

# Thurston County Rent Assistance Survey 2023

Survey of Thurston County residents who received COVID-19 rent assistance, also known as Emergency Rent Assistance Program (ERAP) and Treasury Rent Assistance Program (T-RAP).

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Thurston County Office of Housing and Homeless Prevention conducted a survey of Thurston County residents who received COVID-19 rent assistance during the time it was offered, September 2020 – July 2023. The survey was conducted in August 2023, after these programs permanently ended. The goal was to learn the impact of COVID-19 rent assistance programs and what the current need for rent assistance is in Thurston County.

### COVID-19 Impacts on Renters

The rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus in 2020 caused the government to shut down all non-essential businesses. This led to many people losing work and the ability to support their basic needs. The federal and state government responded to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic through multiple actions and programs. In Washington State, Governor Jay Inslee issued a [Proclamation](#) for an eviction moratorium. Landlords were not allowed to evict tenants for non-payment of rent from February 29, 2020 – June 30, 2021. During and after the eviction moratorium, many renters found themselves owing months of past due rent. The eviction moratorium included that landlords must provide tenants with a “reasonable rent repayment plan.”

In 2021, the legislature passed [Senate Bill 5161](#) which funded the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program in several counties, including Thurston County. Landlords were required to participate in this program if their tenants opted into it. This program offered mediation for landlords and tenants to agree on a rent repayment plan instead of filing for an eviction due to non-payment of rent. This program ended on June 30, 2023.

Rent assistance programs in Thurston County began serving clients in September 2020 and the last COVID-19 funding for rent assistance was exhausted in July 2023. The Eviction Resolution Pilot Program and COVID-19 funded rent assistance closed almost simultaneously, leaving both programs with long waitlists that were not fulfilled.

### COVID-19 Rent Assistance in Thurston County

From 2020-2023, Thurston County provided just over \$53.5 million in rent and utility assistance to Thurston County residents. The program was administered through various sub-grantee and partner organizations from local, state and federal funding sources. Funding sources include two local sources - the Coronavirus Relief Fund and local funds established through House Bill 1406. The main source of the funding came from the state and federal governments CARES Act and American Rescue Plan Act specifically for communities to implement the Emergency Rent Assistance Program and the Treasury Rent Assistance Program.

Though the administering organizations and funding sources changed over the lifespan of the program, the requirements mostly remained the same. The basic eligibility requirements were that the household income was at 80% or below the Area Median Income (AMI) and either directly or indirectly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program paid for

Number of household members	80% of AMI (Thurston County in 2021)
1	\$50,550
2	\$57,750
3	\$64,950
4	\$72,150
5	\$77,950
6	\$83,700
7	\$89,500
8	\$95,250

past due rent, past due utilities and up to three months of future rent at the time of application. Households could reapply until they reached the limit of 18 months of assistance overall. Thurston County made approximately 7,376 rent assistance payments to Thurston County households. See [Appendix D](#) for the infographic summary of COVID-19 Rent Assistance Programs in Thurston County, WA.

### **Rent Assistance Programs in Thurston County, before and after the COVID-19 pandemic**

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Thurston County had few programs providing rent assistance and these programs continue to serve Thurston County residents today. There are long-term housing programs like the [Housing and Essential Needs Program](#) (HEN), Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and housing voucher programs. These are limited to specific populations; some are specifically for people who are experiencing homelessness and many programs have incredibly long waitlists. Short-term rent assistance is offered through faith communities, school districts, and through some Homeless Services agencies when budgets allow, but these programs are frequently limited to paying one month's rent or less and are not available to all populations.

As the COVID-19 pandemic wound down in 2023, the Washington State Legislature designated a permanent funding source for a new program called [Eviction Prevention Rent Assistance](#). This program is funded through the provision of a document recording fee on the sale or refinance of a home in Washington State. This funding amount varies based on the number of home sales and refinancing in the state. The funds collected through these document recording fees have drastically decreased with the rise in interest rates. In 2023, the shortfall of document recording fees was so great that the Department of Commerce worked to identify funds specifically to fill this shortfall. With the additional funds allocated by the Department of Commerce, Thurston County received around \$1.5 million in funding for this program in 2023. This is substantially less funding than the over \$53.5 million provided in rent assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **How does this survey fit in?**

Providing over \$53.5 million in rent and utility assistance in three years was unprecedented for Thurston County. The program intended to prevent evictions for non-payment of rent and to keep people in their homes during a global pandemic. This survey was conducted shortly after the COVID-19 funded rent assistance programs ended. The primary purpose of the survey is to learn clients' levels of housing stability now that the program is permanently closed.

With an approximate 30% response rate, the results of this survey carry the voices of many of the households that this program served and provides guidance for the significant financial support that many residents of Thurston County need to maintain housing now and in the future.

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

This survey was completed in partnership with the following organizations:

- Thurston County Public Health & Social Services Department
  - Office of Housing & Homeless Prevention
  - Disease Control & Prevention
- Family Support Center of South Sound
- Innovations Human Trafficking Collaborative (Innovations HTC)
- FORWARD Platform (LiveStories)
- Senior Services for South Sound

Thank you!

## SURVEY TOOL & IMPLEMENTATION

### Survey Tool

The survey was developed by Thurston County Public Health & Social Services staff in the Office of Housing and Homeless Prevention and an Epidemiologist in the Disease Control and Prevention Division. The questions were determined by focusing on the purpose of the survey – to learn the levels of housing stability clients of the program face now that the program is permanently closed. The questions focus on learning about the assistance the respondent received and learning about their current housing situation. View the full survey in [Appendix A](#).

The survey was created in English and Spanish using SurveyMonkey. SurveyMonkey is a program for building online surveys. The program allows for complex survey questions to meet the needs of most surveys. SurveyMonkey creates a link to the survey to direct respondents to the online location of the survey. The program includes features to review and export results.



### Survey Implementation

The survey link and instructions were sent on August 10, 2023 to 1,982 email addresses of individuals who received COVID-19 rent assistance. These were all of the email addresses for clients of the program that Thurston County had access to. Some clients did not use email and some emails from earlier in the program were not shared with Thurston County. Thurston County and partner organizations sent out emails, this likely created several duplicates. There were also several email addresses that were no longer in order. The survey was open for 22 days. Reminder emails were sent on August 18 and August 28, 2023.

Thurston County offered an incentive to increase participation. 15 random and eligible respondents would win a \$100 VISA gift card.

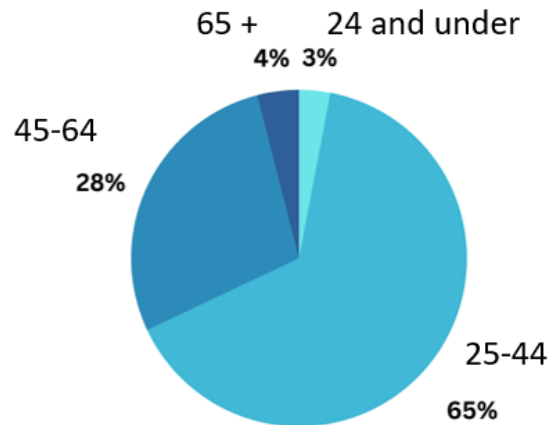
541 of the un-duplicated surveys submitted were complete and considered usable data for this report. After adjusting the number of individuals who received the email, the approximate response rate is 30%.

## SURVEY RESULTS

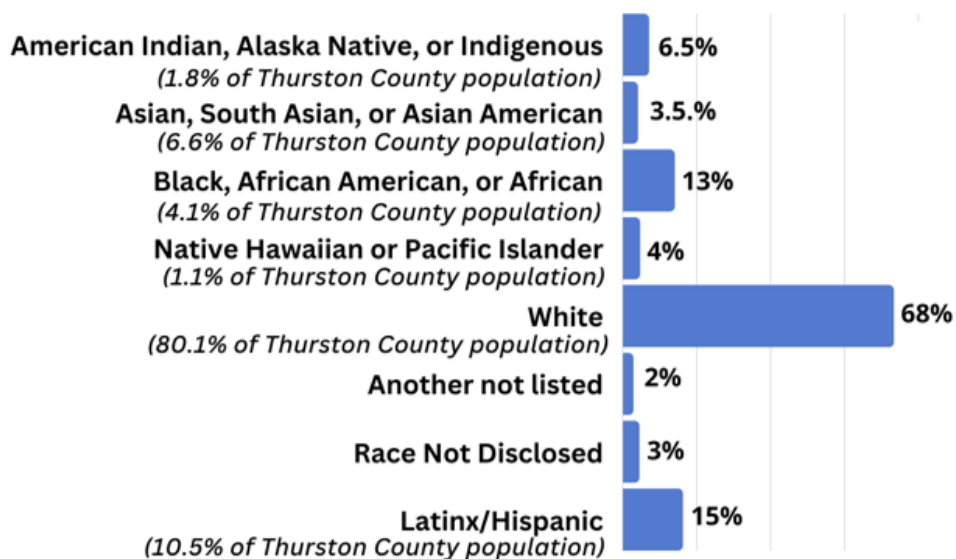
### Respondent & Household Demographics

The demographics of age, race, ethnicity and gender identity reflect the people who responded to the survey as their household representative. They don't reflect the demographics of the other members of the household.

#### Age of Respondent



#### Race and Ethnicity of Respondent



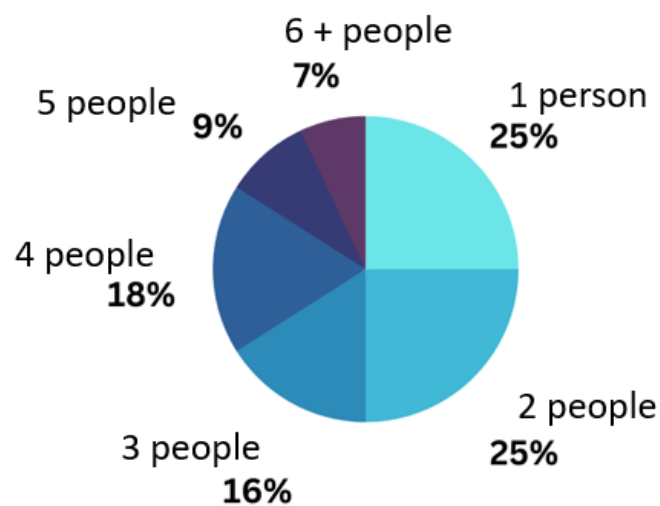
Respondents selected all racial and ethnic categories which applied for their race and ethnicity. Thurston County population data is from the 2020 United States Census.

### Gender Identity of Respondent



### Household Information

#### Household Size



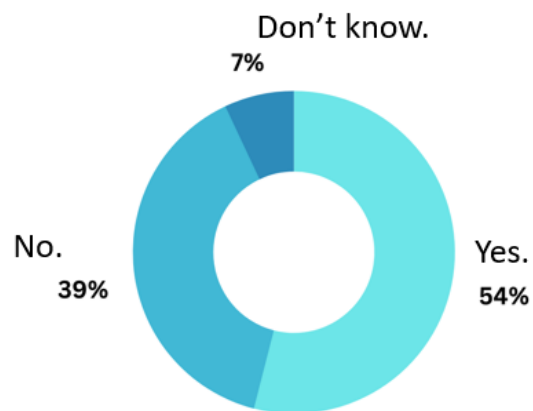
#### Household Type

**519** respondent households live in rental housing. Over half of respondents rent an apartment.

**19** respondent households are currently homeless, in-between places or living with friends & family.

## Utility Assistance

Did you receive utility assistance along with rent?



For the 54% who received utility assistance – did you receive a shut-off notice *after* receiving the utility assistance?



For the 20% who received a shut-off notice – what was the outcome?

