

Short Term Rent Assistance Program (General Housing funds) Eligibility, Policy and Procedures Manual (July 2024 – June 2025)

Households who have received a Non-Payment Eviction Notice and are under 80% Median Income may be eligible for low barrier OREDAP funds. Visit the following webpage to view the OREDAP guidelines and download application forms:
<https://multco.us/dd/short-term-rent-assistance-program>

Admission Criteria:

Evaluation of Need

Multnomah County Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities (MCIDD) strives to provide the short term financial assistance necessary to support individuals in obtaining and maintaining stable, affordable housing.

The following are criteria to receive assistance and how we determine the level of assistance provided. You may be denied assistance if the request does not meet the following criteria.

1. At least one member of the household is **enrolled in Mult. Co. Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.**
2. **Homeless or at risk of homelessness.**
3. **Residence located in Multnomah County** for which assistance is requested (there may be exceptions for extenuating circumstances).
4. Applicant has a **stable housing plan** demonstrating the ability to maintain housing following the receipt of assistance.
5. Budget demonstrates that the household has a current **need for assistance.**
 - Expenses incurred by immediate household members only will be evaluated when determining need for assistance.
6. **Necessity of expense** causing the need for assistance:
 - Only necessary/required expenses will be considered when determining the level of assistance to be received.
 - A reasonable attempt was made to avoid the circumstances leading to the need for assistance.
 - If funds are requested as a result of overdrawn accounts, lost or stolen money, a copy of bank statements, a police report, or other form of verification should be provided by the applicant. Assistance provided for this reason can only be provided once for each client. The applicant's plan for stability needs to include a strategy for safekeeping money (e.g. direct deposit, automatic payment to landlord, representative payee).

- An expense that is considered reasonable (per general industry standards). The following guidelines will be used to determine what can be considered when determining an assistance amount:
 1. Up to \$150/month in combined cable and internet expenses
 2. Up to \$100/month per phone line. Only one phone line per person can be included.
 3. Receipts for large purchases (over \$500) will need to be submitted to verify expense.
- 7. **Lifetime limit:** There is a lifetime limit of 24 months of assistance for some funding streams.
- 8. **Moves:** If the household is moving, the move must be necessary or required. Examples might include, but are not limited to:
 - The level of services the client needs increases or decreases
 - Safety issues requiring relocation
 - Overcrowding or rent amount in unsustainable
- 9. **Licensed Care Facility:** Clients living in licensed care facilities may only apply for assistance to cover expenses related to their portion of the cost to live in the facility and are the specific responsibility of our client to pay. For example, room and board can be paid if the client is unable to cover these costs on a short-term basis. We do not cover the business costs related to the business at large, given the business is receiving service rates that are to be used to pay for housing costs, and the costs for the whole business at large are not the responsibility of our client in the home.
- 10. **Response Time:** If requested supporting documentation is not received within 30 days of the application date the request will be denied.

When considering participant enrollment and stability of the housing plan, MCIDDS considers these factors:

1. Applicant has **sought income** from appropriate sources (earned income, disability benefits, TANF, unemployment, child support, etc.).
2. Prospects for income development if needed finances are not currently in place.
3. Barriers present that will impede the ability for stable housing in the future.
 - If barriers are present, is there a plan to address the barriers to improve housing stability.
4. Support resources present, if necessary, that will aid in the success of the applicant maintaining stable housing.
 - Examples of support resources: social support networks, family and other natural supports; engagement in services such as receiving skills training or payee services; participation in mental health or substance abuse treatment.

Amount of financial assistance and who can be paid.

1. **General Housing Assistance Funds: \$1200 Maximum for the fiscal year (7/1/24-6/30/25).** If OREDAP funding was approved, these funds count towards the maximum a household can receive in General Housing Assistance funds. *[Updated 7/15/24]*
 - i. Exceptions to the limit may be approved for homeless individuals seeking IDD residential placement.
 - ii. Assistance limits apply to the whole household.
2. **Fiscal year starts July 1st and ends June 30th.**

3. Eligible applications are approved on a first come first served basis.
4. Waitlist: Applications will be accepted at any time and will be put on a waitlist for the following month if received after funds have been exhausted for the current month.
5. **All assistance is paid directly to the party to whom funds are owed, on behalf of the applicant. Assistance cannot be provided directly to the applicant or their family, or be used to reimburse the applicant for their expenses.**

Spending Down Excess Funds at Fiscal Year End:

1. At year end if it is projected that there will be excess funds at the years fiscal end, eligible households may be able to apply for additional assistance funds (typically in May and June).
2. An announcement will be emailed to case managers/personal agents alerting them to the availability of additional funding and updates to this policy.

