



# Portland Housing Bureau

## Rental Services Office

### Emergency Rent Assistance: RSC Discussion Themes

1. Funding
  - a. Increase amount of existing assistance
  - b. Research amount to adequately met the need
  - c. Consideration of supply-based funding streams such as percentages of collected rent, percentage of city code violation fines, etc.
2. Eligibility
  - a. Consider more expansive income eligibility threshold (most programs are for tenants at 30% AMI or below)
  - b. Importance of low barrier application criteria
3. Structure & Purpose
  - a. Should assistance be linked to eviction prevention (emergency triage model) or to relationship with community providers (considers long term retention/future ability to pay)?
  - b. Need rent assistance that is for a longer duration (up to 4 years)
  - c. Importance of flexibility for eligible expenses (application fees, moving costs, etc.)
  - d. Need for dependability of rent assistance by landlords (payment linked to a binding contract as opposed to a promissory note dependent on tenant compliance with applicable program rules)
  - e. Tension between stable/ongoing rent assistance and increasing rents. Should rent assistance come with strings such as cap on rent increases, compliance with habitability/code requirements, etc.?
4. Access
  - a. Should access be centralized or disbursed?
  - b. Importance of low barrier application process
  - c. Need for equitable access that takes into account the digital divide
  - d. Balance need of direct applications by tenants and easy access for service providers
  - e. Should program allow landlords to apply directly on behalf of tenants?
5. Outreach/Education
  - a. Importance of clear communication plan about how to apply and who is eligible
  - b. Need to educate housing providers to understand differences in various types of assistance
6. Collateral Support
  - a. Need for legislative changes to support and improve utilization of rent assistance including:
    - i. Right to cure nonpayment up through FED court
    - ii. Permanent adoption of 10-day nonpayment notice period

7. Outcomes
  - a. Prioritize race/gender equity outcomes