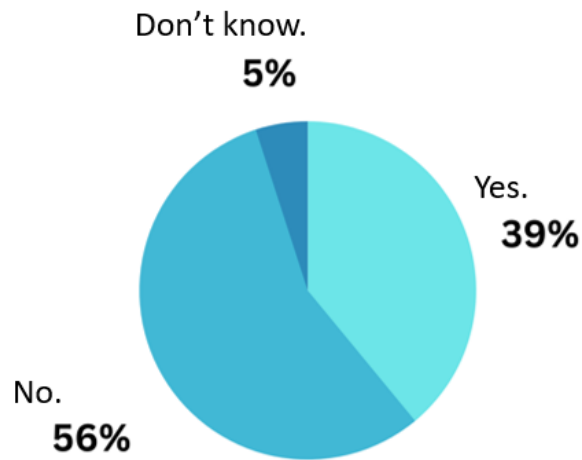
**76%** I paid before my utilities were shut off.

**19%** My utilities were shut off, but they're back on now.



## Evictions

Were you served a notice to pay or vacate *after* receiving rent assistance?



For the 39% who received a notice to pay or vacate – what was the outcome?

**71%** Eviction prevented.

**14%** Moved out before notice ended.

**13%** Still in process.

For the 71% who's eviction was prevented – what prevented it?

**58%** I found a way to pay the rent.

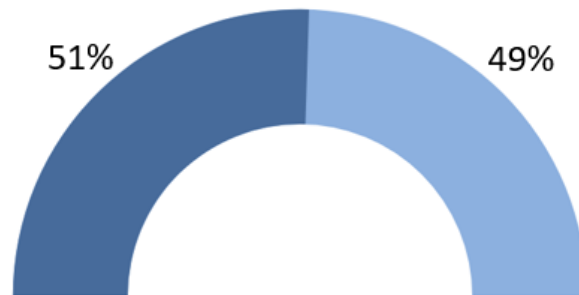
**34%** The Eviction Resolution Pilot Program helped with a repayment plan.

Most of the respondents who had an eviction prevented found a way to pay the rent before the eviction could go through the court process. The Eviction Resolution Pilot Program played a major role in preventing evictions for non-payment of rent. The Eviction Resolution Pilot Program (ERPP) closed on June 30, 2023. Landlords were required to participate in the ERPP if their tenants opted into the program. ERPP staff worked closely with COVID-19 rent assistance intake specialist to connect tenants with rent assistance. Less than ten respondents reported their evictions were prevented by working with an eviction attorney, negotiating a repayment

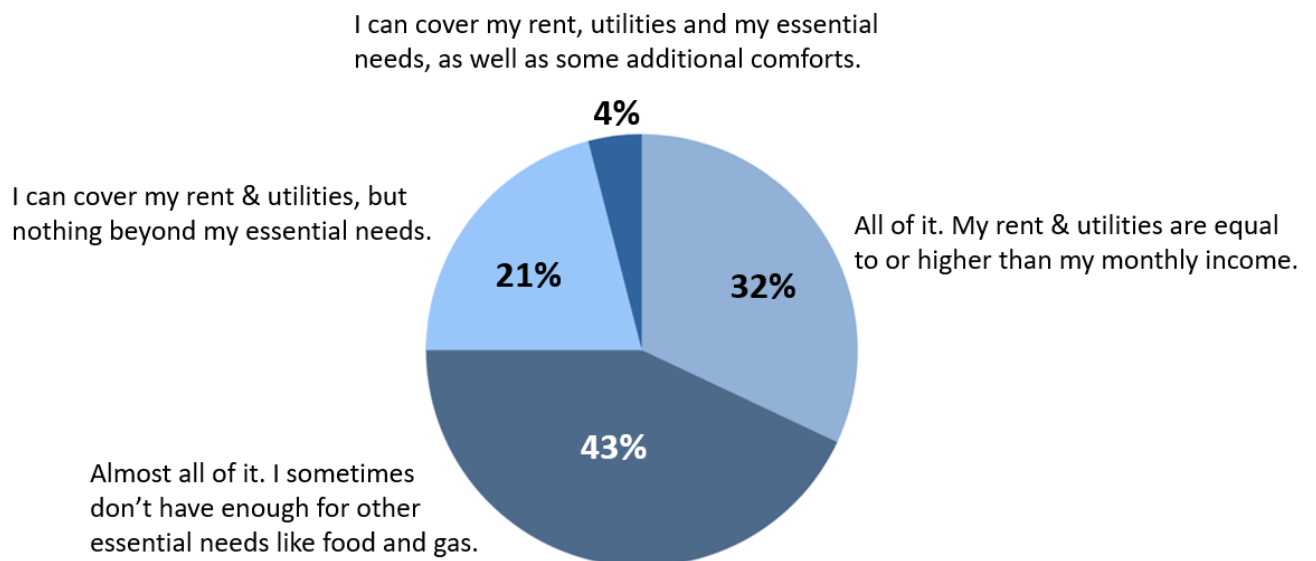
plan directly with their landlord or property manager or by going to court with the outcome in their favor.

## Respondent household's current situation

Over half of respondents stated their household is currently behind on rent.

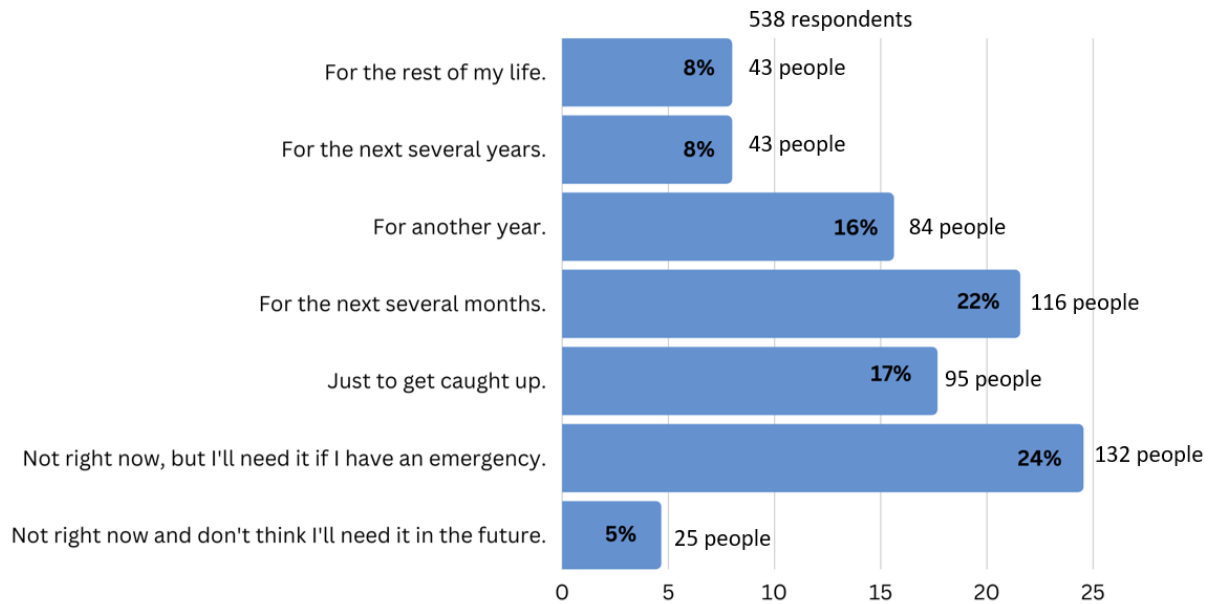


## How much of your monthly income goes toward rent and utilities?



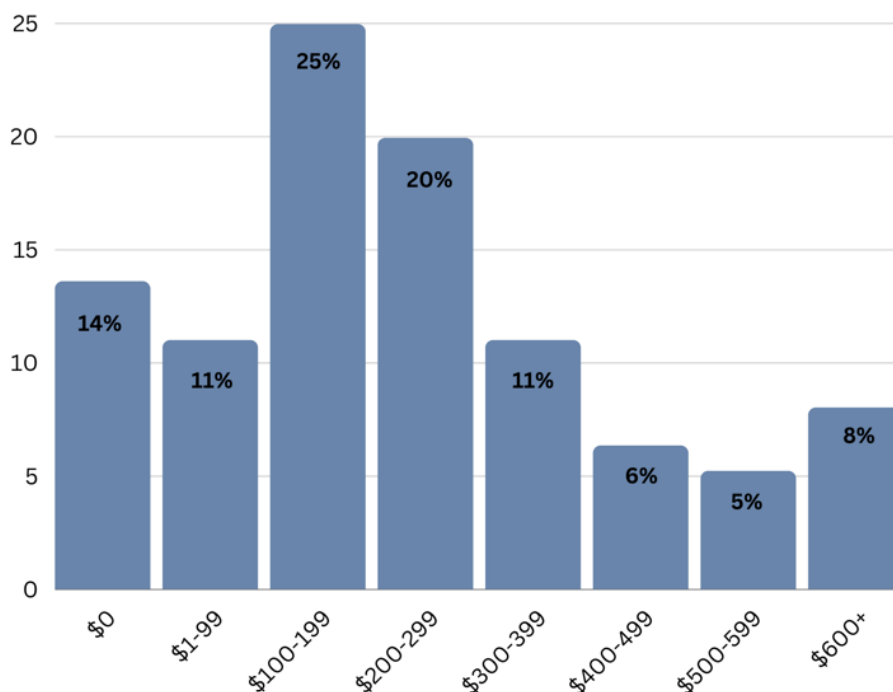
75% of respondents said all or almost all their monthly income goes toward rent and utilities. Only 4% of respondent household's financial situations are relatively stable. Thurston County renters are struggling to make ends meet.

## What are your current needs for rent assistance?



Of the 538 households that responded to this question, 381 need rent assistance now (at the time they took the survey). Since the COVID-19 rent assistance programs ended, Thurston County doesn't have the capacity to provide rent assistance to meet the needs of these 381 households. Only 25 of respondents don't need rent assistance and don't think they'll need it in the future.

## How much has your monthly rent increased since October 2011?



75% of respondents reported having a rent increase of \$100 or more per month since October 2021. In an [US Government Accountability Office](#) report published in July 2020, it is reported that every \$100 increase in rent leads to a 9% increase in homelessness.

**Has any member of your household experienced homelessness in the last five years?**



185 of the respondents reported that someone in their household has experienced homelessness in the last five years. Households and individuals who have a recent experience of homelessness are at higher risk for returning to homelessness

**Is there anything else about your experience with rent assistance that you'd like to share?**

The most common response from this open-ended question was of thanks and gratitude for the program. Several respondents stated that they would've been homeless without this program. The most common critique of the program was that the process for receiving rent assistance took too long.

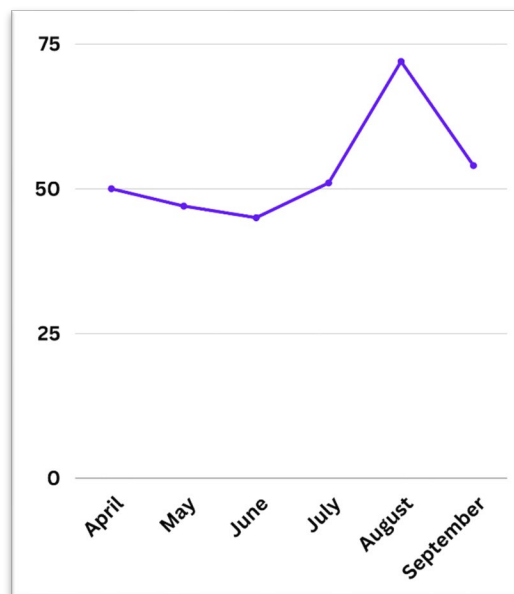
Another common response was disappointment that the program has ended and sharing that their household still needs help with rent. View the responses in [Appendix B](#).

## COMMUNITY CONTEXT

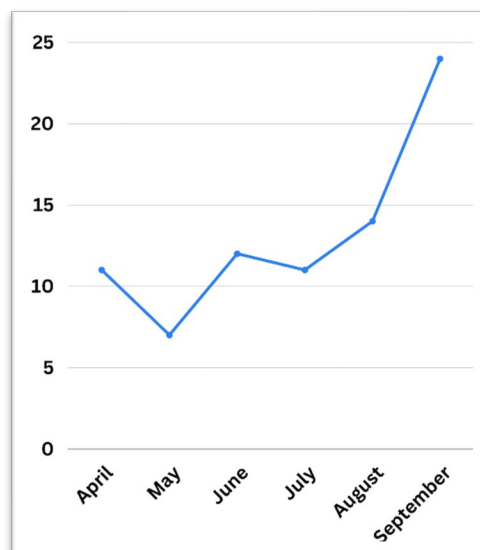
The data from this survey carries the voices of the many Thurston County renters who are struggling to maintain stable housing. The survey data aligns with what community service providers are seeing and hearing from clients.

