

MULTNOMAH COUNTY

FY 2025 Budget Work Session Follow Up

County Human Services (DCHS)

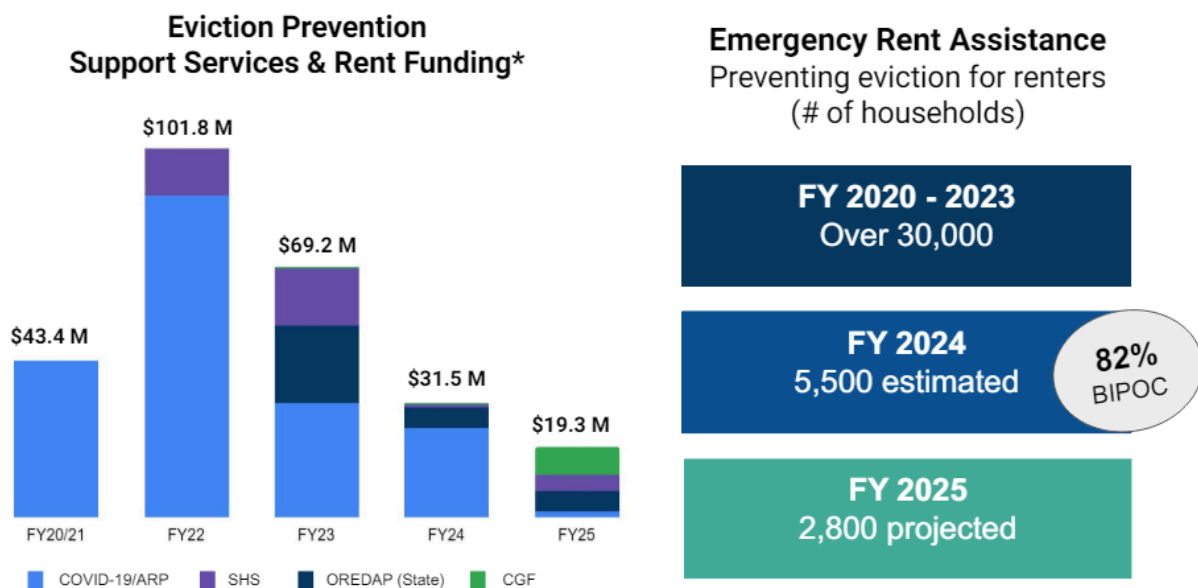
May 15, 2024



Commissioner Brim-Edwards (District 3)

1. Can you please provide more information on the increase of 3x in evictions since 2021. What are the causes and best way to approach the problem in order to make a measurable impact?

Eviction Prevention & Emergency Rent 2020-2025



* Amounts reflect funding to eviction partnership (DCHS, JOHS, City of Portland)

