

Regional Program Standards

Focus: ☐ WorkSource Centers ☐ Youth Program Services
☒ Other: Economic Opportunity Programs

Topic: Economic Opportunity Programs – Rent Assistance

Date: September 18, 2025

☐ New

☒ Revised

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Overview

The Rent Assistance program supports participants in the Economic Opportunity Program (EOP). The program is administered by designated housing hub providers in Multnomah County, and serves participants enrolled in eligible Career Coaching programs. The Rent Assistance program is intended to provide Rapid Re-Housing and Homelessness Prevention housing services for participants to secure or stabilize their rental housing and allow them to actively engage in workforce development services.

Rapid Re-Housing services are designed to rapidly connect households experiencing homelessness to permanent housing. Rapid Re-Housing provides short-term rental assistance with Career Coaching. The goals are to help people obtain housing quickly, increase self-sufficiency and remain housed. Rapid Re-Housing serves individuals that are homeless or fleeing domestic violence.

Homelessness Prevention services are designed to help prevent households who are at risk of becoming homeless from becoming homeless. Homelessness Prevention services provide short-term rental assistance with Career Coaching. The goal is to help people retain their housing to prevent them from becoming homeless. Homelessness Prevention serves individuals that currently have housing or live in an apartment, but who are facing eviction or who may be at risk of becoming homeless.

There are two staff functions within the Rent Assistance program:

- **Rent Assistance Coordinator (hub):** Staff at the hub agency and responsible for completing rent assistance eligibility, assisting participants with their housing search, administering rent assistance funding, completing and maintaining the rent assistance paperwork and file documentation and entering payment and outcome data in the I-Trac Rent Assistance record. Funders may also require data entry into Service Point.
- **Career Coach:** Staff at the eligible Career Coaching Service Provider are responsible for referring participants to the Rent Assistance Coordinator at their assigned hub, creating the Rent Assistance I-Trac record, providing the Rent Assistance Coordinator with the participant's Career Plan, copying or entering allowable services in the I-Trac Rent Assistance record for documenting program engagement and communicating with the Rent Assistance Coordinator.

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Eligibility Requirements by Funding Source

Funding sources that support the Rent Assistance program include:

- A Home for Everyone (AHFE)
- Home Forward Short-Term Rent Assistance (STRA)

Hub Contractors will make funding decisions and follow the eligibility requirements of the funding source that is being utilized for the participant as outlined below.

A Home for Everyone

To receive rent assistance services using A Home for Everyone (AHFE) funding, a participant must meet all the eligibility criteria outlined below:

- Be eligible for and enrolled in the WIOA Adult program, including completion of WIOA Adult Documentation.
- Be eligible for and enrolled in an EOP AHFE, EOP DCJ, EOP Portland program, and meet the Engaged Participant definition below.
- Meet the AHFE Homeless definition below.
- Have a total household income for the 6 months prior to eligibility determination that does not exceed 50% of the Median Family Income (MFI) for the Portland Metropolitan Statistical Area for the participant's household size. Priority is to be given to households at 30% Median Family Income or below. Utilize the Portland Housing Bureau Interactive AMI Tool to calculate 30% and 50% of the MFI: [Interactive AMI Tool | Tableau Public](#).
- Identified as a Multnomah County resident. Rent assistance may be available for Rapid Rehousing participants who find housing outside of Multnomah County; funder approval is required. To secure approval, the hub must email their Worksystems Contract Manager and detail the circumstances. Worksystems will request funder written approval and provide it back to the hub for file documentation.

When the hub determines that AHFE is the best funding source for a participant's rent assistance, and the participant is not enrolled in an AHFE EOP program, the hub is required to verify that the participant is eligible for AHFE funding. The hub must complete the *Multnomah County Joint Office of Homeless Services Experiencing or at Imminent Risk of Long-Term Homelessness Form A/B* (documenting income and homeless status) and verify the remaining AHFE eligibility requirements through I-Trac participant file data.

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AHFE Homeless Definition

The participant is the Head of Household and is applying for homeless services and is at substantial risk of homelessness and/or is experiencing any form of homelessness. Head of Household currently meets at least one of the following criteria:

- Fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence. Includes dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, trafficking or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence and lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other safe, permanent housing.
- Housed through another Homeless Assistance Housing Program during the past three years and is not currently being served in that program.
- In an institution or publicly funded system of care. For example, hospital, jail, prison or foster care.
- Literally Homeless. Is staying in a tent, car, emergency shelter, transitional housing or hotel.
- In housing and will become Literally Homeless within 14 days of the AHFE application and/or has received an eviction notice (this includes households that are involuntarily doubled up).
- Has been literally homeless, institutionalized in a publicly funded system of care and/or involuntarily doubled up for a combined total of 12 or more months over the past three years.
- Is being served in an intensive case management program. For example, Assertive Community Treatment.