Thurston County has seen an increase in evictions since the COVID-19 rent assistance programs and the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program ended in July 2023.

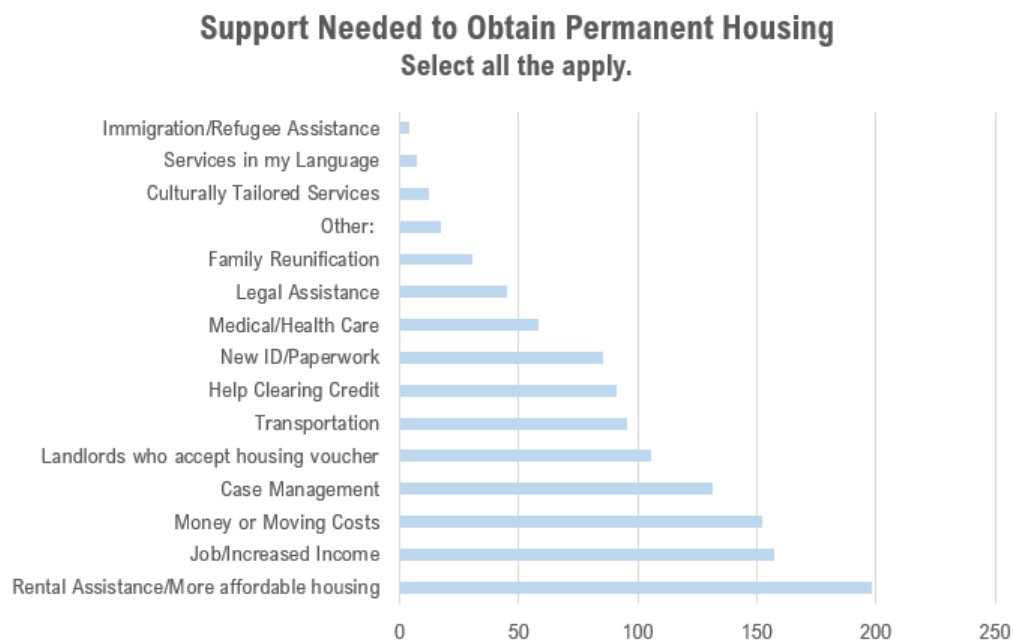
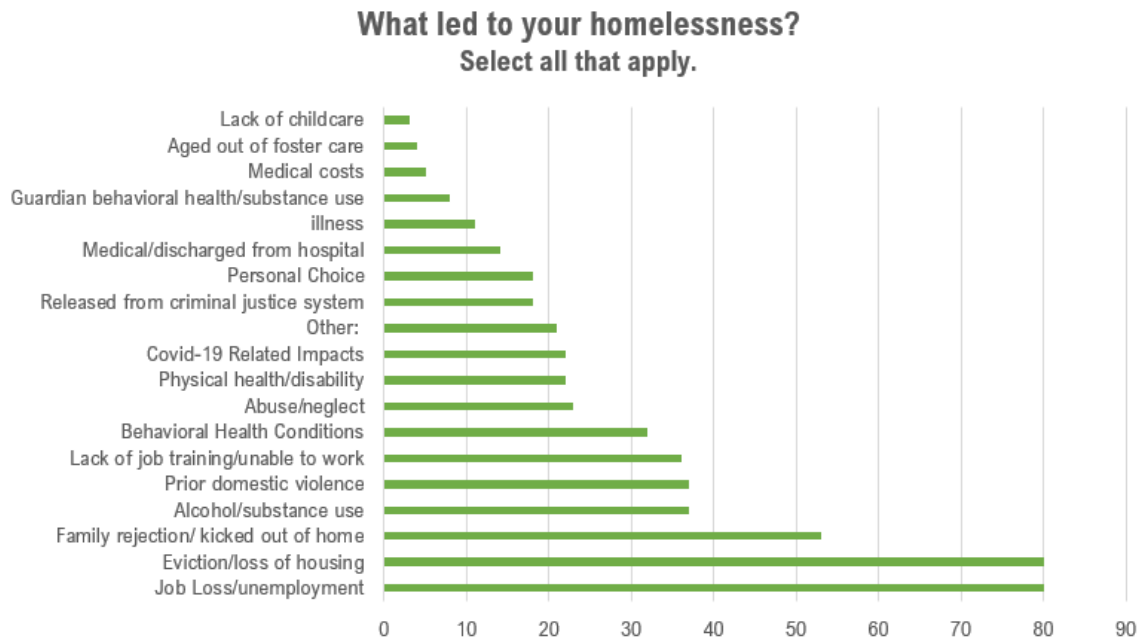
### Evictions filed in Thurston County April – September 2023



### Right to Counsel cases assigned to attorneys at Thurston County Volunteer Legal Services April – September 2023.



The [2023 Thurston County Point in Time Count](#) conducted an expanded survey of the homeless population across the county in January 2023. The expanded survey asked questions about what led to the participants homelessness and what would they need to obtain permanent housing. Rental assistance was a top response for both questions.



### **What does rent assistance look like in Thurston County now?**

Around 34% of Thurston County residents are renters. The average number of Thurston County renters who spend more than 50% of their income on rent was approximately 8,615 in 2016-2020, according to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's [Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy \(CHAS\)](#). The current capacity for rent assistance was inadequate before the COVID-19 pandemic and remains so now.

In early 2023, the Washington State Legislature designated a permanent funding source for a new program called [Eviction Prevention Rent Assistance](#). This program is funded through the provision of a document recording fee on the sale or refinance of a home in Washington State. This funding amount varies based on the number of home sales and refinancing in the state. The funds collected through these document recording fees have drastically decreased with the rise in interest rates. In 2023, the shortfall of document recording fees was so great that the Department of Commerce worked to identify funds specifically to fill this shortfall. With the additional funds allocated by the Department of Commerce, Thurston County received around \$1.5 million in funding for this program in 2023. This is substantially less funding than the over \$53.5 million provided in rent assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic from fall 2020-summer 2023.

In the fall of 2023, the Eviction Prevention Rent Assistance program had the capacity for around 150 participants. This capacity is severely lower than what the community needs. Out of the 538 respondents of this survey, 381 reported needing rent assistance.

There are long-term housing programs like the [Housing and Essential Needs Program](#) (HEN), Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and housing voucher programs. These are limited to specific populations; some are specifically for people who are experiencing homelessness and many programs have incredibly long waitlists. The Housing Authority of Thurston County had funding to provide 2,019 housing vouchers (all types of vouchers combined) in 2023.

Short-term rent assistance is offered through faith communities, school districts, and through some Homeless Services agencies when budgets allow, but these programs are frequently limited to paying one month's rent or less and are not available to all populations.

## CLOSING SUMMARY

According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's [Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy \(CHAS\)](#) data approximately 18,190 renters in Thurston County spend more than 30% of their income on rent, of which 8,615 spend more than 50% of their income on rent. These numbers are an average over the years 2016-2020. Rent assistance and housing assistance programs fell short of the need in Thurston County before the COVID-19 pandemic. As the community recovers from the economic impacts of the pandemic, there is little data published to show the current struggle and needs of renters. This survey and supplemental community data clearly show that Thurston County renters need more support to maintain housing stability. Thurston County renters are struggling to make ends meet.

The consequences of not providing renters adequate support to maintain their housing can be catastrophic. Our homeless neighbors shared that eviction or loss of housing were some of the biggest factors that led to their homelessness. It's important to listen to their voices. Many of the respondents to the rent assistance survey shared that past rent assistance prevented them from becoming homeless. It's important to listen to their voices. As more of the population struggles with housing instability, social safety nets shrink. Friends and family are less able to help each other out and resources for support become scarcer.

Providing over \$53.5 million in rent assistance was unprecedented in Thurston County and it was successful. In 2023 and for the next several years, there is a continued economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, rising rents and limited affordable housing. There is an ongoing need for rent assistance and other programs to support renters in Thurston County.



## APPENDIX A: FULL SURVEY

### Thurston County Rent Assistance Survey – August 2023

Thurston County Office of Housing & Homeless Prevention is conducting an online survey of the renters who received rent assistance from 2020-2023. The goal is to learn how this program helped Thurston County renters and what the current needs are for rent assistance.

Your participation is voluntary, the information you provide is confidential, and you can skip any question. This survey should take about ten minutes to complete. The survey will close on August 31, 2023.

Only one survey per household should be submitted. A household is defined as having joint financial responsibilities, such as families, partners, etc. It doesn't include roommates managing their finances separately. Fill out the survey for a chance to win a \$100 VISA gift card. There will be 15 winners.

If you have any questions, please contact:

RentAssistance@co.thurston.wa.us  
Office of Housing & Homeless Prevention  
Thurston County Public Health & Social Services

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your feedback is incredibly valuable and appreciated.

1. Did you ever receive rent assistance through the COVID-19 relief funding Emergency Rental Assistance Program [ERAP] and Treasury Rent Assistance Program [T-RAP] between 2020-2023?

These programs were offered at Community Action Council, LiveStories, and partner organizations: Family Support Center of South Sound, SafePlace Olympia, Centro Integral Educativo Latino de Olympia (CIELO), Innovations Human Trafficking Collaborative, Thurston County, Senior Services for South Sound, and Community Youth Services. If you received the survey via email directly from a rent assistance provider, the answer is likely yes.

YES NO (If no, respondent is ineligible. End of survey.)

2. What age group represents your age at the time you began receiving rent assistance?
  - 24 years or younger
  - 25-34
  - 35-44
  - 45-54
  - 55-64
  - 65-74
  - 75-84
  - 85 or older

3. What best describes your gender?
  - Woman
  - Man
  - Transgender
  - Non-binary
  - Culturally specific gender identity (e.g., Two-Spirit)
  - Questioning
  - Another not listed
  - I don't know
  - Prefer not to answer
  
4. What is your race/ethnicity? Check all that apply.
  - American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous
  - Asian, South Asian, or Asian American
  - Black, African American, or African
  - Hispanic/Latina/e/o
  - Middle Eastern or North African
  - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
  - White
  - Another not listed
  - I don't know
  - Prefer not to answer
  
5. How many people are currently in your household, including yourself? A household is defined as having joint financial responsibilities, such as families, partners, etc. It doesn't include roommates managing their finances separately.
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5
  - 6
  - 7
  - 8
  - More than 8
  
6. What best describes your current rental situation?
  - I pay rent for a room in another person's home.
  - I pay rent for an apartment.
  - I pay rent for a unit in a duplex, triplex, or fourplex.
  - I pay rent for a single-family home (house).
  - I pay rent for a mobile home.
  - I pay rent for lot space but own my mobile home.
  - I live in a hotel or motel.
  - Other:

7. Have you received a Notice to Pay or Notice to Vacate (Eviction Notice for not paying rent) after you received rent assistance?

YES / NO / DON'T KNOW

8. If yes, how far into the eviction process did you go?

- I moved out at the end of the pay or vacate period or before an eviction was filed with the court.
- My eviction was prevented because the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program helped with a repayment plan.
- My eviction was prevented because I found a way to pay the rent.
- My eviction was prevented with the help of an eviction lawyer.
- I went to court but was not evicted.
- I went to court and was evicted by sheriff's notice.
- I missed my court date and was evicted by sheriff's notice.
- Other:

9. Did the rent assistance program also pay for any past-due utility bills?

YES / NO / DON'T KNOW

10. If yes, have you received any utility shut-off notices after you received utility assistance?

- Yes, but I paid it before the utilities were shut off.
- Yes, and my utilities were shut off, but they are back on now.
- Yes, and I am currently without water and/or electricity.
- No, I have not received a shut-off notice after I received utility assistance.

