



Regional Long-term Rent Assistance Program Update

This document provides an update on the RLRA program from April 2021 through April 2022.

Regional Long-term Rent Assistance (RLRA) is a key strategy for achieving the goals of the Supportive Housing Services (SHS) measure. Long-term rent assistance is a critical program that allows Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties to expand housing access across the Metro region and ensure housing stability for households experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

The RLRA program works as both a tenant-based subsidy (tenants receive a rental voucher that they can use to rent a unit in the open market) and a project-based subsidy (the rental voucher is attached to a specific rental unit, often in an affordable housing building). The program's design is based on best practices and pilot programs in our region, with the explicit goal of improving access for historically marginalized communities who have been disproportionately impacted by homelessness and restricted from housing opportunities.

Regional policy framework

In Spring 2021, representatives from Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties worked together with support from Metro to finalize regional policies and guidelines for the RLRA program. These policies and guidelines were informed by input from more than 110 stakeholders, including people with lived experience of homelessness, culturally specific organizations, service providers, housing providers, the business community, faith leaders and other interested community members.

The resulting [RLRA policy framework](#) provides consistency for participating landlords and tenants while enabling flexibility to meet local needs. The framework aims to streamline screening criteria, simplify application processes, support landlord participation, and reduce eligibility barriers to increase housing access and support long-term housing stability for all participants.

Program launch

The RLRA program launched in July 2021. The program is implemented independently by each county based on the regional policy framework. Each county has one or more designated agencies responsible for administering the rent assistance in accordance with the regional guidelines. Specific program and administrative practices are tailored to reflect local variations and be responsive to the needs and capacities of each county.

Since the program's launch, the counties and Metro have continued to work together to monitor the program's implementation. Quarterly updates to the regional policy framework have been used to clarify expectations, refine specific guidelines in response to lessons learned and support effective implementation.

Regional coordination

The regional RLRA Workgroup has provided an ongoing forum for shared learning and problem solving among the three counties with support from Metro. Regular bi-weekly meetings are used to identify issues needing further regional coordination or clarification, share strategies and sample materials, and discuss potential updates to templates and guidelines. Since the program's launch, the Workgroup has facilitated quarterly updates to the regional policy framework, discussed implementation challenges and solutions, and addressed administrative issues requiring regional coordination.

Templates

To support consistent regional implementation, the counties worked together to develop customized forms and templates for the RLRA program. These include application forms, landlord contracts, tenant agreements outlining rights and responsibilities under the program, tenancy addendums, and contract templates for project-based RLRA. Regional guidelines have also been developed to support the use of the templates through aligned workflows and administrative procedures. To reduce barriers to access, Metro has worked with the counties to translate the tenant-facing forms into seven languages representing each county's and the region's most common languages. Additional languages will continue to be added as needed over time.

Data reporting

The three counties have developed a consistent framework for collecting and reporting on data from the RLRA program to support ongoing accountability. Data teams from each county have co-developed customized data collection and reporting tools for the program, guided by shared regional guidelines. The regional RLRA Workgroup has reviewed and analyzed tri-county data reports on a quarterly basis to monitor progress, identify areas for improvement, and ensure the program is achieving its goals.