Engaged Participant

To be referred to and approved to receive rent assistance, participants must be engaged with their Career Coach by meeting one of the following engagement criteria:

- The participant is actively working with their Career Coach and engaged in Training, career planning, job search or other activities specified in their career plan. The participant must also attend established appointments and maintain scheduled contact with the Career Coach at least monthly.

OR

- The participant has completed the participating program's Career Plan activities and is employed and maintaining monthly contact with the Career Coach.

Career Coaches must verify program engagement in the Rent Assistance I-Trac record as noted in the Service Definitions section of these Regional Program Standards. Service engagement must be entered in each month the participant is searching for housing, and then each subsequent month that rent assistance is received until rent assistance ends. The monthly verification of services must occur prior to the rent payment being released.

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Transferring Participant

Participants may be transferred from one Rent Assistance hub Service Provider to another Rent Assistance hub when it is in the best interest of the participant. Participant transfers require written permission from Worksystems prior to transferring any participants. Permission is obtained through an email to the hub's Contract Manager. When a transfer occurs, the current Service Provider must:

- Confirm in writing from the participant that they agree to the transfer and document the agreement and reason for transfer through a case note in I-Trac.
- Obtain approval from the current Rent Assistance hub Program Manager and the hub Program Manager at the Service Provider the participant is transferring to. This is documented in the transfer record in I-Trac on the Outcomes Tab.
- Upload to I-Trac all eligibility and performance documentation obtained prior to the transfer date.
- Enter a transfer record on the Outcomes Tab in the Rent Assistance I-Trac record.

All eligibility documentation for the enrollment remains the responsibility of the Service Provider that collected and validated the documents. If there are eligibility documentation questions that arise during monitoring that leads to questioned or disallowed costs, the Service Provider that managed the eligibility documentation process is responsible for the questioned/disallowed costs. All performance is the responsibility of the new Service Provider.

Service Definitions

Career Coaching

Career Coaching is relationship-based guidance and coaching dedicated to increasing the self-sufficiency of participants through unsubsidized employment. It includes assessment of employment-related skills, identification of achievable career and training goals, and development of an achievable Career Plan. Career Coaches support participants in the execution of their Career Plan and attainment of their goals by building a relationship of support and accountability.

Data Entry: Where the participant is enrolled in an eligible Career Coaching program, the Career Coach must enter their program services in the qualifying program's I-Trac record and copy the service to the Rent Assistance record. Refer to the *Rent Assistance I-Trac Data Entry Guide* for additional information. Services cannot be open ended – all services must have a start and end date at the time of data entry.

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Rapid Rehousing

Rapid Re-Housing services quickly connect households experiencing homelessness to permanent housing. Rapid Re-Housing provides short-term rental assistance and Career Coaching services. The goals are to help people obtain housing quickly, increase self-sufficiency and remain housed. Rapid Re-Housing services are provided to individuals that are currently experiencing homelessness or fleeing domestic violence.

Data Entry: The Career Coach enrolls a participant in this service on the *I-Trac Registration Tab* in the *Other Rent Assistance Information Control – Housing Type at Registration*. The hub tracks assistance with Rapid Re-Housing services by entering the Rapid Rehousing (hub) service in I-Trac on the *Services Tab*. This service sets the *Participation Date* but does not update the Rent Assistance *Last Qualifying (LQ) Fund Service Date*. Services cannot be open-ended – all services must have a start and end date at the time of data entry. Refer to the *Rent Assistance I-Trac Data Entry Guide* for additional information.

Homeless Prevention

Homelessness Prevention services help prevent households at risk of becoming homeless from becoming homeless. Homelessness Prevention provides short-term rental assistance and Career Coaching services. The goals are to help people retain their housing to prevent them from becoming homeless. Homelessness Prevention services serve individuals that currently have housing or live in an apartment, but who are facing eviction or who may be at risk of becoming homeless.