11. Are you currently behind on rent?

YES / NO / DON'T KNOW

12. What are your current needs for additional rent assistance?

- I need rent assistance now and will likely need it for the rest of my life.
- I need rent assistance now and will likely need it for the next several years.
- I need rent assistance now and will likely need it for another year.
- I need rent assistance now and will likely need it for the next several months.
- I need rent assistance now to get caught up on my past due rent, and I can pay my own rent after that.
- I don't need rent assistance right now, but I will need it if I have an emergency.
- I don't need rent assistance right now, and I don't think I will need it in the future.

13. How much of your monthly income currently goes toward rent and utility costs?

- All of it. My monthly rent and utility costs are equal to or higher than my monthly income.
- Almost all of it. After monthly rent and utility costs, I sometimes don't have enough left for food, gas, and other necessities.
- I have enough to cover my monthly rent and utility costs. The rest is for food, gas, and other necessities. I can't afford anything beyond essential needs.

- I have enough to cover my monthly rent and utility costs, and essential needs such as food, gas, and other necessities, as well as some additional comforts.

14. How much has your monthly rent increased since October 2021?

- \$0 per month
- \$1-99 per month
- \$100-199 per month
- \$200-299 per month
- \$300-399 per month
- \$400-499 per month
- \$500-\$599 per month
- \$600 or more per month

15. Has any member of your household experienced homelessness at any point in the last five years?

YES / NO / DON'T KNOW

16. Is there anything about your experience with rent assistance from 2020-2023 that you would like to share?

OPEN ENDED

17. If you wish to enter to win a \$100 VISA gift card, please enter your name and contact information. This information is confidential and will only be used to contact you if you win.

- Name:
- Email:
- Phone:

NOTE: To be eligible to win a gift card, you must have received rent assistance through the COVID-19 relief funding Emergency Rental Assistance Program [ERAP] and Treasury Rent Assistance Program [T-RAP] between 2020-2023.

These programs were offered at Community Action Council, LiveStories, and partner organizations: Family Support Center of South Sound, SafePlace Olympia, Centro Integral Educativo Latino de Olympia (CIELO), Innovations Human Trafficking Collaborative, Thurston County, Senior Services for South Sound, and Community Youth Services. If you received the survey via email directly from a rent assistance provider, the answer is likely yes.

## APPENDIX B: RAW DATA

### 1. Did you ever receive rent assistance through the COVID-19 relief funding Emergency Rental Assistance Program [ERAP] and Treasury Rent Assistance Program [T-RAP] between 2020-2023?

*Note: Question 1 is the only question that required a response. All other questions could be skipped by the respondent.*

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100%	541
No	0.0%	0
TOTAL RESPONSES	541	

### 2. What age group represents your age at the time you began receiving rent assistance?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
24 years or younger	3.3%	18
25-34	31.0%	168
35-44	33.3%	180
45-54	17.6%	95
55-64	11.3%	61
65-74	2.8%	15
75-84	-	<10
85 or older	-	<10
TOTAL RESPONSES	541	

### 3. What best describes your gender?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Woman	78.0%	421
Man	18.3%	99
Transgender	-	<10
Non-binary	2.4%	13
Culturally specific gender identity (e.g. Two-Spirit)	0.0%	0
Questioning	0.0%	0
Another not listed	-	<10
I don't know	0.0%	0
Prefer not to answer	-	<10
TOTAL RESPONSES	540	

**4. What is your race/ethnicity? Check all that apply.**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous	6.5%	35
Asian, South Asian, or Asian American	3.7%	20
Black, African American, or African	12.9%	70
Hispanic/Latina/e/o	15.0%	81
Middle Eastern or North African	-	<10
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	4.3%	23
White	67.8%	367
Another not listed	2.0%	11
I don't know	-	<10
Prefer not to answer	3.1%	17
TOTAL RESPONSES	541	

**5. How many people are currently in your household, including yourself? A household is defined as having joint financial responsibilities, such as families, partners, etc. It doesn't include roommates managing their finances separately.**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1	25.0%	135
2	25.2%	136
3	16.1%	87
4	17.4%	94
5	9.1%	49
6	4.4%	24
7	-	<10
8	-	<10
More than 8	-	<10
TOTAL RESPONSES	540	

**6. What best describes your current rental situation?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I pay rent for a room in another person's home.	5.2%	28
I pay rent for an apartment.	53.3%	288
I pay rent for a unit in a duplex, triplex, or fourplex.	12.4%	67
I pay rent for a single-family home (house)/	14.1%	76
I pay rent for a mobile home or trailer.	3.7%	20
I pay rent for lot space but own my mobile home or trailer.	4.3%	23
I live in a hotel or motel.	-	<10
I currently don't have a place to live. For example: homeless, couch surfing, staying with friends/family, etc.	3.5%	19
I own a home now and am no longer a renter.	-	<10
Other (please specify)	2.0%	11
TOTAL RESPONSES	540	

**7. Have you received a Notice to Pay or Notice to Vacate (Eviction Notice for not paying rent) after you received rent assistance?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	38.6%	209
No	56.4%	305
Don't know	5.0%	27
TOTAL RESPONSES		541

**8. If yes, how far into the eviction process did you go?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I moved out at the end of the pay or vacate period or before an eviction was filed with the court.	10.7%	22
My eviction was prevented because the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program helped with a repayment plan.	24.3%	50
My eviction was prevented because I found a way to pay the rent.	38.0%	78
My eviction was prevented with the help of an eviction lawyer.	-	<10
I went to court but was not evicted.	-	<10
I went to court and was evicted by sheriff's notice.	-	<10
I missed my court date and was evicted by sheriff's notice	-	<10
My eviction was prevented with more rent assistance.	-	<10
My landlord/property management is working with me to arrange repayment.	-	<10
I am currently under a notice to pay or vacate, or my eviction is in process.	12.6%	26
Agreement or settlement was made for me to move out.	-	<10
Other (please specify)	-	<10
TOTAL RESPONSES		206

**9. Did the rent assistance program also pay for any past-due utility bills?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	54.0%	291
No	39.2%	211
Don't know	7.0%	38
TOTAL RESPONSES		539

**10. If yes, have you received any utility shut-off notices after you received utility assistance?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, but I paid it before the utilities were shut off.	15.5%	45
Yes, and my utilities were shut off, but they are back on now.	4.0%	11
Yes, and I am currently without water and/or electricity.	-	<10
No, I have not received a shut-off notice after I received utility assistance.	78.0%	232
TOTAL RESPONSES		291

**11. Are you currently behind on rent?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	50.5%	271
No	47.5%	255
Don't know	2.0%	11
TOTAL RESPONSES		537

**12. What are your current needs for additional rent assistance?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I need rent assistance now and will likely need it for the rest of my life.	8.0%	43
I need rent assistance now and will likely need it for the next several years.	8.0%	43
I need rent assistance now and will likely need it for another year.	15.6%	84
I need rent assistance now and will likely need it for the next several months.	21.6%	116
I need rent assistance now to get caught up on my past due rent, and I can pay my own rent after that.	18.0%	95
I don't need rent assistance right now, but I will need it if I have an emergency.	25.0%	132
I don't need rent assistance right now, and I don't think I will need it in the future.	5.0%	25
TOTAL RESPONSES		538

**13. How much of your monthly income currently goes toward rent and utility costs?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
All of it. My monthly rent and utility costs are equal to or higher than my monthly income.	32.0%	169
Almost all of it. After monthly rent and utility costs, I sometimes don't have enough left for food, gas, and other necessities.	43.0%	228
I have enough to cover my monthly rent and utility costs. The rest is for food, gas, and other necessities. I can't afford anything beyond essential needs.	22.0%	115
I have enough to cover my monthly rent and utility costs, and essential needs such as food, gas, and other necessities, as well as some additional comforts.	4.0%	21
TOTAL		533



**14. How much has your monthly rent increased since October 2021?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
\$0 per month	14.0%	73
\$1-99 per month	11.0%	59
\$100-199 per month	25.0%	134
\$200-299 per month	20.0%	107
\$300-399 per month	11.0%	59
\$400-499 per month	6.3%	34
\$500-\$599 per month	5.2%	28
\$600 or more per month	8.0%	43
TOTAL RESPONSES	537	

**15. Has any member of your household experienced homelessness at any point in the last five years?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	34.3%	185
No	63.5%	342
Don't know	2.2%	12
TOTAL RESPONSES	539	

**16. Is there anything about your experience with rent assistance from 2020-2023 that you would like to share?**

*Note: Responses containing personally identifiable information have been excluded unless consent was given.*

- they helped me not get evicted i have two kids so its been hard for me
- This was incredibly helpful for me and my family. there have been some big changes since then, my rent was about to go up but I lived in mold, with rats in the walls and no one was fixing anything. I managed to leave there and an abusive marriage with my two disabled children. I am now paying as much for renting a house as what the increase would have been at the apartment but with less income than before due to the separation. I ma in the process of sending an email because I have a pending application from 2022. at the time assistance was given, it was a godsend1 I appreciate all that was done for my family. I am trying to figure out how to get on my feet. I am also a full-time student, although online because I have not been able to drive for the last 6 years. I just got my drivers license though so its a step forward!. although not in the last 5 years, 6 years ago I was technically homeless while pregnant with my first. a kind woman opened her door for us though, so thats something! thank you to anyone reading this! you all are doing more than you know!
- It helped me to catch up on rent but am severely behind on utilities
- I need a subsidized apt to get out of this rotten travel trailer.
- Their help was greatly appreciated. I don't know what I would've done without them.

- it was great but also not happy that we got approved for rental assistance and no there is no funding for our county
- The assistance programs are, without a doubt and with no exaggeration, the only reason that I am alive and able to have even semi-stable roofing over my head. Head. The removal of these programs has been devastating for my own personal well-being and finances, and the cost of living in Thurston county has continued to rise with out a adequate reflection in wages. As a single household person, assistant programs are the only way I am able to continue living in Thurston county and helping to benefit its local economy.
- Very helpful. Sometimes I was a bit anxious not hearing any updates but until the last time I applied I was approved and didn't need to panic 8 weeks later when I found out the program was out of funds and I was pretty much left to figure it out.
- They was able to help for a couple of month so I can get back on track. Now my rent has gone up almost \$400. I need help to get back on track for a couple of months
- The assistance we have received helped us tremendously. Stopped us from being evicted and helped us get the things we need for our children
- No assistance unfortunately due to no funds
- Great help wish they still helped
- Everyone that I dealt with involving rental assistance was always extremely helpful and made sure I had everything I needed except for the time when my spouse tried applying for help. She had to go through the Youth Services and we stayed in touch with the person we spoke with via email, but she just stopped replying one day. The next thing I got regarding my rent was a Notice to Vacate and that's what I'm dealing with now. I have a lawyer and the rental assistance people say I'm eligible for only one more month of help, even though I was told I was eligible for 18 months and have only used 15 of them. But aside from those issues, everything has been as pleasant as you could hope for.
- Just that if all rent would of been paid I believe I would be ok but they left me owing a month and a half which defeated the purpose of helping
- Wish rent assistance was permanent. I'm disabled and am going to be homeless come Monday because I can't find a place on my monthly disability income of \$2,000
- Long periods between applying and receiving contact. Due to covid the normal max ammount of mos for help is not long enough
- It went everywhere. Xfinity and Puget sound never received payment. We need our ledgers because I know he was paid more than he credited us.
- This program helped me so much I was in dire straits after COVID hit and my job I was going to start got cancelled and than the company closed. So it was a huge help and I could definitely use help again cause I can't work right now due to medical issues and all I get is 417\$ a month and 281\$ snap benefits. Have fallen behind in rent and not sure how much longer I will be here and scared I will be homeless again.
- Great program, so grateful for any help they provide
- I was just upset that they had me believe that everything was going to be alright and then crush me at the end
- Was very helpful:)
- My experience wih Thurston County rent assistance 2020-2023 has been such a blessing. My household has dealt with sickness,surgery,covid lockdown and job loss due to covid pandemic. Although we are still dealing with the after affects of the shutdown, ive got to say that Thurston County rental assistance helped so many that were down and out at no fault of our own. C.A.C

had a big fallout due to some illegal situations which caused an even more terrible situations for anyone who looked to them for help.

