

Eviction Prevention Mediation Demonstration December 15, 2022

"Mediation made the entire situation less stressful and allowed us to create a realistic payment plan for the near future."

-Renter

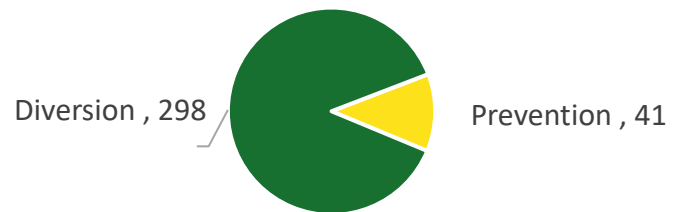
"This is the best stipulated agreement I have ever seen! Thank you everyone for your collaboration!"

-Renter assistance housing staff

Summary

In December 2021, the Oregon Legislature passed SB 5561 which included State General Funds for eviction prevention and diversion services. The Eviction Prevention Mediation Demonstration (EPMD) formally launched in November 2022 in 13 Oregon counties with services provided by 5 community Resolution Centers. This report covers the scale up of the program through October 31, 2022, while the contract with OHCS was being finalized. EPMD sites are scaling up mediation services within an integrated upstream eviction prevention system in connected partnership with local renter assistance programs, such as legal aid, rehousing programs, and the courts. The Oregon Office for Community Dispute Resolution (OOCDR) has created and implemented EPMD program standards and is refining the EPMD data collection system.

Total Prevention and Diversion Cases Closed As of October 31, 2022

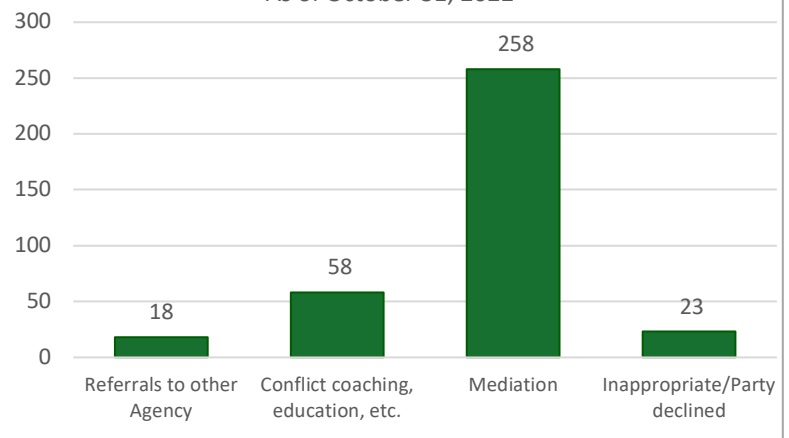


Housing stability services

Resolution Centers provide referrals to other agencies, conflict coaching and/or mediation to help stabilize housing for both the renter and the housing provider. Conflict coaching helps a party to anticipate problems, reality test options, and strategize a solution. Mediation is where two or more parties are assisted by a mediator to reach a mutually acceptable resolution to the dispute. As of October 31, 2022, Resolution Centers served approximately 948 people with 58 cases of conflict coaching and 258 mediations.

Prevention and Diversion Services Provided

As of October 31, 2022



Housing issues or concerns? Don't wait. Mediate!



No cost mediation and conflict resolution services for both housing providers and renters in Clackamas County. Services provided in all languages, please don't hesitate to call.

Top of Flyer from Clackamas County Resolution Services

Oregon mediation has a long history as an effective housing stability tool before an eviction is filed (prevention) as well as after the eviction is filed (diversion). Currently Oregon has no formal requirement or incentive to mediate before an eviction is filed. There are a handful of Oregon courts that do require mediation on the day of the trial. These policy differences (voluntary vs. required) create differing data flows and differing impacts on case outcomes. Page 3 and page 4 offer prevention and diversion details respectively.