Data Entry: The Career Coach enrolls a participant in this service on the *Registration Tab* in the *Other Rent Assistance Information Control – Housing Type at Registration*. The hub tracks the Homeless Prevention service by entering the Homeless Prevention (hub) service in I-Trac on the *Services Tab*. This service sets the *Participation Date* but does not update the Rent Assistance *Last Qualifying (LQ) Fund Service Date*. Services cannot be open-ended – all services must have a start and end date at the time of data entry. Refer to the *Rent Assistance I-Trac Data Entry Guide* for additional information.

Rent Assistance Expenses

Administrative Requirements

Prerequisites

- **Current Career Plan:** The referring Career Coach must upload the participant's current Career Plan (updated within the last 3 months) to the participant's I-Trac record utilizing the *I-Trac Document Upload Tool*, when submitting the rent assistance referral. Document Upload type is *Individual Plan*.
- **Program Application:** Rent Assistance staff must verify that the Rent Assistance I-Trac program Application was signed by the participant before processing any rent assistance payments.
- **Monthly Engagement:** The Rent Assistance Coordinator must verify monthly engagement of a service in I-Trac before authorizing a rent payment.

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Documentation of Support Service Need

The support must be necessary to enable the participant to engage in housing or job search activities, Training, or employment. Staff must complete documentation that supports need. Documentation of need is completed through the I-Trac rent assistance record that documents the participant meets the rent assistance eligibility element of the AHFE or STRA homeless definition as defined above in the *Eligibility Requirements of Funding Source* section of these Regional Program Standards.

I-Trac Documentation

All expenses are to be tracked in the participant's I-Trac Rent Assistance record on the *Payments Tab* in the *Rent Assistance Payments Control*.

Fiscal Procedures

Payment and documentation requirements are noted with each payment type below. Each hub must establish a written process to ensure proper fiscal procedures are followed, including paying from original invoices and securing original receipts. ***Payments may not be made directly to participants but must be made directly to vendors.*** Documentation of payments is maintained in the financial records attached to the payment record.

Limitations

- Participants not engaged in Training may receive up to four months of rent assistance payments.
- Participants engaged in Training activities may receive up to six months of rent assistance payments. The hub is required to verify the Training dates in the participant's I-Trac record.
- The rental unit must be located in Multnomah County. To request exceptions, contact your Worksystems Contract Manager.

There is a lifetime maximum of one instance of rent assistance services for each participant.

Note: WIOA funds may not be used to pay any of the below rent assistance expenses

Rent Assistance Expenses Definitions

Housing Related Costs

Payments for services or items necessary to move into stable housing. Allowable costs include fees for and related to Rent Well classes, access to Community Warehouse, housing related legal fees, household items, temporary storage unit costs and U-Haul or similar truck or van rental to move furniture.

Whenever possible, community resources such as Goodwill and Community Warehouse should be utilized. Housing-related costs should be coordinated with the Career Coach(es) to ensure there is not duplication of payments.

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Required Documentation: Payments must be made directly to the store, merchant or organization where the purchase is being made. Original, detailed receipts are required to be attached to the payment documentation.

Motel Vouchers

Payment for homeless participants to stay in a motel while they are searching for permanent housing.

Required Documentation: Payments must be made directly to the motel; itemized receipts from the motel where the purchase was made are required to be attached to the payment documentation.

Move-In Fee

A fee that landlords charge related to moving into a unit. This often includes last month's rent, which a landlord requires to be paid up-front before an individual moves in.

Required Documentation: Payment from an itemized invoice directly to the landlord/rental/property management company.

Property Debt

Debt owed to a former landlord. Allowable only if the debt is the only barrier to landlord acceptance of a housing application. For Home Forward funding, there must be an approved unit that a current landlord is willing to rent.

Required Documentation: Payment from an itemized invoice directly to the landlord/rental/property management company

Rent

Rent payment may include utility costs in situations where landlords add utilities to rent total that will be covered under rent payments and follow below required documentation measures. For AHFE funding, rent payments toward Section 8 or public housing units are limited to the costs not covered by the housing voucher. For Home Forward funding, no rent payment is allowed toward Section 8 or public housing units.

Contractor may not request reimbursement for future rent payment expenditures that exceed the immediate month following the service period (e.g. reimbursement for September or later rent expenditures would not be allowable in July) unless otherwise authorized in writing by Worksystems. Worksystems will request funder approval and forward to hub for file documentation.

Required Documentation: Copy of rental agreement. Payment must be made to the landlord/rental/ property management company.

The following rent payment type is available for participants receiving Homelessness Prevention services:

One to three months' mobile home space rent. Additional months may be requested by Career Coach. The hub has the authority to approve additional months.