- To make a long story short, my own personal experience was quite unique due to the property being sold during the wait for assistance thru C.A.C, new owners, brought new prices. At my most stressed and feeling like there wasn't anything left to do to help my family's situation, I stumbled across a name while searching the web frantically for help. Elisa Sparkman, was the name I stumbled upon. God bless Elisa Sparkman, she was such a tremendous blessing in our lives. No matter how big the obstacles in my way, she stayed down from day 1 and seen it through to its entirety. Elisa Sparkman put in effort and showed that she genuinely cared. Thank you Thurston County rental assistance for having such an a blessing on your team. We are all human and everyone needs help at some point in life, thank you for not judging and just dismissing someone just because. Take the time and listen..."
- Was very very helpful to my family
- Just that I am grateful for any and all help that I have received in the past and am hopeful that I may be able to find help to get me back on track with this present rental debt I have gotten into.
- I have tried so hard to keep and maintain the stability and structure for my girls and I, but it just seems no matter my efforts I seem to fall behind at least once a year.
- It is exhausting.
- My girls and I lived in our truck for about 8 months close to 5 years ago and it is my biggest fear to be in that position again with my daughters at such an impactful age (11 & 8).
- I was grateful to have received the help I did. It's unfortunate the program ended when it did, and I'm not looking forward to being homeless. But I am so grateful for the help last year. The program was helpful but so delayed on responding/processing applicants. I feel the outcome could have been different had the program been run more efficiently. I'm probably wrong though. And I deserve to be homeless I'm sure. It helped lots of people, so it was a great program in my book.
- The landlords do not have anyone that oversees their actions and is making sure they follow the rules of the program.
- I'm extremely grateful for the assistance that I received everybody was helpful kind and diligent I am waiting on assistance now from pipe and have been waiting for approximately 3 months with a current eviction the property was sold and I am being forced to leave with relocation assistance but I am still currently past due because the check from pipe was never received they are looking into it now and hope to rectify the issue though I am still going to be without a home due to the sale of the Inn and Suites I currently reside in this losing my job as well which was half of my income but I am extremely grateful for the programs I was able to receive assistance through
- I was so grateful to get this help meant everything to my two disabled children and I. WE don't qualify for EBT or any of those benefits so this was an amazing chance.
- Miracles. I've never been able to receive help in the past before civil. Was unsure if u could help. Thanks so much. I just need a Lil additional help for Aug n next few months...
- I have not received any rental assistance since Covid relief funding. I have provided documentation and contacted multiple times but nothing is in progress. I am recovering from a disability and unemployment.
- I was qualified for the ERAP , signed all docs. But they never pays the rent, now that why I'm getting eviction. I still need HELP..thank you, I hope I win, the survey bec I need FOOD, thank you

- Rental assistance should still be helping families because landlords are mean as ever now because they feel screwed over after covid-19
- Rent is bs this world is bs right now and so called luxury apartments aren't that at all when most apartments do the cheap updates rent is not right or fair it's to make sure most people can't actually go anywhere in life and stay at the bottom
- Last assistance APPROVED by T'rap in June-2023, was NOT GIVEN, notified 8/4/23 that funds were exhausted before they got to me!!?? Terrible!! (Caused me to get behind on rent for July, August.)
- It help me significantly.
- I had a child move out that was helping me with rent.and to move to a two bedroom is the same cost I pay for a 3 bedroom .
- It was a great help! Sad that it's no longer available.
- Those who handled my case went above and beyond in my opinion to make sure I received what was needed to prevent me from being not only homeless but kept me from being easily reached by my abuser.
- I was happy they were quick.
- It was a big help. I didn't know I could get help with past bills. Thank you.
- I'm so grateful
- Rent assistance was so very helpful in making ends meet under these tough circumstances do to covid
- It was a blessing but could have had more months of it
- I would like to express my gratitude for this program which assisted me in paying my rent when I was in a time of need. It kept me from becoming homeless with my 2 kids.
- Only that I am so very grateful and receiving the assistance kept myself and my children in our home.
- Thank you
- I am grateful to have rental assistance during Covid 19. I received 10 months worth of past due, current and future rent. Then I got a job for 6 months and now still looking for work. I think my age is a big factor for not getting hired because I am over 60 yrs so I back to the predicament I was before. I really need rental assistance now but when I applied I was told that that there is no money to help me from the TRAP program. I am disappointed because I know funds for this program are disbursed every 1st of the quarter. My big question is 'Where is the money)!!!
- If it weren't for the assistance I would be on the streets. So thank you
- It helped tremendously! But I am still not surviving y and need help. I get \$752 per month th and have a 13 year old child. I don't get TANF or SSI anymore. I'm behind. I'm always behind . I have serious. 8 and I'm still behind.
- It was helpful but somehow I was removed from the assistance and now I'm homeless. I was in a domestic violence situation and I've been actively trying to get back to a safer and healthy life. I stay at Holly Motel when I can but spent months living in my car. I'm separated from my emotional support animals as well and all of this has been extremely difficult. I've been trying to work for UberEATS delivery but I'm not making enough to survive off of yet. I sustained some pretty serious injuries from my previous abuser. I have permanent damage done to my spine, my ribs, my tailbone and my brains cognitive ability, and lungs.
- It took way to long to process and receive. However the direct contact with the staff were very prompt helpful and informative.
- It took way too long and my landlord did not renew my lease because of it.

- No, just thank ful for the help
- Family support Center has been paying my rent and covered my passed due rent but now they are out of funds and I need another agency to help pick up my rent from next month in till I get back on my feet.
- Rental assistance was and is life saving
- Everyone I came into contact with were kind and understanding. I can only imagine how many applications they received yet I was never met with short answers or a rude reaction.
- The staff in Thurston County Housing & CACLMT were amazing, REAL, helpful, efficient, and friendly. The staff at LiveStories is not & they have awful customer service.
- Only that the process between companies handling the assistance took way too long and I was almost evicted. It was extremely stressful to have the paperwork signed and not receive the assistance for 6 plus months!
- To know when assitance is paid
- I am grateful for the assistance I have received because without it I would probably not be here to take part in this survey. Thank you so much!!!
- I wish there was way more funding to continue helping people that become in debt due to COVID-19. Like myself that had to be furloughed go on unemployment only to find out they where paying more then they should have. That is another \$5000 debt over my head not to mention the two loans I had to take out on my car and still struggling to pay back. Single family income, the government says I make enough to feed 6 people but to take account rent, bills, car payment, loans, phone bill, gas, groceries and basic house hold essentials. We should have to struggle or stress out on when you are going to be able to enough money to feed your kids let alone have a safe place for them to live.
- Better communication between assistance counselor with landlord
- They were very helpful and on time with paying the rent.
- Very grateful for the help. But communication was poor. I needed more months covered at application but it wasnt put in that way and I only got the back rent paid. Then when the worker put me in for a few more months, the funds were gone and they could not help.
- Received funding when I had cancer and was out on medical leave for work. Recently I had reapplied for funding and they had told me I would receive this then ran out of funding so I received several eviction notices one from court. Put me in a bad spot
- "Life saver, wouldn't have been able to make it without their help for my son and I."
- I would love an opportunity to qualify for rental assistance again.
- I was beyond appreciative to receive any type of help
- It was a blessing. I had just got a position that would have gotten us out of the poverty range I fought HARD for, then Covid hit and the business went under. Struggling again, child is medically needy, got sick, trying to find new position working days for her sake.
- Absolutely amazing!!!! We are forever thankful for this program and everyone that helped us!!!
- They definitely helped me in a bind and they had really good communication
- Thank you
- It was a blessing once I actually got it.. it took many many months months of stress anxiety waiting for approval . Even tho I was pre-approved previously.
- I was one of the ones that it got delayed because of the fraud issue with CAC. And I almost got evicted. Other then that it was very helpful.

- Getting assistance for rent has allowed me to be able to buy food with cash after getting cut off of foodstuffs in February. With all the bills I have to keep up with, rental assistance definitely helps me be able to be able to buy food for my son and I.
- Easy to deal with.
- Very kind and made asking for help not feel so embarrassing
- Excellent experience. I am so thankful for your services. My life is definitely back on track after the Covid-19 setbacks thanks to this program.
- "I was beyond grateful for the help!!
- Unfortunately I'm behind again and am being evicted. "
- It was greatly helpful with keeping me in my home at a very scary time. I already am on section 8 which if I didn't have that I would be homeless. Even with a voucher it is still over 30% of my income after other expenses to stay afloat. It would be more stable with ownership instead of renting but that will never happen for me as a person at my age with a disability. I am grateful for the past help. Habitat for humanity I didn't qualify because of a limited income and DTI.
- I needed additional help with rent and was cut off the program. Was told they only accept new clients (those who have never used rental assistance before) Which was a horrific criteria and led to us being homeless and moving out of our area as rent had increased massively. Rental programs should never exclude those who have used rental assistance in the past from accessing rental assistance. Terrible criteria. Deadly criteria.
- You sent an incompetent person a paper saying that we were approved and how much we were approved for and she told me that she got the money for our rent and all was well. 2 months later you guys say we were eligible and everything but the funding wasn't there so the apartments had someone serve papers to us for eviction. And that incompetent person is no longer manager. There is a new manager. We filed notice that we were moving and we are currently sleeping on the floor at my parents and grandparents house and my dogs are driving the neighbors nuts. So this program helped at first but in the end put us out of our home. We have 7 kids BTW.
- Just to say thank you for helping get through that tough time. I would be homeless if you hadn't helped me. Thank you again.
- They are quick and Attentive I really appreciated it
- Quite a bit actually, but I have shared my experience with this department recently already.
- I really appreciated the help I received for 2022. The help I have needed in 2023 has been very hard to get.
- I was grateful beyond expression to receive rent assistance last fall. I could not believe that my life had come to this: not only that nobody would hire me, but that not one application ever got a response. Ageism - I don't look in the mirror and see an old man. I graduated college in 2017, thought that a Bachelors with decades of interesting experience and numerous skills sets. 2018 was the year of discovery, none of it especially ""good"", in 2019 I accepted a ""fall-back"" sort of job with the Census. It paid enough that I could afford to make payments on an economical, reliable car. Then, 2020, two weeks after I moved from bad circumstances to a nice little house on the outskirts of town, COVID blew the foundations of my life away. I was unemployed for a half-year, and resulted (among many awful things) in my first encounter with my landlord's very particular nature about paying rent on time: ""Well, Governor Inslee says I can't evict you!" Last year, 2022, the Census job - which after COVID assigned me 75% of my previous caseload, and working hours - ended in June, and thereafter I discovered again just how brutal the world of applying for jobs really is (only worse because I'm that-much older now. I received rent

assistance, which ran out in November: three months, surely I would have a job, any job... In November, struggling with mounting depression and real panic, the first I've ever known in 69 years, I became desperate to get an extension - only to be made aware that the program was about to stop. I was told how to apply for a ""hail Mary"" tap into remaining funds, and in the week before Christmas, the 23rd. I took the rent assistance application to my landlord - who rejected it out of hand, saying that it pains her but she does "not believe in the government giveaway programs," and so on. I broke down there in her kitchen - she lives next door. Actual homelessness was real, it would happen (the eviction ban had been lifted). But, my falling apart somehow assuaging her deepest fears that ""I am taking advantage of her,"" she agreed to put matters on pause until Safeway gets back to me after the Christmas holiday... And they did, thank God. I'd never imagined, much less considered (at my age!) throwing stock on shelves with the night crew as an employment life ring. But now, after nearly nine months, this next month (before the third) I will pay my rent on time and settle the arrears on penalty fees - so that's good. Thing is, I'm in survival mode, have been for years now. I run out of cleverness, believing in possibilities - so un-me! Being caught up with rent is a relief, but now I need to face the other creditors I have literally ignored for more than a year. How will I ever catch up, much less get ahead? You ask in the survey if I anticipate needing rental assistance for the rest of my life - OMG, I hope not! But thank you very much for your consideration.