FY 2025 Proposed Budget Presentation • 36

Response

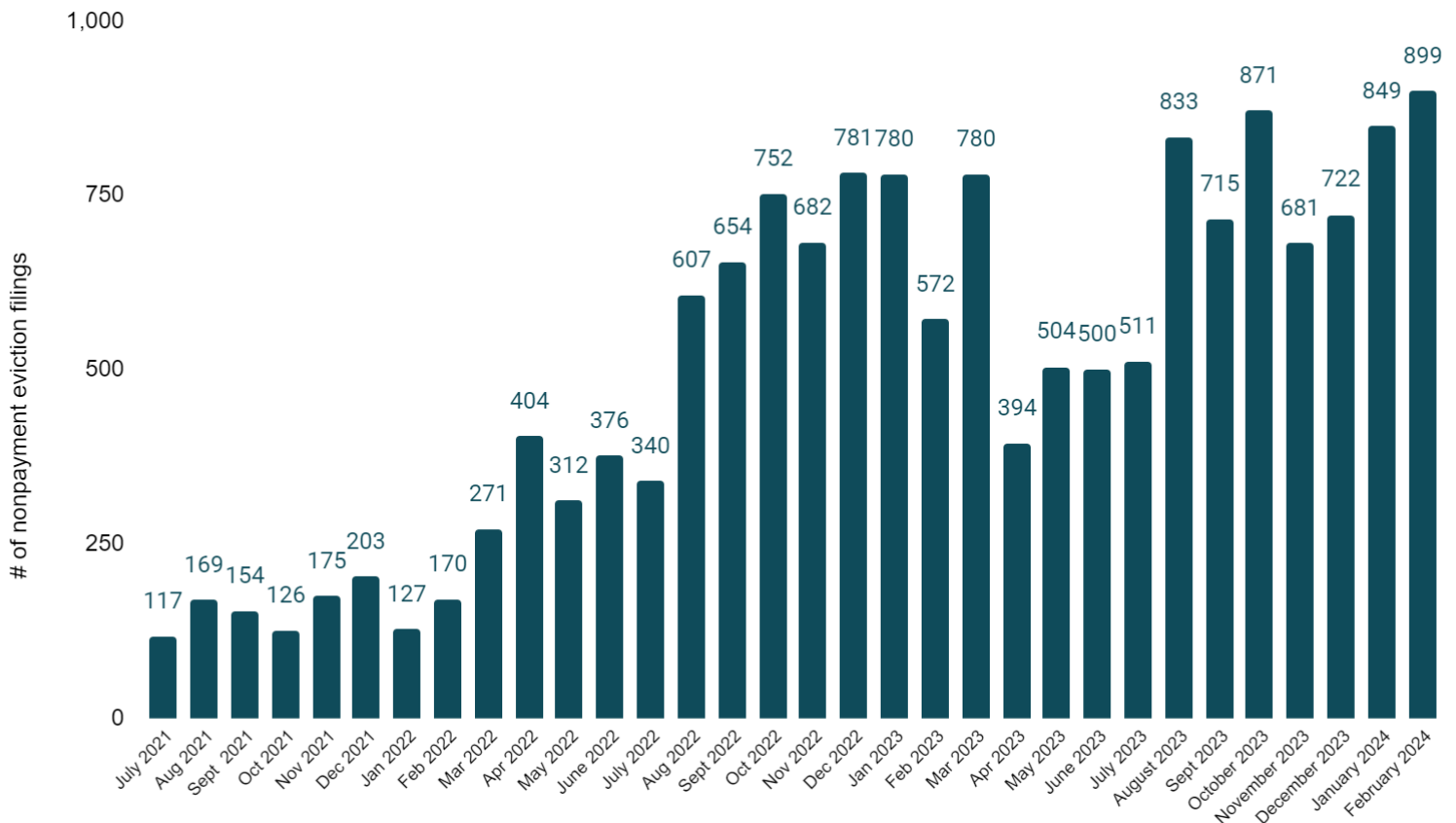
The monthly eviction court cases for non-payment of rent is what has tripled since 2022. This is one of the key data points that help us understand the level of imminent risk of eviction and need for emergency rent assistance.

Our analysis points to the following causes:

1. An eviction moratorium and other emergency tenant protections were in place during the pandemic. With those protections ending or changing, the number of evictions has risen. At the state level (where we have pre-pandemic data to compare), monthly court case filings for evictions now exceed pre-pandemic rates.
2. From FY 2021 through FY 2023 there were large amounts of rent assistance available for households who were impacted economically by the pandemic and struggling to recover. Those dollars have dwindled in FY 2024 and are sunseting.
3. Increases in monthly rent costs following the 2023 change that allowed up to 14.6% annual rent increases (the allowable annual rent increase in 2024 is 10%) and with January 2024 utility rate increases of 17.2% for residential customers.
4. Although unemployment is low (labor participation is strong), BIPOC communities that faced disparities in employment and income before the pandemic continue to face economic challenges and have not recovered at the same rate as other communities. Inflation continues to make it challenging for low-income folks to afford to pay for their basic needs.

