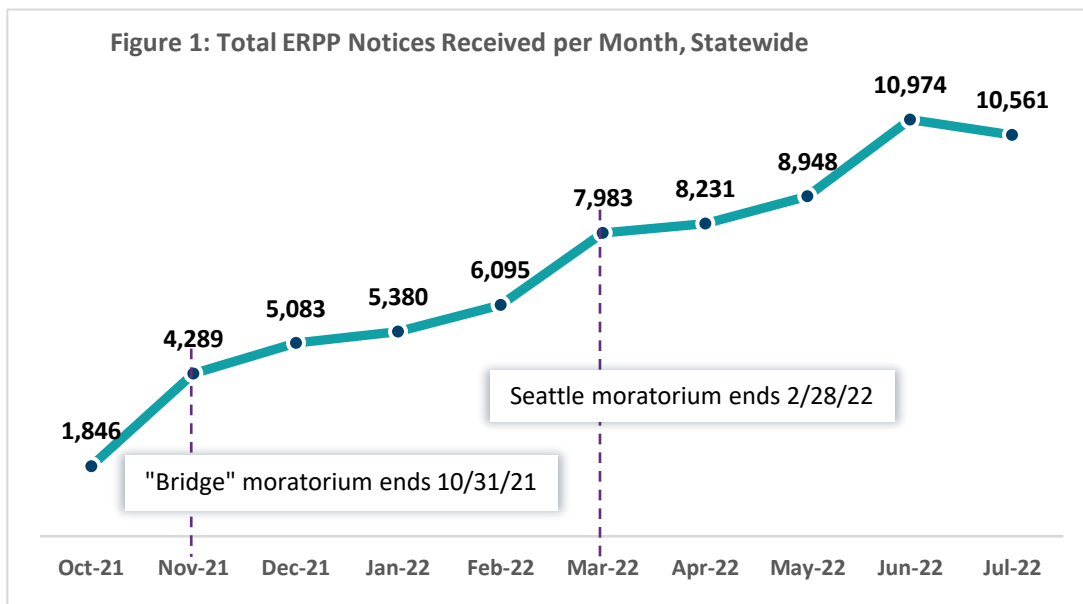
July Outlook/Update

To meet unexpectedly high public demands with the program in its first year, dispute resolution centers (DRCs) diverted funding from other essential programs or received one-time emergency funds to manage the volume of Eviction Resolution Pilot Program (ERPP) caseloads.

An infusion of new funds for program implementation at the launch of the second year of the ERPP in July 2022 can:

- recalibrate funding to correspond to the actual high-volume caseload of the pilot program
- provide adequate resources for addressing the true complexity of individual lives and cases, using trauma-informed conflict resolution to work toward stable situations for both renters and landlords
- adjust to barriers and timelines as rental assistance shifts to the smaller, permanent program in September and clients take longer to try to solve rent without assistance
- increase critical program resources, such as additional case management and resolution specialist staff hours and technology investments over the prior year

We are hopeful that July will represent a reset moment, as case volumes may be beginning to plateau. For the first time the DRCs received fewer ERPP Notices for the month, as a statewide total, than in the previous month (fig. 1).

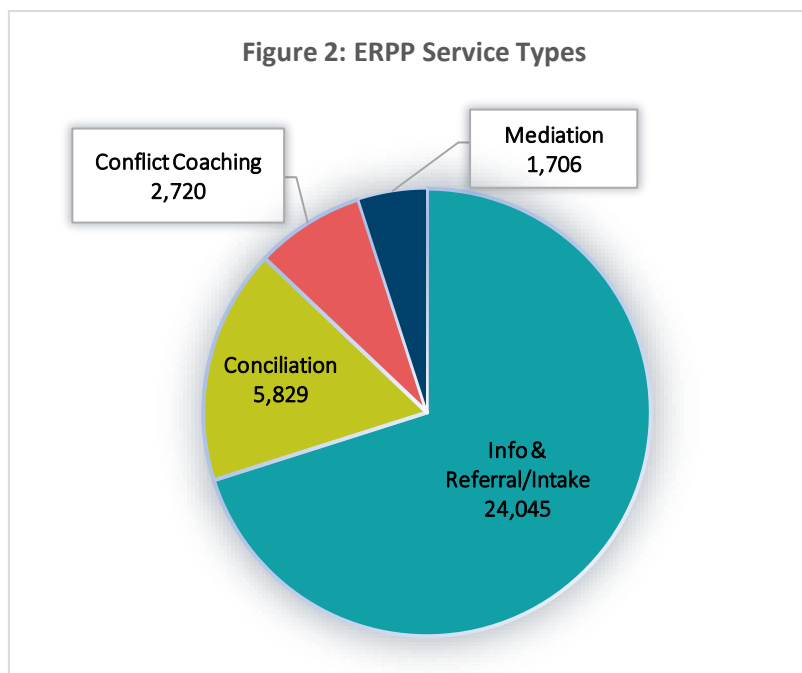


- Almost 60% of the volume of ERPP Notices in July originated in King and Pierce Counties.
- After the Snohomish County Superior Court amended the standing order in June, the DRC serving Snohomish County saw a reduction of 36% in ERPP Notices received in July compared to June by providing enough time for most tenants to pay in full before being served with an ERPP Notice.
- The average statewide tenant response rate was 54% for cases closed in July.

As rental assistance shifts to the smaller, permanent program in September, DRCs will adjust to help tenants and landlords navigate reductions in assistance and expect clients to take longer to try to solve rent disputes at the DRC. Current median case duration measured during the November 2021 – July 2022 period was 22 days and cases that reached mediation took a median of 53 days to close.