- Thank you for your help. I didn't apply for assistance because I thought I could get caught up, unfortunately I was not able to. I had too much pride but when I said it was ok to ask for help, I got it. Thank you! Thank you all for your assistance, I am forever grateful!
- I was lost at a dead end road with no options and I was depleted of all hope until I was told about the renters assistance program and I cannot be more thankful for the kindness and generosity given my way when it was needed the most.
- We were able to eat decent healthy meals as a family Instead of just the kids getting 3 meals a day before the help.
- It saved me a lot from being homeless, and I'm truly grateful for this assistance.
- I think that community action council did a great job in stepping in to make sure my rent was paid when I was no longer eligible for the hen program because I was pregnant and started receiving TANF. I had no clue they had been paying for y rent for a few months after the fact.
- I worked with Community Action Council first in Thurston Co. Then there was a huge shakeup and chaos bc the contract was pulled from CAC. Livestories took over the contract and then process was mostly smooth. Overall I wish there were permanent and robust rental assistance programs such as the temporary one during the Pandemic. We desperately need it to prevent homelessness before it happens, we need a multi-tiered approach that definitely begins with statewide rent control—my rent went up \$400 this year, which in my opinion, is criminal.
- The rent assistance program has helped and saved my family tremendously. If it weren't for this program me and my family would be without a home. Thank you so much for the help and support.
- I had placed two applications recently, I have only used rent assistance during a couple months at most during covid's lockdowns. I currently was told my applications cannot be found, and that rent assistance is out of money. I'm being told I have to leave my home. I don't understand why everyone is telling me they don't run out of funding this long.
- Such a blessing to have this program for us to have a roof above our head. Thank you
- It really helped my family in a time we most needed it

- I was upset my landlord put an application for trap and I was on a program so when trap approved everything I got closed on the other program. He raised the rent without doing the things he said he would during mediation.
- It has been a very helpful and much needed experience - it has prevented homelessness and I appreciate all the staffs efforts who helped me
- I recieved 12 months rwnt assistance for past due. I applied for assistance for future rwnt at the same time but did not recieve it
- I sincerely appreciate any assistance that we received. I only wish that your assistance would continued because I don't know how with my only monthly social security income I could support my family and pay the rent too. I used up my savings and now using my credit cards. Our lives Suddenly changed since I lost my employment due to covid epidemic in May 2020. Thank you
- I just appreciate the help I got without it I would of been more behind thanks again
- I am just grateful for the help I received
- Was very helpful, I can't find any rental help now.
- Very helpful and grateful for any help.
- Good program it just was too much changing i could not keep up with it but I need help again with renting a room
- Thank you, much appreciated 😊
- I'm hoping I'll have an opportunity to use the rental assistance again thank you
- Lifesavers
- Thank you
- Just overall gratitude. Thank you
- Once I was approved I guess the companies switched and never paid my rent I was getting eviction notices and had to stop searching for a good enough paying job to figure out why and try to get help paying rent another way.
- I was so grateful with the assistance. I desperately need it. Being head of household single parent so difficult to provide when you only working as part time while going to school. I was so behind paying with everything. But i know this is only temporary until I am done with my nursing degree in 8 months. Thank you again I don't know what could happened without this rent assistance program.
- It's was very helpful & very grateful for the help my family received.
- Im just very thankful for your help
- It was a great help and allowed me to catch up on other bills. thank you
- Very grateful for the support
- I was asked in June 2023 if I needed help with rent and did an intake and in August I was told my rent was paid till October 2023. That same week I got an email saying my application wasn't approved because they ran out of funding. Now I'm 4 months behind rent. Because I was told I was getting help but then didn't receive it. Every other time I've got help was great.
- The Notice to Pay happened because my application was accidently assigned to 1 month that I had already received assistance for, rather than the correct 3 month period I was applying for. It wasn't discovered for another 3 months, but it was corrected (although I did have to scramble to have enough to cover rent for the next 2-3 months afterwards). I am currently about to go through 2-4 months of little to no income due to needing emergency dual hip replacement surgery (due to extensive damage from arthritis), and am not sure where I'm going to be able to find it (nor do I know if I'm even eligible for rent assistance any more).



- You blessed my family with kindness and understanding. Helped me and my boys in time of when I thought I had failed as hardworking mother. I will never forget that. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. ❤️
- It was very helpful to have the rent assistance that I received. This program kept me from losing everything I own. I feel that programs like this are necessary and helpful for our community.
- I am great full for this program. It has helped me and kept me from being homeless. I am disabled and I don't know what I would have done if it wasn't for this program
- The rental assistance helped me recover from a surgery.
- Traumatizing I work but due to work exhaustion and burnout I had to go on medical leave then I had an emergency surgery
- This program was awesome! The communication was great!
- "It helped me at a time that was really hard for me not only with rent but personal and mental health issues I was going through so much and the stress of being kicked Out of a place I had worked hard to keep was so scary. My rental assistance was literally life changing and I won't ever forget how much it helped me and how grateful I was for that option. Thank you so much. "
- After I was told there was no more assistance from the facilitator I was with, I was not told that another facilitator was providing the same assistance, and thus spent the past year struggling to make ends meet and provide for my kids. It wasn't until June that I was told there was another program, and it had already stopped taking applications.
- I never thought I would get help and I was so grateful to not lose my home.
- I'm grateful for the assistance and wish I could qualify for assistance in my current income bracket.. the rent has increased more than my pay has!
- have programs available is all i can ask for.
- its helped me and my kids so much
- The help was greatly appreciated
- Yes they told me that I was going to also receive utility help but I never received it and I'm struggling to bring a current it is behind and I continue to get it shut off notices
- God bless and thank you....
- this help was a blessing for me, I am a single mother and I take care of my 91 year old mother and I work hard to cover my needs, thank you for your help when I needed.
- I was supposed to get ERAP assistance for 18 months but was only able to collect 6 months because of fraud by the CCA of Thurston county . I ended up closing my business and moving out of town to my partners place because I could no longer afford rent. It was a stressful process. I would suggest being more aware of what an eviction notice means to people's rental history when telling people to not pay their rent for the sake of rental assistance . It's detrimental and landlords won't accept that history for a potential tenant. So maybe the county can work out a better promissory note that landlords will accept. Mine wouldn't and I didn't want to ruin my rental history so I used my tax return while I was waiting for my assistance which took twice as long because of the fraud investigation .
- I received the rental assistance in a timely manner and the staff were very nice
- Would be nice if there were sufficient ongoing funds for folks who have lost businesses or dealt with health crisis since pandemic
- This program really helped me from becoming homeless. With the increase in rental payments, food costs, and gas prices, this program is truly a blessing. Thank you!!
- such a blessing with the help you guys did i would be homeless with my 3 girls if it weren't for your rental assistance.

- It was a very hard time, and was initially approved with the Thurston County Community action counsel. After being told a check was being sent for rent to cover about 4 months I was then notified that it wasn't being paid and that everything was going to be switched to livestories. With that, it was like the whole process had to start over and had to wait much much longer to receive any assistance which made things a lot harder. A poor experience but glad it finally came through.
- I would like to let people know not to be nervous of asking for help when needed. The staff here was extremely friendly, helpful, and non judgemental. I'm a disabled woman seeking disability and they understood my situation and were very helpful in the process with my landlord to help ease the stress of the eviction notice sent to me. Very pleasant working with them.
- I really appreciate them keeping me and my children from being homeless
- My 10 year old son died.
- It helped me to stay in my home.
- I was told I would be receiving additional assistance several months ago and haven't received any follow-up or additional assistance.
- It was the miracle we needed! So very grateful.
- Better communication after application submitted.
- It took too long.
- As much as I appreciated the assistance, wouldn't changed hands several times it became increasingly high barrier and difficult to access including fearing I would not receive assistance in time.
- I am very grateful that I received assistance or I would have been homeless
- thank you for the peace and freedom i experienced with the help of your assistance i wish it could have continued
- Great friendly understanding help and the best help I have ever received
- It definitely helped me and I'm extremely grateful
- It was very hard to get help
- What a blessing.
- The program is wonderful. It helped me a lot. Before the program ended I was to receive assistance but it has not come to me or my apartment complex. The only negative thing I would say is that there need to be some way of getting ahold of someone to talk to about the assistance or answer any questions someone may have instead of leaving them on edge. I am on edge because my rent is due and I was supposed to receive assistance for July August and September, but here we are mid August about to be put out waiting for the assistance to get here. I have no way of contacting anyone for a status update so that I could let the apartments know what is going on. So frustrating.
- It was a long wait to hear back from anyone. I have a son who was homeless 5 1/2 years as well and no one helped him find housing, he is disabled & needs assistance finding housing. Hex was told by dshs case worker there was a more than 2 year waiting list for housing assistance and not given any resources to get out of homelessness.
- I appreciate all the help you have given my family. Without you, we would be on the streets because i lost my job due to Covid causing health condition.
- I was promised an amount from Community Action Council but then the county took it away and the county paid half of what I was allotted. Very disappointing
- The experience was positive and lifted a lot of stress from me.
- It was an easy experience and the work I worked with was very kind and efficient

- I'm very grateful. We were about to lose our housing and getting rental assistance gave a peace of mind.
- Me and family are very grateful everyday for the assistance that was provided to us. God Bless you all.
- Livestories really saved me from being homeless. They were awesome.
- I appreciate all they have done for me as this program was very useful.
- Everyone was nice and helped me out! 😊
- You guys switching from one provider to the next almost cost us our apartment. I was approved for the rental assistance. And then nothing for 3 months. And then I had to REAPPLY AND QUALIFY WITH NO REQUIREMENTS ALL OVER AGAIN. we barely made it the second time. I appreciate the help tremendously but the circus act y'all put us through will forever cause me anxiety
- It would be great to keep this opportunity for families and single people to prevent homelessness
- I'm very Thankful that the Rental Assistance Program was there to Help me in my time of need!
- My 90 year old mother and I are extremely grateful.
- Just that I appreciate everything you did for me
- I was told I would receive rental assistance and could renew every three months. Unfortunately funds ran out and I did not have money to pay my rent so I fell behind and was kicked out. Now I owe back rent and am staying with a friend with my children until I can get on my feet again.
- I wish you all improved your communication. That's all. Landlord received the promissory note then we didn't hear anything for 3 whole months. So we saved but didn't pay rent fearing we would end up paying for rent that you all already covered. Left in limbo we stressed daily over an eviction. Would have appreciated a little expediency in communications but in the end up so thankful that you all are here to help people in need like me. Thank you all for everything you do. I'd easily be living out of my car if it wasn't for your organization. Thank you.
- Without this program my 3 children and I would be sleeping in a car. THANK YOU!!
- This program has been a real blessing for my family and I and we are extremely grateful.
- It's a great help to keep families off the streets
- I have been retaliated against and my housing voucher taken away from me. I don't know what to do but I'm still here in my same apartment with no income or assistance to move and I still have a half renovated unit.
- I am currently homeless so stop bugging me. Your programs don't work
- The program really helped but since then being unemployed I have become homeless and having a really hard time. Being in my car is hard I spend most of the day trying to find out where I can sleep that night.
- It was hard to get a hold of people and help came through but so close to the line I had to leave but I can rent in the future thanks to you guys for helping with the backpay. I am so grateful that on top of all my other issues I do not have court and more debt hanging over my head. I could not afford to stay with rent going up or I would need your help forever. As a single mom I could not work more than my 10-14 hour days and pay my bills. I have to figure something out. My body is failing from the excessive work for so many years. Thank you for the help 🙏
- I ended up homeless, there was no one to contact, my application was handed around to a couple different case workers and I still ended up homeless and now have a 22,000.00 debt after moving out and living in a 5th wheel with no running water
- I greatly appreciate all of the help I received.
- It did help us a lot