The chart below provides more background info. The chart shows the number of eviction court cases filed for nonpayment of rent by month in Multnomah County since the beginning of the pandemic.

Monthly Eviction Court Cases Filed for Nonpayment of Rent -



- Renter protections were in place for more than a year in the first part of the pandemic and during that time landlords could not evict someone for non-payment of rent.
- When the moratorium ceased at the end of February 2022 you can see that eviction cases filed began to increase.
- Other pandemic tenant protections expired in July and October 2022.
- The dip in cases filed from April - July 2023 coincides with HB2001 coming into effect 3/29/23 and changing eviction requirements for landlords (including extending the notice to vacate period to 10 days from 72 hours and requiring

landlords to work with rent assistance providers to allow tenants to pay).

The client follow up survey YFS conducted December 2023 - January 2024 also offers some additional insights into the causes and experiences of folks who needed emergency rent assistance over the last 3 years.

- The top two most common factors reported as causes for experiencing housing instability currently were the cost of rent and household expenses (at 60.9% and 50.2% respectively).
- The next most common reasons included:
 - Not enough hours at work (37.2%)
 - Unemployment (31.6%)
 - Illness (31.4%)
- Medical expenses, large household size and “other” were also reported as reasons for housing instability.

Potential Ways to Approach the Problem to Have Measurable Impact

Based on the above information, DCHS believes the best way to approach the problem in order to have a measurable impact is:

- Continue to invest in preventative services to prevent eviction and homelessness, including emergency rent assistance and supportive services (including triage, outreach, tenant education and advocacy, and eviction defense legal services)
- Continue to focus one-time emergency rent assistance on households where a one-time payment will move the family out of the immediate crisis and bridge short term gaps in resources.

- Increase our investment in deeper supportive services for families where one-time assistance will not stabilize them in future months. These services offer more than one-time crisis services in order to increase economic housing stability through employment support, financial literacy, wraparound services and short term rent (ex. Bienestar's Adelante program).
- Continue to invest in emergency rent assistance to prevent significant numbers of households from ending up in homelessness which creates trauma and requires intensive and costly interventions. Find opportunities to invest in ongoing funding for rent assistance to allow for program stability, staff retention and further build out of program design.
- Engage in other policy areas including economic development, basic income, rent control, taxation reform, etc to address the upstream and root causes of economic and housing instability.

Commissioner Brim-Edwards (District 3)

2. Climate Resiliency - who are we serving with this program?
What is the eligibility criteria and how do we provide services?
How are our services different from, comparable or complimentary to services offered by the City of Portland?

YFS: Significant Program Changes

- **Eviction Prevention/Emergency Rent** (25133A \$5.1M ongoing, B & C \$10.7M OTO)
 - Sustaining access & outreach, support services and rent assistance to stabilize households at imminent risk of eviction. Reduced level from FY 2024.
- **Family Resource Navigators (FRN)** (25146 - \$3M OTO)
 - Sustaining funding for lower number of FRN positions at highest need SUN Community Schools (60 schools).
- **Climate Resilience** (25121B - \$152,948 OTO)
 - Continues our environmental justice work in partnership with the Office of Sustainability and Environmental Health; OTO funded position helps leverage additional resources to promote climate justice.
- **Domestic Violence Housing Support** (25050B - \$135,329 ongoing, \$598,302 OTO)
 - SHS funding for 2.00 County FTE and 2 positions with culturally specific contractors to provide housing assessment, navigation, retention support and wraparound services.
- **Domestic Violence Services to Highly Vulnerable Survivors** (25047B - \$236,655 ongoing)
 - Sustaining Response Advocate and culturally specific contractor that were ARPA funded.



OTO = One-Time-Only

FY 2025 Proposed Budget Presentation • 35

Response

This program is currently known as the Wood Burning Device Exchange. The Program was designed initially to encourage residents of Multnomah County to remove their older, smoky wood stoves and replace them with cleaner electric heat pumps for a healthier home and cleaner air.