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Required Documentation: Payments must be made directly to the landlord/rental/property management company; itemized receipts are required to be attached to the payment documentation. Mobile home space rent assistance requires a copy of the rental agreement. For mortgage or rent-to-own assistance, required documentation will be communicated with approval; payments may only be made to the mortgage-holder.

Rent Application Fee

Fees required by a landlord or property manager of all Applicants related to applying for a housing unit.

Required Documentation: Payment from an itemized invoice directly to the landlord/rental/property management company.

Rent Arrears

The amount of accrued and unpaid obligations arising under a lease with a current landlord.

Required Documentation: Payment from an itemized invoice directly to the landlord/rental/property management company.

When using Home Forward funding for homeless prevention, payment is allowed for up to two months of rent arrears arising under a lease with a current landlord.

Rent Late Fees

Fees related to payment of rent after the date it is due.

Required Documentation: Payment from an itemized invoice directly to the landlord/rental/property management company.

Security Deposit

A predetermined amount of money that landlords require to be paid by all tenants at the beginning of tenancy. These funds can later be used to pay damages to a unit or back rent owed to the landlord.

Payment amount limited to not more than two-times the rent amount.

Required Documentation: Payment from an itemized invoice directly to the landlord/rental/property management company.

Utilities

For participants receiving Rapid Re-Housing services, assistance with utilities is allowable only if it is a barrier for maintaining housing and the participant is unable to access community resources. Types of assistance include:

- **Monthly Expense:** Monthly assistance with current utility costs.
- **Arrears:** Past-due amount owed to utility provider on an open account.
- **Debt:** Utility costs owed to a utility provider on a closed account.
- **Deposit:** Payment to a utility provider needed to get an account open or restarted after shut-off.

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- **Late Fees:** Fees related to payment of utility bills after the date they are due. **Only allowable for participants receiving Homelessness Prevention services. Not allowable using WIOA funds.**

Required Documentation: Clear verification (copy of detailed utility invoice that matches participant's address in I-Trac) of charges due. Payment must be made to the utility/vendor.

Terminating Rent Assistance

If a participant fails to meet the program engagement requirement, the Career Coach must contact the hub as soon as disengagement is determined.

The Career Coach enters a case note to document that the participant failed to meet program engagement requirements of monthly Career Coaching services and sends an email to the hub explaining why the participant is no longer considered engaged and outline the barriers that the participant has faced towards engagement.

The Career Coach and the hub are to discuss the participants' circumstances and what efforts have been made to re-engage them in services. The decision to terminate rent assistance and the related timeline is to be made by the two staff together.

The hub must have a written rent assistance termination policy and follow it. When it has been determined that a participant's rent assistance will be terminated, the hub will send the participant and the landlord a 30-day notice of rent assistance termination. The policy must include a statement that rent assistance may be terminated if the participant does not meet monthly engagement requirements.

Performance

Measure	Calculation Methodology	Performance and Cohort	Data Entry
Housing Supports	Number of participants provided with Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention Services.	Quarter of <i>Participation Date</i>	WellSky and I-Trac
Housing Retention	Denominator Number of Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention enrolled participants who are successfully contacted	Quarter of 6 months after <i>Exit Date</i>	WellSky and I-Trac

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	Numerator Number of contacted participants that retain housing for 6 months (disaggregated by Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention) after financial assistance ends.		
	Denominator Number of Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention enrolled participants who are successfully contacted Numerator Number of contacted participants that retain housing for 12 months (disaggregated by Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention) after financial assistance ends.	Quarter of 12 months after <i>Exit Date</i>	WellSky and I-Trac

Additional Performance and Data Guidance

Case Notes

All data entered in the I-Trac system is defined as a case note. Narrative case notes entered into the system should not repeat information already entered into the participant's I-Trac record, but expand upon, provide context to or augment service or employment data, such as noting successes and challenges and progress toward Career Plan goals. Narrative case notes should not include any medical or treatment information, or personal information that is not relevant to their career plan activities. A case note is also to be completed to document when a participant cannot be located or contacted.

Enrolled Participant

A customer is enrolled when the Rent Assistance Eligibility and Registration process is completed and a *Participation Date* has been set in I-Trac. The service of *Rapid Re-Housing or Homelessness Prevention* is the first service entered by the hub Contractor in the Rent Assistance record after the referral is accepted. This first service sets the *Participation Date*. The Rent Assistance Coordinator cannot pay the rent until the *Participation Date* has been set.