- It's was big help
- Family support services drastically helped change mine and my daughter's circumstances for the better. I am beyond grateful for the assistance I received and support I was given.
- The people were very helpful and understanding
- They were phenomenal. It was quite disparaging to have to had waited so long to get assistance during the year 2022 but it certainly came in right on time even if at the VERY last minute.
- Family support center has been helping me and my family since 2020 with rental assistance and without the help we would still be homeless because I have a low credit score and with that it costs so much to get into a place it's nearly impossible
- There was an unfortunate death for my agent which lead to a delay which lead to an error not being seen in time so I'm still on the hook for a utility bill that my landlord should have been responsible for but everything got delayed and now I'm stuck with it and no one could do anything because the timeline ran out. She was super nice so I feel bad but it was a lot so it sucks.
- It was very helpful at the time. It's hard to say that I won't need it again.
- I'm incredibly grateful rent assistance exists
- It kept me and my children from being evicted and I greatly appreciate the assistance. I really need it again after struggling with health issues.
- The process moves fast and stress free.
- After the murder of my uncle, and having to come up with funds for funeral, cremation. Etc. I didn't have anything for my bills. As a single mom of 3. It saved us from being homeless.
- Having the option to get a few months future rent so I can catch up on my other bills. It took so long to get rent assistance there was a lot of late fees that were not necessary but it took so long for past rent to be paid that it was a much larger amount that I was stuck paying on and still am.
- They were available when I needed them most. Staff was friendly,accommodating and understanding when times were tuff. Thank You
- It's always taken time but I've always been able to get assistance when I need it
- Thanks to rental assistance my family didn't have to move. My daughter can continue to attend the same school as my family lives on the other side of the state. Otherwise we would live in our car.
- This program has helped our family survive during this difficult time and we are very grateful for the assistance! Very nice people too! Thank you!
- It was so appreciated and so helpful. It was hard though when there was an issue with Community Action Council was suspected of wrongdoing and it had to go through another company. There was a super long delay.
- I am very grateful for the assistance I've been provided however I am still behind on my rent and am concerned about being homeless again.
- I have not received anything yet I just got done with an internship in June 23 to go with my degree but have not found a job yet. My daughter sent this to me.
- They were efficient helpful and very kind.
- It was very helpful for my children and myself.
- If I would have known that I could have received more of it that would have helped out tremendously.
- Our previous landlord raised our rent from 1275 to 1890. During and after Covid. She knew we were doing all we could to move and she was receiving trap checks. We took out payday loans.

Husband had massive heart attack during this. Finally in 5/23 we moved. Just Signed 2nd year lease Happy here. Rent never late. Still trying to catch up on past electricity bill. Wasnt sure which box to check on survery we did get shut off notice but not shut off but owe ALOT. Still have to do payday loans for car expenses prescription medical food. Computer broke no more telemed apts. Trying to find work or help at my age but don't know where to go. Want to help other seniors a few days a week. So grateful Thurston County we are not homeless because of you. Also grateful to the Manager who discovered other Manager took 2 months of TRap rent she shouldn't have. It is almost impossible to move to lower rental without additional support for a few months. Need help to get back to zero with moving expenses prescriptions medical Food gas all necessities. Old computer gave out. Depended on comuter for rare Onocology Apt study at UCSF. Old old TV gave out too. Guess the move was too much:) However we are NOT homeless. Thank you again Thurston County. Forever grateful. P.s. Your Communication Specialist kept us from being evicted.

- It was definitely awesome. I just wish the communication was better of knowing whether things were approved or pending or waiting. Like getting a phone call or a proper email for that but otherwise it was great."
- Just that is was so much needed and so greatly appreciated and so many family's need help. Thank you guys.
- Keeping in touch with rent assistance programs has been difficult. It is obvious that funding for these programs is seriously inadequate, as more & more people find it hard to keep up with rent increases. We currently pay 2/3s of our SS income for rent - this is criminal! And costs continue to go up for basic needs - we can't keep our heads above water, with this kind of economic projection!
- Due to the confusing switch that happened regarding the funding, it caused major amounts of stress and anxiety. It was really hard getting zero communication from the businesses that were helping with distribute this funding. However it all worked out for me but other people were not so lucky
- They are awesome
- During the whole process from the initial application to the interview / intake I was humanized and treated with respect and dignity by the response team. I never wanted to be in a position to have to ask for anything, but when life transitions happened all of a sudden I had to. I m glad that the assistance was available but more importantly, the staff and level of civility and service during the time of great stress was awesome.
- All I can say is it was a god send and thank you. I don't know what I would have done without the help it offered.
- I was on medical leave for three months. That is why I fell behind in rent. Trying to catch up on medicals bills and car payment and utilities.
- I was given the decency and respect while in need. It has been difficult to keep up with rent and bills. I hardly have enough, but if it wasn't for your help, we would be homeless. Thank you so much for your support.
- Rent assistance helped me by preventing eviction due to non payment I don't know what I would have done without them. if not for rent assistance I would be homeless.
- It was VERY helpful!
- It was very helpful, we are need of more programs like this, thank you.
- It was a lifesaver and I am so grateful it was available. Everyone I dealt with in the program was very nice and helpful, never judgmental.

- I was set to Recieve some early 2023. Even offered yet offer was pulled as wasn't currently "behind" but don't have enough for food after bills and maxing out CC to pay bills
- I am so thankful that there are programs to help during hard times
- I appreciate the help very much thank you
- Rent increases leaving me less than a hundred dollars a month
- It was very helpful
- Yes, this program helped my family and I in so many ways. I was at a very low point of my life and this program saved my children and i from homelessness. I am forever grateful,
- They were absolutely wonderful, caring , sympathetic. My family and I appreciate all the help from the program.
- Wish you could help again
- I am so thankful I was able to get rental and utility assistance because it kept my family housed during our time of need. I have a good job now and can't imagine what may have happened if I was not able to pay my rent. The people at Thurston county rental assistance and Community Action were really great to work with, thank you!
- I'm very grateful
- That the whole of society, governments and groups, need to stop inflation and raising minimum wage and just get rid of economics completely, money is the root of all evil on this planet, it ruins lives.
- Very great program and so helpful
- They were hands down amazing saved my children and my self from being homeless. True life savers.
- It was very helpful and very much appreciated! Thank you!
- I tried to gain rental assistance unsuccessfully before I became homeless in October 2022. It is really hard to get an appointment to even see if you qualify. I got lucky and found a quick online survey for assistance, first come first serve when money opened up. I know many people didn't apply in time.
- Its a huge help, thank you.
- Yes I was and am thankful that your program was around and helped me and my family. I definitely appreciate and some day I want to help just as you all do.
- It saved me being evicted on the streets in winter as all I ha e is 914 a month and my bills are almost double that just for a room
- I was unsure for 4 months if it would happen but finally it came in...today! It was so nerve wracking to go week to week without knowing for sure it would get to the mobile park manager, even though the rent assistance org did say it would, but it was delayed 2 months. It's very difficult to be on the rears 4 months.
- I am so relieved and grateful today at long last!"
- I am just really grateful for what they do and support they give.
- It was and immense help
- Having faster assistance
- I was so happy to see how helpful they were and how easy the process was ..even for my landlord to receive the 3 months of rent . my income always says I make to much for other assistance but I technically don't have much after all the rent and bills are paid so.im just as bad as those who qualify for other assistance
- You saved my life ,I had nothing and CAC saved my life I am forever grateful

- It greatly helped me make ends meet and cover my monthly necessities. I am extremely appreciative of the rental assistance program and the opportunity to get even with all my monthly costs.
- We would have been homeless if we hadn't received this help. I can not express my gratitude for this assistance.
- It was a true blessing. Now I'm not sure how we will make it
- Was told would be getting \$12,600 for help with rent but then told funds dried up beforehand. SUPER disappointed in the lies
- Everyone was very kind and respectful
- Community Action Council was effective and efficient. Live stories was horrible in comparison. It took six months or more for landlord to get paid after my application was successfully submitted. Communication was horrible. CAC was awesome, competent and I was able to get a hold of them. PIPE currently is horrible. In all ways they are failing. CAC should get the contract back, find a way to work with them.
- My rent increased by a whopping 33% after the pandemic and I was reliant on assistance to avoid homelessness. I have since moved into a more manageable situation but I am still technically "rent burdened". Rent is extremely out of proportion with earnings for the populace.
- Because of the ERAP program my family was able to stay housed and safe and healthy during the pandemic and that meant a lot to me as a mother for my family. This program helped me avoid having an eviction on my record and ultimately gave me a second chance and we are very appreciative and grateful for this program and the people who are able to provide services and issue payments to the appropriate vendors. So we thank them for that and I'm pretty sure many more families do as well.
- It was easy to apply and I'd really love more help to get caught up
- The wait took several months but it paid off in the end.
- I tried filling an application but they couldn't help due to the fact that the property isn't on my landlords name yet. His mother recently passed so it's in the process still.
- After receiving assistance our apartment manager provided us noticed they would not be signing a new lease with us. We are required to move out by September 29 2023. Finding another apartment is difficult and the cost of moving and increased rent will be a hardship
- Yes. In June of 2023, I received a call from Thurston County Rental Assistance asking if I needed help with rent for the months of July and August. They also asked about utilities. I gave them all docs from what I had on hand to docs my landlord needed to supply, but it seems nothing has happened, and I'm still needing assistance currently to figure out where things went wrong. I had been hoping for those months to be covered because of mental and physical health issues, but now I am 2 months behind and owe \$2100 I don't have.
- They're extremely helpful
- Such an amazing program to help!
- The program was a literal lifesaver. I wish there was additional clarity around deposit assistance, that could have "dug us out" of homelessness more quickly.
- I really appreciated getting the assistance and I was treated with dignity while applying
- I was and am extremely grateful for all of the rental / utility assistance I received.
- It took awhile but thank you to everyone who helped with my shady apartments to make sure I had my rent paid.

- It really took a lot of stress off my shoulders and helped me in a time when I was struggling really hard and begging for money from friends and family.
- I really appreciate the help. I'm trying to get on my feet from a rough year, it's been very helpful.
- Everyone has been so helpful and its truly a blessing!
- It was a great help
- I very much appreciated having received rental assistance during COVID and was sad to have lost assistance when the federal program ended. Even with help from my family, after paying rent and utilities I have little left to spend on other expenses every month. I manage to pay my bills, so I've assumed that I don't qualify for further assistance since I do not receive eviction notices. I wish the qualifications for rental assistance would change in the future.
- Tried to get assistance with new program and I have not heard anythingq
- Mostly I'm just so grateful for the assistance I received. I was able to pay off past debt that had accrued and my credit was deeply affected by the economy and cost of living increases. It feels impossible some days to have enough money to even live in a house.
- The worker helping process my request for assistance was very communicative and helped me find some ease in my situation. She walked me through everything and helped talk with my landlord which was amazing. So for that I just wanted to say thank you.
- This program saved me and my kids from being with a home I'm-so great full i was able to recieve such a blessing thank you
- It was great
- It was a great help to me and my family
- I need help paying rent now.
- I'm so thankful! These programs and the wonderful people that help with getting the assistance to the public have been such life dangers for my daughter and I in our time of need. I'm forever grateful!
- I just received notice last week that the rent assistance I applied for is not available due to lack of funds. This is heartbreaking and I'm now facing eviction as I'm currently off work and on state disability.
- Very friendly employee's. Process was fast because I applied on the first day.
- It was difficult to get updates and not knowing how much of the back due rent would be paid and how much and when I would be required to pay or start paying.
- It was an extremely lengthy and difficult process to receive. This program was run by 2 different non profit companies, both of which are being investigated for fraud. I feel like I should have received more assistance.
- I am praying for a solution to homelessness.
- Great program help out and made it easy to work with
- This program really helped my family during Covid and without it we would have ended up homeless. I think having this program around so if emergencies arise will be very helpful for families in the future.
- It was a lifeline. I feel extremely blessed to have received it.
- It saved me more times than I can think of. I am so beyond grateful especially having 2 children. One under one years of age. Thank you.
- VERY, VERY GRATEFUL FOR THE ASSISTANCE; VERY HELPFUL AND VERY UNDERSTANDING ASSIGNED CASE MANAGER(S) AND/OR OTHER ASSIGNED PERSONNEL!!
- Saved me and my family from being homeless
- It's very helpful due to my medical issues that had stopped me from working