This initiative aligns with the County's 2015 Climate Action Plan, the 2017 commitment to 100% renewable energy by 2050 and the 2023 Climate Justice Plan Framework.

This initiative has expanded in FY 2024 to include other “bulk fuel” replacements such as fireplaces, older gas stoves & furnaces and pellet stoves.

The program contributes to both individual and environmental health benefits. As such it is a partnership of the Office of Sustainability, Health Department and DCHS.

Outcomes

- Since March of 2023: **100** devices replaced/removed (74 wood stoves, 26 other)
- 3 Year Program goal of 50 exceeded in 9 months
- Leveraging significant additional resources - over \$1.25 million

Prioritization

Referrals come from multiple sources. Low-income households in geographic areas with higher health risk from wood and other smoke and outside the City of Portland are prioritized. Referrals come mostly from community based organizations, cultural communities, and now a large portion is via word of mouth. The program conducts outreach to community and neighborhood organizations as well as to the community directly and County does outreach periodically as part of Wood Burning Reduction efforts.

How it Relates to City of Portland Program

This program differs from the Portland Clean Energy Fund (PCEF) program in several ways. The City program:

- is not available to those not living within the City of Portland geographically
- does not require the removal of the wood burning devices
- has income limits.

Our program has a sliding scale of services based on income but is open to all income levels and all residences within Multnomah County. As a smaller program, we are also quite a bit more nimble than similar programs and our project turn around time is usually less than a month as opposed to 6 months to a year.

Currently, the City of Portland supports the County's program largely as a layered service provider/partner. Many of our homes need additional repairs due to deferred maintenance, of which we often partner with PHB funded CBO's who have critical home repair funding as well as the city's lead paint repair program. To date, we have leveraged these funds to replace a roof, redo a whole home's electrical, and in multiple cases to fill the funding gap that current HVAC funds could not cover. These strong working relationships put us in a good position moving forward as PCEF funds have not been available to government organizations, but according to their messaging will be in the upcoming fiscal year.

Opportunities for Future Funding

There are several opportunities for funding in the future including the federal Housing and Economic Recovery Act (HERA) funding, White House Justice 40 Initiative, and City of Portland PCEF funds. In all of these cases, those providing the funds have already contacted DCHS staff encouraging us to apply.

Commissioner Brim-Edwards (District 3)

3. IDD - how do we connect clients to employment?

IDD: Economic Stability

Employment Support Services

IDD offers funded employment supports to assist with job skill development and sustained, integrated employment at the prevailing wage.

In FY24 **365 IDD clients have received over \$4M** in funded employment supports across 5 categories.

Project SEARCH Internship Program

- 9 month paid internship
- 8 interns with I/DD
- 3 office rotations
- Transferable work & social skills
- Career exploration
- Intended outcome = year round, competitive & integrated employment, 16+ hours, at the prevailing wage
- 100% Graduation FY 2023
- 63% of FY 2023 Cohort employed in the community at the prevailing wage



Response

Eligibility:

Employment is one of the services that can be provided to any Multco IDD client receiving [Title XIX services](#) at the minimum age of eighteen. The case manager is responsible for supporting adult clients with the Career development plan (CDP). This is completed for the adult client's Individual services plan (ISP) specified for the purposes of establishing which employment supports should be set up for the individual.

Employment Engagement Process:

Funding for employment services is allocated via Title XIX services authorized through Multnomah County IDDSD.

Service coordinators with our program set up various agreements for service access and implementation with third party community providers to facilitate supports for clients in their employment journey. These supports can include the following:

Employment Path Services, in various environments, such as the community or at the facility space operated by the providers

Small Group Employment; individual clients receive pay at the minimum rate

Discovery: an assessment report showcasing the client's abilities and aptitudes along with how these skills can be applied to the current local job market

Initial Job Coaching, for a period of 6 months

Ongoing Job Coaching, for a period of 18 months

Maintenance Job Coaching, for an additional 12 months as advocated for by the client and their services team including the IDSD services coordinator.