Specialized trainings

Resolution Centers provide continuing education opportunities directly to community mediators. Examples of trainings planned and/or implemented during this period are modules in equity-informed mediation, inclusive communication, landlord/tenant law, and working with court-connected interpreters. In January 2023, OOCDR approved lead trainers (ORS 36.175) from EPDM sites will participate in a full 40-hour equity-informed basic mediation training to continue to deepen equity work within their programming and practices.

Increasing awareness and access to services

Direct marketing is sent out to those communities that don't currently utilize mediation, including historically marginalized communities and communities that are most likely to be impacted by evictions. Examples of direct marketing from Clackamas County Resolution Services and Neighbor to Neighbor are included within the report. Outreach activities with partner organizations are helping to provide referrals as well as building a more integrated community response. For example, the Beaverton Center for Mediation and Dialogue is well connected with the Beaverton Inclusive Housing Program for service delivery and Six Rivers Dispute Resolution is working with the Director of Equity and Family Partnerships and Migrant Education for the Hood River County School District on outreach engagements.

Terrific job. This service is highly valuable.

- Housing Provider

Mediator was amazing at making sure both parties were heard and respected.

- Participant

I appreciate everyone taking the time to hear what I needed to say and help me understand my obligations.

- Renter

Professional & courteous.

- Housing Provider

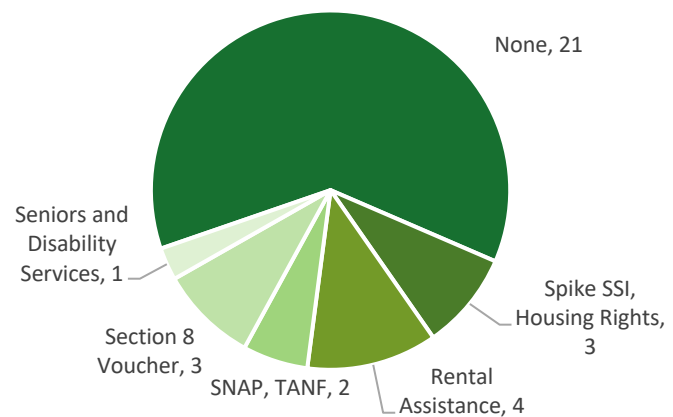
Eviction prevention details

Each Resolution Center is in active conversation with their community partners to build out a thoughtful eviction prevention system. Referrals from government agencies, social services, and self-referrals represent 5% of overall EPMD cases, and non-court referrals make up 16% of overall EPMD cases. An objective of the program is to build referrals from a number of sources including government agencies, housing agencies and authorities, schools, and word of mouth leading to conflicts being resolved before a filing occurs.

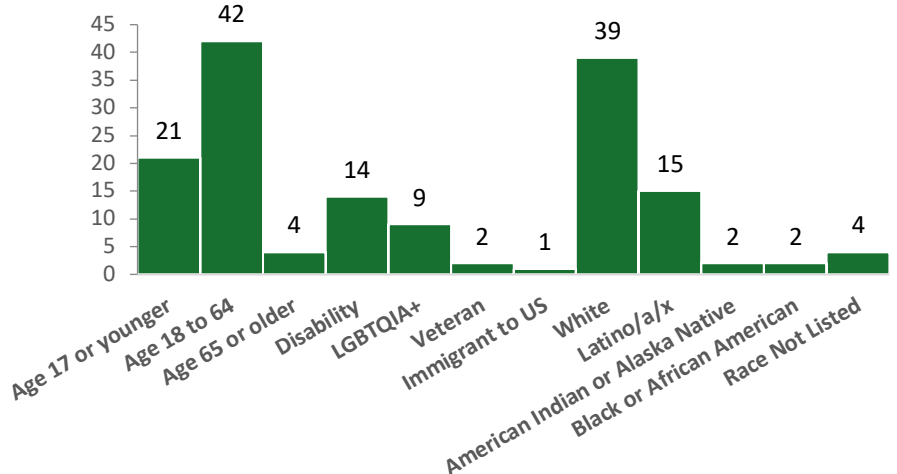
Forthcoming reports will include 3-month follow up data to better assess impacts of services provided on housing stability.