- I was assisted in a time of great need even owning my own mobile home does not guarantee anything as if I get evicted they get to keep it and resell it. It is a financial burden I will never stop stressing about living paycheck to paycheck
- Very helpful and my family and I are grateful for the help and hard work
- The rent assistance program helped us so much. Right now, my partner and I both work full-time and I am a full-time college student. We are just barely getting by.
- So glad to have found them. First year in apartment and didn't know what to expect. Utilities are very high. Wish I could have got 3 or more months help because it took so long for them to pay one month and now still owe \$300. Don't have it
- I'm extremely thankful for it
- I'm am grateful for the help, everyone was so kind
- It was amazing to not have to stress for a little while with having the help.
- It was a life saver! It bridged a very difficult time and ensured that I was able to make a better situation for me!!
- I just truly appreciate this program
- The information about what program is offering what was a bit confusing. For those that are not tech savvy, it might have been very hard to understand information.
- It was a real blessing
- It saved my life.
- Love the program thurston county community youth services really helped me out in a time of need
- It saved my life. If it wasn't for the rental assistance I would have been on the streets. I am disabled and very sick. I can't afford to be homeless with my health conditions.
- It has been incredibly helpful and kept me and my bestie off the streets. We're both disabled, but not disabled "enough" for disability. This makes keeping up with rent and bills difficult, especially when one or both of us gets sick and has to miss work. Which happens a lot, unfortunately.
- The workers where very helpful and kept in contact through process.
- Thanks for preventing my death. My brother who did not get help died yesterday in a homeless encampment.
- Thank you 😊
- I think the rent assistance should be until the person has a sustainable way to pay for rent and bills, without spending all their money on it, not like now that the limit is one year. Right now, my situation changed from a 3 household to 3 person household. My boyfriend left and now I have to provide all income for me and my baby (is not his daughter, so he doesn't have an obligation to keep helping us financially). And I won't be able to apply for rent assistance again since I already spend the limit amount of time.
- The program was very helpful with assisting me in getting caught up with my past due & behind rent payment after losing my job due to COVID. The customer service provided was also outstanding.
- I need it for life and dread reapplying in fear I may miss a deadline, I can become homeless at any moment. I constantly live in fear
- A big help for me and my family
- Great service
- Rent control would be helpful. I was able to get help for a year and I greatly appreciated it.
- They was very kind.

- The person who helped me was absolutely amazing fast and very considerate of my situation
- It came at a time of great need. I am very grateful for this assistance. I received a couple extra months which allowed me to catch up on other needs.
- I appreciate the help I was able to have shelter and it was Blessing God Bless you all
- Nothing that you guys can do anything about. The issue is more with the landlords.
- Just as a single mother who was furloughed due to state furloughs, I want to thank you so much. You guys are the reason I am not homeless today.
- The process was fairly easy. I am very grateful to have received assistance. It was during the holidays and it helped me and my family have a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- I think more focus should be given to those attempting to work and pay rent instead of those letting it lapse to eviction status. Help those who help themselves more.
- When I had questions someone always answered and was kind and helpful

## APPENDIX C: RENT ASSISTANCE SURVEY TEASER FLYER

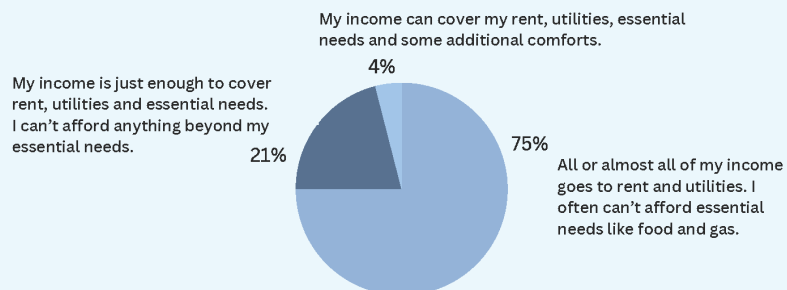
This flyer was sent out to community partners and jurisdictions to announce the survey was conducted and offer a presentation of the survey results.

### Thurston County Rent Assistance Survey 2023

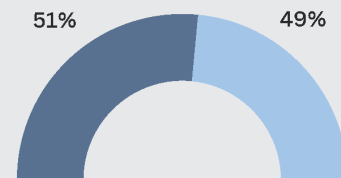
In August 2023, Thurston County Office of Housing & Homeless Prevention conducted a survey of households who received COVID-19 Emergency Rent Assistance. 541 households responded.

#### What do the preliminary survey results tell us?

##### Renters are struggling to pay for rent, utilities and essential needs.



##### Just over half of respondents are currently behind on rent.



Full survey report will be published by November 15, 2023.

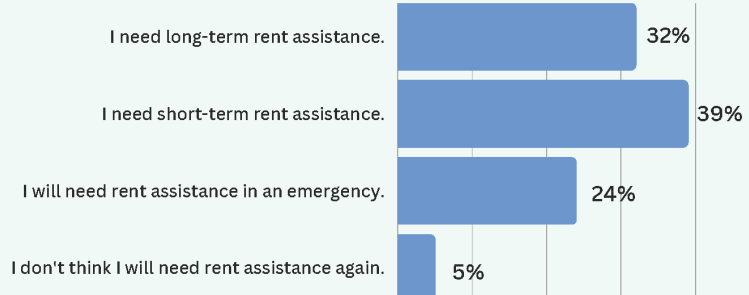
To schedule a presentation of the results, please contact:

Elisa Sparkman: 360-490-7648  
Elisa.Sparkman@co.thurston.wa.us



Thurston County Office of Housing & Homeless Prevention  
Public Health & Social Services  
412 Lilly Rd. NE Olympia, WA 98506

##### The need for rent assistance is high.



## APPENDIX D: RENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INFOGRAPHIC

### COVID-19 Rent Assistance Programs 2020-2023 Thurston County, WA

Multiple COVID-19 rent assistance programs were funded differently and had different requirements for data collection and reporting. Therefore, this data is approximate.

From 2020 - 2023, COVID-19 rent assistance programs were administered through various sub-grantee and partner organizations from local, state and federal funding sources. Almost all of the funding came from federal allotments under the CARES Act and American Rescue Plan Act, administered by the U.S. Treasury Department, and issued either directly to Thurston County or through the Washington State Department of Commerce. These funds were supplemented by State and local funds.

Though the administering organizations and funding sources changed, the program requirements mostly remained the same. The basic eligibility requirements were that the household was at 80% or below the Area Median Income (AMI) and either directly or indirectly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program paid for past due rent, past due utilities and up to three months of future rent at the time of application. Households could reapply until they reached the limit of 18 months of assistance overall.

#### Total Rent & Utility Assistance Distributed: \$53,621,479.31

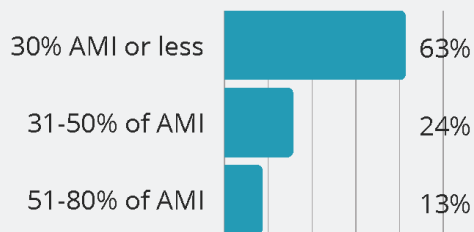
**Total Household  
Payments: 7,376**

**Average Payment  
Amount: \$7,270**

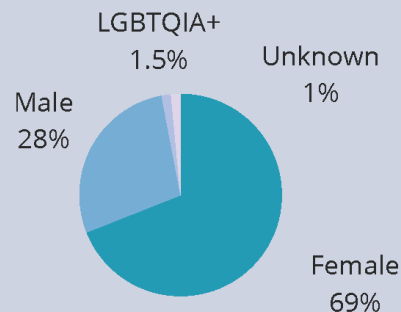
**Average Household  
Size: 2.5 people**

#### Household Income

*AMI = Area Median Income*

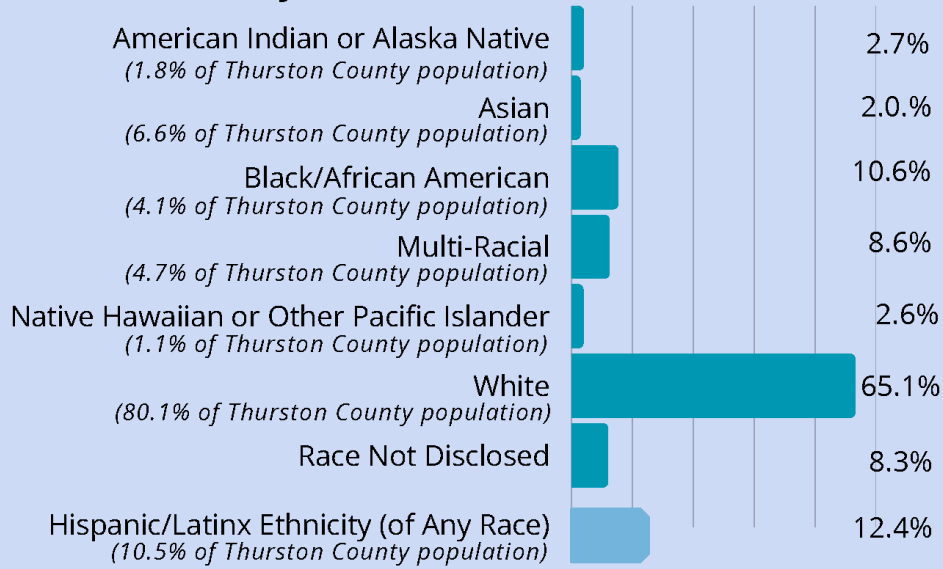


#### Gender Identity of Head of Household

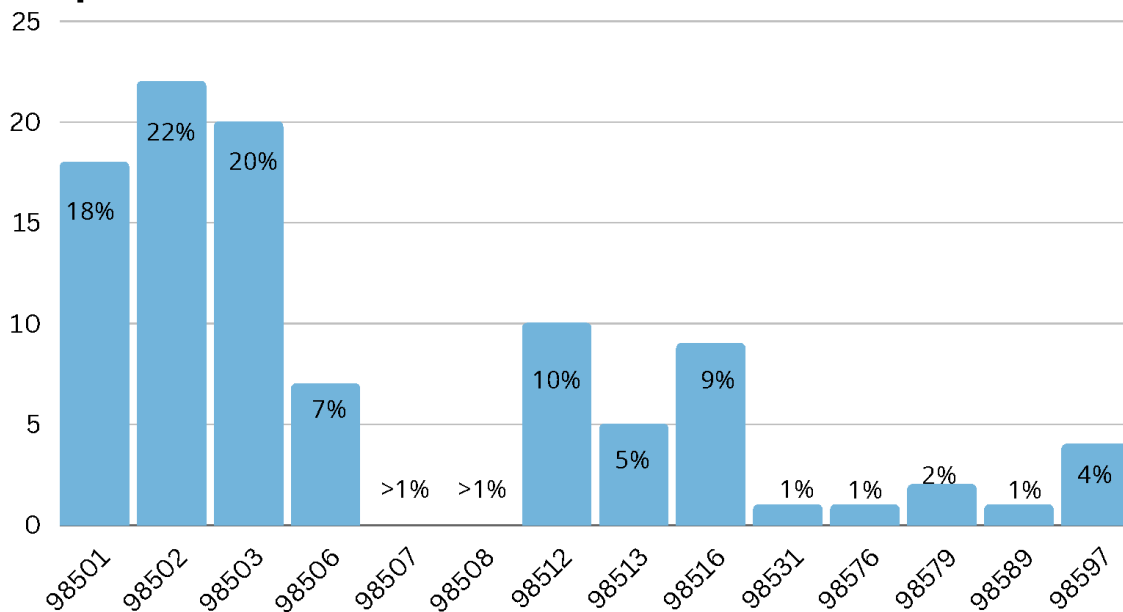


Thurston County Public Health & Social Services  
Office of Housing & Homeless Prevention  
RentAssistance@co.thurston.wa.us (360) 490-7648

## Race & Ethnicity of Head of Household



## Zip Code of Rental Unit



Thurston County Public Health & Social Services  
 Office of Housing & Homeless Prevention  
 RentAssistance@co.thurston.wa.us (360) 490-7648