The services coordinator closely monitors the process, job satisfaction with the client, provider and adjusts the career development plan when necessary. In addition, they can also provide the following case management styled activities for their caseload clients based on the individual needs of a specific client: choice counseling around Discovery, pre-employment job shadow opportunities/resources, and Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVR) branch location preferences. Here is a link to our program's policy and procedure on employment: [Employment Policy](#). Page five of this policy has the steps a services coordinator would take when referring a client to OVR services.

In discussing employment services for our clients, I would like to illustrate how these supports function via a specific example which is

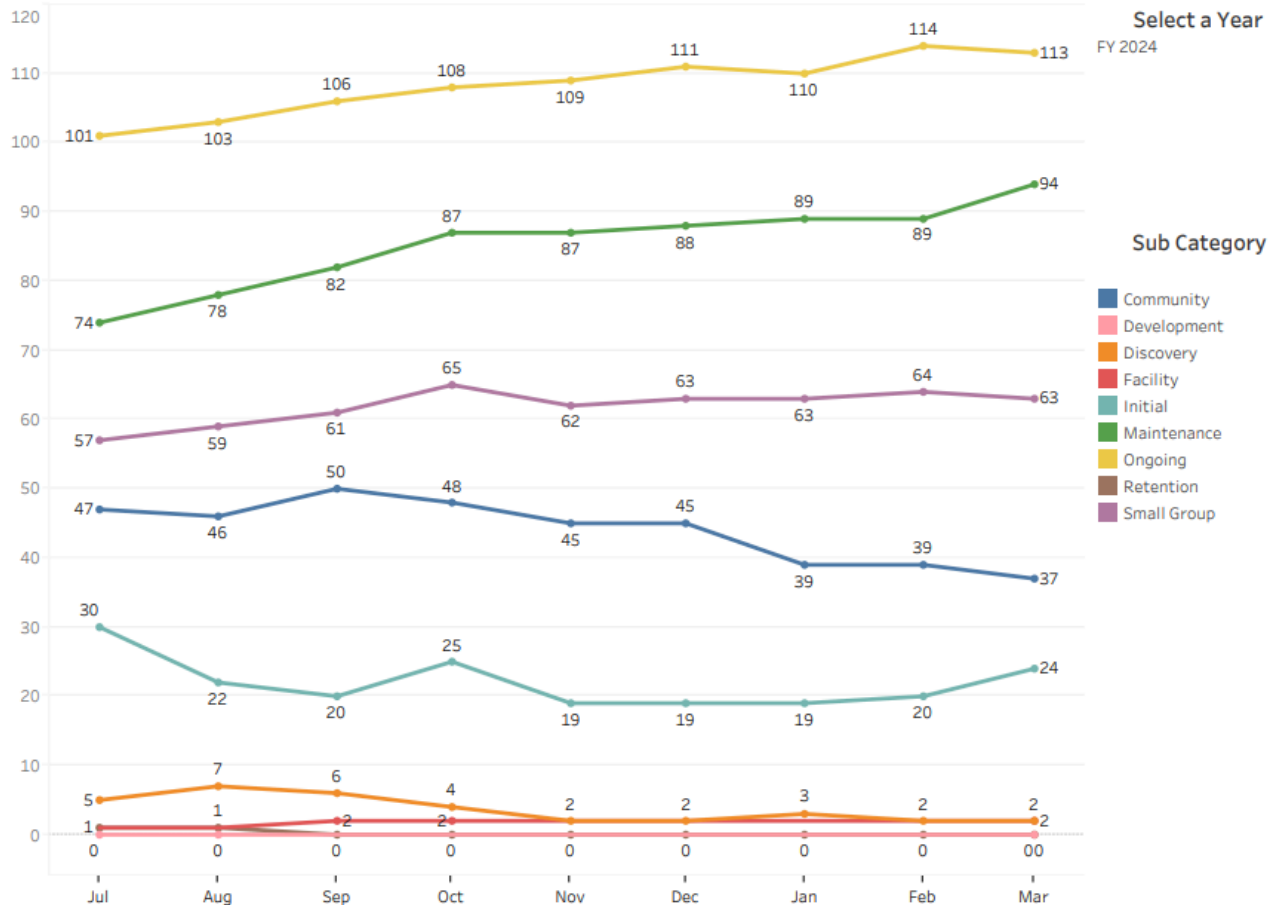
an ongoing collaboration between Multnomah County IDDSD and a community provider organization, Albertina Kerr. The specific example is the **Project Search** nine month unpaid internship program for participants in the I/DD community. Project Search supports program interns experiencing a developmental or intellectual disability in workplace settings where the interns learn all aspects of establishing and maintaining employment. The program is divided into a series of three internship rotations lasting 10-12 weeks each. The rotations give the interns opportunities to explore various careers and develop competitive job skills. Project Search interns can receive individualized worksite accommodations and adaptations to ensure their success regarding their internship journey, along with mentorship from department champions, instructors, and skills trainers. The overarching goal for each participant is to secure competitive, paid, integrated employment within the intern's community. The Project Search experience is designed to provide individualized job development for interns based on their unique experiences, strengths, and skills.