As of July 31, 2022, the DRCs reported the following on cases closed year to date (July 2021-July 2022):¹

- The ERPP Notices received represented a combined total of **68,623** 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, or assistance through information and referral, or with rental assistance.
- **34,300** cases were closed and completed (depicted by service type in figure 2); and **11,730** 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 36% of Info & Referral service cases and 54% 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.



- The overall settlement/agreement rate was **76%**.³
- A total of **13,184** tenancies were preserved upon case closing.
- **195** tenants were served using an interpreter due to clients' limited English proficiency.
- Just **3%** of tenants had legal representation during the conciliation stage and **9%** of tenants had legal representation during formal mediation. DRCs refer all ERPP tenants to legal aid, unless they request otherwise.

Demographics of the ERPP clients surveyed during July 2021 through June 2022 were the following (data reflects all demographics received, approximately one-quarter of all ERPP clients):⁴

- Race/Ethnicity: 59.9% White; 17.7% Black/African American; 7.4% Other; 4.5% Multiracial; 4.3% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander; 3.3% Asian; 2.4% American Indian/Alaska Native; 0.6% Indian/South Asian
- Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino/a: 32.5%; Hispanic or Latino/a: 7.9%; No Response: 59.6%
- Annual Household Income: 44% was at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL); 31% was at 101-200% of FPL; 15% was at 201-300% of FPL; 10% was above 300% of FPL

“ I am writing to thank you for your excellent help and effort in attempting to resolve my rent dispute with my tenant. As you know, the eviction process is a long drawn out affair that favors the tenant over the landlord. However, I am continuing on with that legal process and will prevail thanks in great part to all the help you have been to me. So, thank you again for doing such a great job for me and, I think, also for your Dispute Resolution Center.

- Landlord after receiving ERPP services ”

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](#).

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.”



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

July 2022

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.

Celebrations

The average ERPP case duration is between 14-29 days depending on rental assistance, engagement with tenant-landlord, or scheduling mediation session.

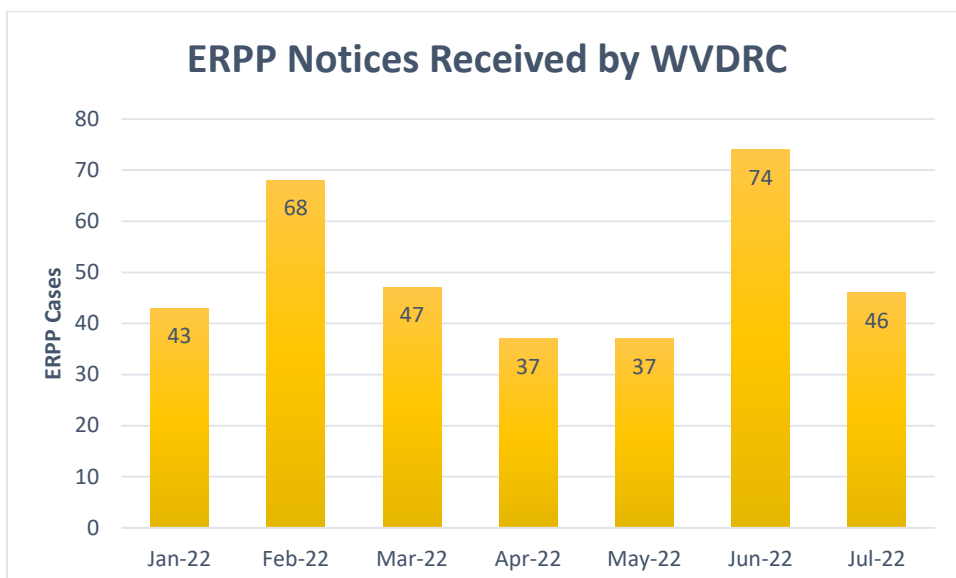
For cases where mediation occurs, the settlement rate averages 84%. Regardless of case settlement, mediation participants report satisfaction with the process and are grateful for the free opportunity to attempt to resolve their housing conflict pre-court filing.

Challenges

Legibility and accuracy of ERPP notices continues to hinder the efficiency of the program. Although a fillable ERPP form is available online, the majority of property managers continue to handwrite and scan notices.

Almost two thirds of all ERPP cases are for current month rent. WVDRC continues to receive repeat ERPP notices for tenants who are consistently late payers. These cases are typically resolved within several days of receiving ERPP notice, but require additional administrative time for both ERPP staff and landlords as far as follow-up to close case.

WVDRC Data as of July 31, 2022



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Closed Cases April 2022 thru July 2022

| Date DRC Received Notice (Monthly) | Apr, 2022 | May, 2022 | Jun, 2022 | Jul, 2022 | Total (Disposition) |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|
| Disposition | 37 | 37 | 73 | 46 | 193 |
| No follow-up from LANDLORD | | | 4 | | 4 |
| Other | | | 2 | | 2 |
| No response from TENANT | 3 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 22 |
| Mediated Agreement | 2 | 3 | | 1 | 6 |
| ERPP no longer needed | 17 | 20 | 39 | 29 | 105 |
| Resolution by Rental Assistance | 15 | 5 | 24 | 10 | 54 |

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 |

Current Case Status – January 2022 thru June 2022 Cases

| Date DRC Received Notice (Monthly) | Apr, 2022 | May, 2022 | Jun, 2022 | Jul, 2022 | Total (ERPP Case Status) |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------|
| ERPP Case Status | 37 | 37 | 74 | 59 | 207 |
| Case Closed, Administrative | | | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| Case Closed, Certificate Issued | 3 | 10 | 6 | 6 | 25 |
| Case Closed, Resolved | 34 | 27 | 61 | 40 | 162 |
| Closing Certificate Pending | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Schedule Pending | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Rental Assistance pending | | | 3 | 8 | 11 |
| Confirmation (no ERPP) pending | | | | 2 | 2 |

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