Income Limits

Annual gross income limits vary depending upon the funding source available at the time the assistance is paid. The income guidelines below are effective through April 2024.

2024 Annual Median Income Guidelines								
Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
50%	\$41,300	\$47,200	\$53,100	\$59,000	\$63,750	\$68,450	\$73,200	\$77,900
80%	\$66,080	\$75,520	\$84,960	\$94,400	\$102,000	\$109,520	\$117,120	\$124,640

*See Steps to Verify Income Eligibility for more details regarding the income verification process.

Eligible Expenses

- **Rent assistance for arrears and current month (Mobile home space rent included)**
 - **Future rent (due beyond 30 days from application date) is not eligible.**
- **Security deposits and move-in fees - only when a move is necessary or required.**
- **Application Fees** - CM/PA has determined that a unit is available for rental and a verbal screening has been completed with property manager. Maximum of 3 application fee payments
- **Late Rent Fee**
- **Debt to a past landlord or utility** - cannot be with Home Forward. Must be the final barrier to obtaining permanent/stable housing.
- **Mortgage Assistance** (conditions apply)
- **Utility Assistance** - must provide notice indicating account is at past due and written in lease that tenant is responsible for payment of utilities.
- **Small allocation of funding for non-leasing expenses** (extra conditions apply):

[Update as of 12/12/19: Due to the increased need for assistance in the IDD community, non-leasing expenses are not available for funding unless there is a direct and imminent risk of homelessness associated with the need for assistance.]

- Conversion costs for making a unit ADA Accessible
 - Storage for up to 2 months for clients who are between units and would otherwise lose their belongings
 - Moving Expenses
 - Cleaning a unit and removing debris (“a muck out”), if the client will otherwise be evicted
 - Identification, Social Security card, and/or birth certificate if required for housing
 - Expenses that promote housing stability for assisted households
- **Motel Vouchers**
 - **Housing Plan** - Clients in the process of seeking IDD residential placement would be considered to have a housing plan. All other applicant's must have determined the following:
 1. Long term housing has been identified.
 2. Move in date has been set and will occur by the end of the voucher period.
 3. A plan has been made to pay the deposit.
 - **Exceptions can be made to the housing plan requirement for the approval of up to 7 nights of motel vouchers if the applicant is in imminent danger due to domestic violence or other type of imminent threat and shelters/natural resources are not a viable housing resource.**
 - **Exhaust Other Resources** - Homeless shelters, natural supports and applicants own resources must be exhausted prior to the request for motel vouchers.
 1. If the applicant's health and/or safety would be at risk if housed in an alternative housing arrangement, such as a shelter, please explain these risks on the request form.
 2. Shelter information is available by calling 211.
 3. If the household refuses to stay in an appropriate shelter or emergency housing alternative, and health/safety issues do not preclude this as a viable resource, the household is ineligible for motel vouchers.
 - **Eligible motels** – we are required to use motels that contract with Home Forward's Voucher Program.
 - **7 nights is the maximum that will be authorized at one time.**
 - Renewal for additional weeks will be dependent upon progress made toward obtaining permanent housing and program funding limits.

Process for Requesting Funds

- I. **Needs assessment:** Service Coordinator/Personal Agent (SC/PA) receives request for assistance from applicant, screens for criteria on page 1-4 of this policy document and determines the level of need for assistance.

2. **Review alternative resources:** SC/PA accesses possible alternative or supplemental resources that are available (Examples: domestic violence services, shelters, other community/natural supports) and applies for services as needed.
3. **Review OREDAP - Emergency Rent Assistance Program eligibility criteria:** Review the OREDAP Fund eligibility criteria on our [Short Term Rent Asst. website](#). If applicant would be eligible for OREDAP funds follow the steps on the website link above to apply.
4. **Housing plan is developed:** The housing plan must demonstrate that the client is able to achieve long-term housing stability following their receipt of assistance. The future budget section of the Housing Assistance Request form will need to demonstrate the household's ability to get their future budget to balance.
5. **Complete the Housing Assistance Request Form:** The form can be completed by the household directly, case manager or other relevant party and submitted via email to iddhousingassistance@multco.us. Requests for same day motel vouchers must be submitted no later than 12pm.