In addition to Albertina Kerr, the most prevalent community providers who currently support our clientele with employment services include, but are not limited to, the following list of agencies: Dungarvin, Pacific Opportunities, Abilities at Work, Community Vision, Dirkse, Trellis, the Good 2 Go agency, and Exceed Enterprises. Our clients have accessed various positions in a wide variety of inclusive employment environments, including Safeway, Dollar Tree, Pizza Hut, Washman, Fred Meyer, New Seasons, and Jersey Mike's. If you would like to arrange a visit to one of these job sites to observe our employment supports actively transpiring in the local community, please reach out to me so arrangements can be made.

Employment Data Stats for Client

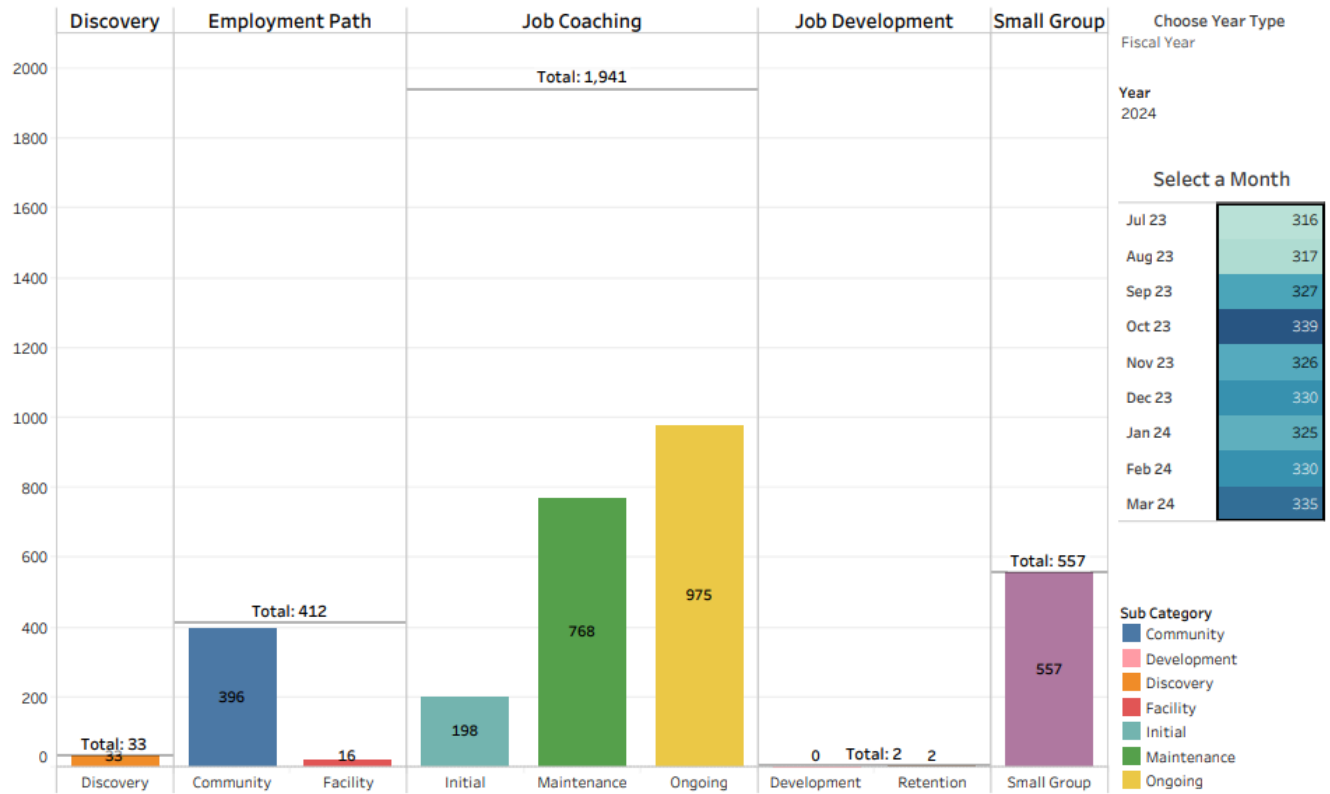


Monthly Employment Services by Sub-Category



Please contact iddtableauusers@multco.us if you have any question about this dashboard. v2.01 01/31/2022

Client Employment Services



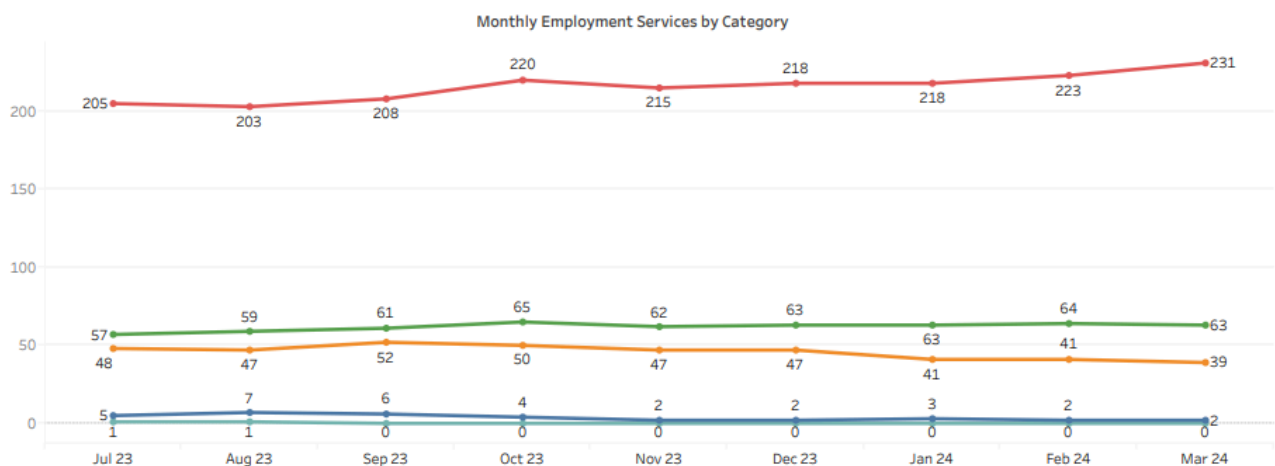
Please contact jddtableauusers@multco.us if you have any question about this dashboard. v2.01 01/31/2022



Monthly Employment Service Trends



Note: Total monthly employment services contains duplicate clients, as clients can access multiple categories each month.