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Program Status

Exit: When a participant has ended Rent Assistance, the Rent Assistance Coordinator must manually enter a hub *Final Rent Exit* service on the *I-Trac Services Tab* and a *Program Status* of *Exit* on the *Outcomes Tab*. The *Exit Date* is the date of the hub *Final Rent Exit* service. Staff may remove an *Exit* for up to 90 days. Beyond 90 days the participant must start a new Rent Assistance enrollment record.

Auto-Exit: If a record goes more than 90 days without a service entered, the I-Trac system will auto-populate an *Auto Exit*.

Pre-Program Exit: When a referral is initiated, and the customer is not accepted into the program. This service may be manually entered in I-Trac by the hub Contractor when a referral is not accepted. The I-Trac system will automatically apply a *Pre-Program Exit* when the hub does not approve the individual within 45 days of the *Application Date* (Referral).

Rent Assistance Outcomes

Type

- At Exit – Housing Status at the point of *Exit*.
- 6 Month Retention (After Exit) – Housing Status at a full 6 months after rent assistance ends.
- 12 Month Retention (After Exit) – Housing status at a full 12 months after rent assistance ends.

Housing Status

- Housed
- Not Housed
- Unable to Contact – Enter this status when hub staff attempts to contact a participant three times and is unable to connect with the participant. Document your attempts to reach the participant in the case notes.
- Received RA Again – Enter this status when a participant has exited and returns after 90 days needing rent assistance again. In this case the participant is re-enrolled into a new Rent Assistance enrollment episode, and this status is entered in the exited Rent Assistance record. When this status is entered the participant's first enrollment episode, outcomes are removed from performance.

Documentation Requirements

The following are file documentation requirements for participants receiving rent assistance funding under the referenced projects. Documentation may be paper located in a physical file (to be always kept in a secure [locked] file location); may be kept in a secure electronic file (secure means limited access/access requiring system permissions and is not in a folder accessible by all staff and with no security built in); or may be in the form of staff attestation through data entry in the I-Trac, WellSky or Agency MIS, as appropriate.

Data entry and Rent Assistance participant file maintenance is the responsibility of the hub agency. All required rent assistance data should be entered into ITrac and WellSky HMIS within 10 days of the associated activity.

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Requirement	Detail	Location
Rent Assistance Program Application	The I-Trac Program Application is to be signed and dated by the participant.	I-Trac Customer Document Upload Tool
AHFE Funded Rent Assistance	When the referred participant is not enrolled in AHFE, and the hub determines that AHFE funds may be used for the rent assistance, the hub is required to verify the participant meets AHFE eligibility requirements. The hub is required to complete the <i>Multnomah County Joint Office of Homeless Services Experiencing or at Imminent Risk of Long-Term Homelessness Form A/B</i> (documenting income and homeless status) and the <i>Rent Assistance Eligibility Checklist</i> to verify the remaining AHFE eligibility requirements through I-Trac participant data.	Participant File
Career Plan	Participant's current Career Plan (updated within the last 3 months)	I-Trac Customer Document Upload Tool
Lease/Rent Agreement	Documentation is required to show that the participant is living in the unit legally and with knowledge of the landlord/property owner	Participant File

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Requirement	Detail	Location
Release of Information	<p>Secure signatures of all adults in the household on the <i>Release of Information</i> printed out of WellSky Community Services (AHFE funds only) and the Rent Assistance Coordination Agency release, including Agency Grievance procedure and Client Confidentiality statement signed by both participant and hub staff.</p> <p>Contractor must post the <i>NW Social Service Connections Notice to Clients of Uses & Disclosures Privacy Notice</i> or its subsequent replacement in its office and/or on its website and also make this document available to participants as part of their intake packet. The longer <i>NW Social Service Connections - Notice to Clients of Uses & Disclosures - Privacy Notice to Clients</i> or its subsequent replacement must be made available to participants upon request.</p>	<p>WellSky</p> <p>Participant File</p>
Rent Assistance	The hub enters all required data in the Rent Assistance I-Trac record and any required data controls including detailed payment information, WellSky ID, name of landlord, date of check of rent paid and month in which rent was paid.	<p>I-Trac Payments Tab</p> <p>WellSky</p>
Rent Assistance Follow-Up	Evidence of follow-up contact at 6 and 12 months following the date that rent assistance ended; entered by the hub in appropriate system(s).	<p>I-Trac</p> <p>WellSky</p>
30-day End of Assistance	Copy of letter sent to landlord and participant, along with any amendments (if applicable).	Participant File