Early indications suggest that most renters are not currently receiving support for their situation, while others are receiving support from a variety of services.

Housing Support Received by Renter Respondents



Demographics of Renters Provided Services



Communication Improves Community Eviction Prevention Case Study

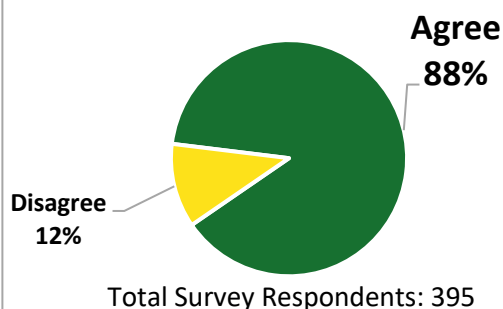
A negative relationship that developed between two neighbors disrupted the well-being of the entire apartment building. Both families were facing eviction by their housing provider if they couldn't find a way to get along. The parties entered the mediation room with obvious tensions and hostility toward each other. After an hour of sharing the hardships they each were experiencing, the renters shared tears and hugs. The mediator helped the parties set an agreement designed to strengthen communication moving forward. To set a new path forward for their families, the renters scheduled a barbecue so that the kids could see the adults getting along again.

Eviction diversion details

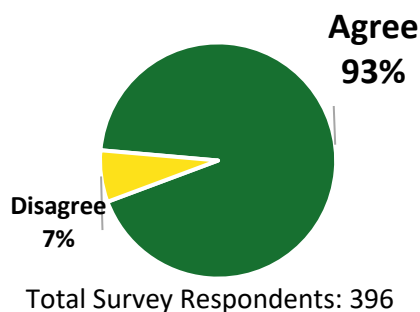
Eviction diversion mediation is well established in 3 of the 5 EPMD regions. Due to the fast pace of court processes and the court's restrictions on the collection of certain data, diversion data is more limited than the prevention data. The court refers 84% of current overall EPMD cases.

Court referrals will continue to be high as some courts require mediation prior to the trial.

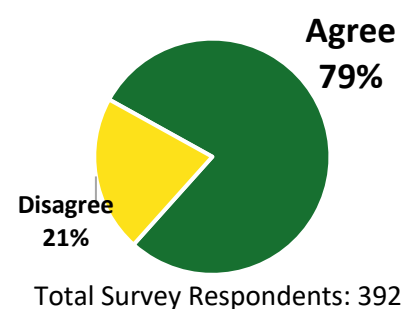
"In consideration of my age, race, gender, and other identities, I felt respected by the staff during the entire process"



"The mediation process was fair"



"After participating in mediation, my stress about this conflict has decreased"



TENANT TROUBLE?

TRY MEDIATION FIRST. TRY MEDIATION EARLY.

Don't let minor issues escalate into expensive problems



Save Money

No court fees
No sheriff fees
No mediation fees



Flexible Solutions

No complicated legal procedures
Productively address rule violations
Payment plans & graceful move outs



Save Time

No notices to track
No waiting for court dates
Flexible scheduling

Top of Flyer from
Neighbor to Neighbor

At the 11th Hour Eviction Diversion Case Study

A mediator picks up the phone to find a panicked renter explaining that she got on the wrong bus to the courthouse. Now set to miss her court date, the renter was distraught over the very near eviction from her home of 16 years. The mediator worked with the renter to explore next steps and help to identify resources to settle what was owed to the housing provider. Surfacing questions about HUD payments, the mediator explored a legal assistance referral for the renter and learned that legal aid's timeline made it unlikely for them to respond before this renter's trial. The mediator reached out to the housing provider and shared the renter's earnest efforts while also acknowledging the real need for the housing provider to receive reliable payments. With this new information, the housing provider reached out to the renter to negotiate a payment plan. The renter was thrilled to clarify the confusion, set a payment plan, avoid being evicted and remain in their home. The housing provider had a mediated agreement in place to receive the amount owed and to retain a long-term renter.