Please contact jddtableausers@multco.us if you have any question about this dashboard. v2.01 01/31/2022

Commissioner Meieran (District 1)

4. Where are the tenant protections and legal resources budgeted for our prevention efforts? Please provide the information by program offer.

Response

The following chart reflects the investments in eviction-related tenant information, advocacy and legal services in the Chair's FY 2025 Proposed Budget. It also includes the one-time investment the Board made mid-year FY 2024, that is not continued in the proposed budget.

Provider	Supportive Service Description	FY 2025 Amount	Dept/ Program Offer
Community Alliance of Tenants	Renters rights & resources information, education, and advocacy. Delivered through hotline, workshops, events and outreach. Referral to legal support and advocacy.	\$111,564	DCHS/25131C
Metropolitan Public Defender	Legal services and support for households with eviction notices. Legal representation to dismiss the case. Court outreach. Legal representation to cure eviction in court.	\$334,692	DCHS/25131C
Oregon Law Center	Legal services for households with a non-payment eviction case filed against them. Resolve evictions. Connect with State eviction prevention rent assistance when available.	\$338,410	JOHS/30100
City of Portland Eviction Legal Defense (ELD) Program Subcontracted providers: Metropolitan Public Defender, PCC, United Way	Fall 2023 Underspent ARPA revenue allocation of \$2.1 million to increase City's ELD Program and give access to residents in the rest of the county. Legal services and rent assistance payments. Note: The Commons Law Center was given access to rent assistance through a pot at Bienestar as part of this funding.	\$0	N/A

Within the FY 2025 budget, DCHS is also planning to do additional outreach in FY 2025 to tenants, with a focus on households with court cases filed for non-payment of rent (ex. mailers, text messages, social media messaging)

Commissioner Meieran (District 1)

5. I understand that the Department of Housing and Urban Development has identified a 10% increase in fair market rent in our community. In order to meet that increase in rental costs, does funding for all short-term rent assistance increase by 10%? What other strategies are included in the proposed budget to ensure housing access is maximized while rents have increased by 10%?

Response

There are many limitations to Fair Market Rent (FMR) values. One FMR is calculated for the Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro area and it is very difficult to find units that are at or below FMR across Portland and particularly in higher cost neighborhoods. For this reason, the RLRA program allows households to rent units that are up to 120% of FMR. So we essentially cover the cost of the unit that the individual or family is able to move into.

Over the last 5 years we saw a steep increase in rent assistance funding from Federal and State sources. This allowed us to serve many people in need of Emergency Rent Assistance. As we navigate a significant reduction in available funds we are continuing to reflect and adjust to meet the needs of our community.

Emergency and Short Term Rent Assistance is always adjusted to meet the current needs of the individual or family being served. This means paying past due rent owed, current month and sometimes future payments to prevent eviction. This allows for tenants to remain housed while the family makes adjustments for longer term housing stability.

YFS has not seen increases in state or federal funding to adjust for rises in the cost of rent. Emergency and short term rent assistance programs (where we are not committing to long-term or permanent support) we end up scaling up/down the number of households we can serve annually based on the cost of housing. If we were to receive additional funding we could continue to serve a higher # of households and with enough increase, we could sustain the numbers served in FY 2024.

Commissioner Stegman (District 4)

6. Clarity about why Program #25147B - YFS - Food Security / Pantry Enhancement was not included in the chair's budget. Would now like to know what other DCHS programs are serving this need?

Response

As part of the SUN Service System, DCHS funds additional food pantry sites at other schools and we will share the Oregon Food Bank food finder [Oregon Food Bank Food Finder](#) to support families and SUN sites in identifying local pantry locations.