Tips on how to complete the Housing Assistance Request form:

- Current Income section:
 1. Employment Income: Use NET income amount, not gross. We need to see the actual cash flow for the household.
 2. Paychecks stubs will be required if the household contains an individual that is employed and is not paid in cash.
 3. Food Stamps (SNAP): Include this amount in the Income section of budget.
 - Current Expenses section:
 4. Include all costs that are contributing to their need for assistance (ex. emergency expenses, move in deposit, application fee's paid)
 5. Food: report food stamp amount, plus any additional funds spent on food if applicable
 - Current Income minus Expenses: amount should be equivalent or greater than the amount requested. This demonstrates that they need the amount they are requesting.
 - Future Income: if a household member will be starting new employment, include estimated net wages.
 - Future Income minus Expenses: amount should be zero or a positive amount to demonstrate that they are able to get their budget to balance and have a stable housing plan for the future. If this is a negative amount, the request will be denied for lack of a stable financial/housing plan for the future.
6. **Next steps once a request is approved:**
- Motel Vouchers –**
1. Room Reservation: The Housing Specialist will consult with the CM/PA to determine an appropriate motel (motels are limited to those that contract with Home Forward), will make a reservation with a motel and send a voucher to the motel.
 2. SC/PA is provided with the Housing Assistance Forms Packet that needs to be completed by the client within 5 business days of voucher start date.

3. Check in: Once the motel has received the Motel Voucher the participant can then check into the motel for the night at the appropriate check in time per motel policies. Participant will need to show photo ID to the hotel.

All other types of assistance –

1. SC/PA is provided with the Housing Assistance Forms Packet that must be completed prior to issuing payment.
 - a. SC/PA can request that a promissory letter be emailed to property manager at this time.
2. The housing assistance check is generally mailed to the party to whom funds are owed within 14 days after the required documentation is submitted.
3. Upon completion of required documentation, notification letters will be emailed to the property manager, tenant and case manager informing them that the assistance check will be mailed within 14 days.
 - a. Payment is made to the 3rd party provider and will never be made directly to the tenant.

Signature Requirements on required housing assistance documents:

Physical signatures are required.

Exceptions: If it is not possible to obtain a physical signature in a timely manner, verbal signatures are permitted (via phone, email, text messaging, etc.). The case manager on behalf of the tenants may sign documentation electronically.

If using electronic signature complete the following steps:

- 1) Case Manager (CM) will email the required documentation to the tenants and ask them to review it. If the household does not have email the CM will discuss the contents of the paperwork with the tenant over the phone.
- 2) **Each adult** will need to send you an email or text approving you to sign the housing assistance documents on their behalf. If the household does not have email, CM will need to obtain verbal approval from each adult over the phone.
- 3) **Signature Verification Form: If the household approves CM to electronically sign housing assistance documents on their behalf, CM will need to complete the Signature Verification form.**
- 4) CM will complete the housing forms packet and type in the names of each adult in the household and dates signature approval was granted.
- 5) **CM will send a copy of the each adults approval email or text and the Signature Verification form to: iddhousingassistance@multco.us**

If request is Denied:

- Applicant can choose to appeal the decision.
- The IDD Short Term Rent Assistance Program Grievance Policy can be downloaded from our [Short Term Rent Assistance website](#).

Timeline for Payment

1. Required documentation is due on Wednesday's at 12:00pm in order for payments to mail out the following Wednesday.
 - If documentation is incomplete, the payment will be delayed.
 2. There are occasionally delays if staff are unavailable or behind schedule, or if there are issues with confirming tax identification of property managers/service providers. The Housing Specialist will alert the CM/PA if delays are anticipated.
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Follow-up and reporting:

1. The Housing Assistance Forms Packet will contain Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) forms which collect demographic information regarding the participating household. The information from these forms is entered into the HMIS database, as required by the Federal Bureau of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Home Forward.
 2. The Housing Specialist will contact the SC/PA at 6 and 12-month intervals following the assistance provided to the client, to obtain housing follow-up information. The rent assistance is approved with the understanding that the SC/PA will be responsive to these requests for information. OREDAP funds do not require housing follow ups.
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Submit all Housing assistance request forms to:
iddhousingassistance@multco.us

Housing Specialist Contact information:

Natasha MacDonald
421 SW Oak St. Ste. 610
Portland, OR 97204
natasha.r.macdonald@multco.us
503-988-6273

Supervisor Contact:

Tammorra Barnes
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