

Dept. of Administration: Eviction prevention efforts helping Wisconsinites stay in their homes

Posted on Friday, Jul 23, 2021

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

Madison, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) has reported a steady decline in eviction judgements for the first half of 2021. According to the latest data from the [Wisconsin Eviction Data Project](#), state-wide evictions have declined for four straight months, with June evictions at lowest point since May 2020. Evictions for the first half of 2021 are down 14.6 percent when compared to the same period in 2020.

Several COVID19-relief programs, including the [Wisconsin Emergency Rental Assistance](#) (WERA) program, have used federal funding to provide eligible households up to 15 months of assistance with existing or overdue rent and utility bills, including internet costs. WERA was expanded by Governor Tony Evers to help renters cover their housing-related costs and stay in stable housing during the pandemic.

“The Governor is committed to making sure families at risk of losing a safe place to live get the help they need,” said DOA Secretary Joel Brennan. “This is a partnership between the state, local officials, community action program (CAP) agencies, and housing advocates across Wisconsin. Our collaborative efforts to respond to the pandemic have strengthened Wisconsin’s ongoing economic recovery, while helping families keep a roof over their heads.”

In 2020, the Wisconsin Rental Assistance Program (WRAP) had provided over \$28 million to 14,000 households statewide. That program was replaced by WERA in 2021. A report at the end of May from the U.S. Department of Treasury had ranked Wisconsin 8th nationally in terms of percentage of available funds spent for emergency rental assistance, and 13th for overall expenditures. The DOA is partnering with members of the Wisconsin Community Action Program Association (WISCAP), as well as Energy Services, Inc., to get \$280 million in available funding out the door to qualifying households.

“While there is still a strong chance we will see a spike in eviction filings in August once the federal ban on evictions ends, the low eviction numbers are a clear testament to the very hard work folks across the state have done to get help to the people who need it most,” said Michael Basford, the Director of the Wisconsin Interagency Council on Homelessness. Eviction data shows that eviction filings have increased 31 percent within the last month.

Using the Eviction Data Project, DOA is identifying Wisconsinites at risk of eviction to allow WISCAP agencies to proactively reach out to potentially eligible households and offer support and resources. Individuals and organizations interested in receiving more information about other pandemic-relief grants and applications can sign up for [Badger Bounceback alerts](#).

About the WERA and the Eviction Data Project

The Wisconsin Eviction Data Project is produced by the [Interagency Council on Homelessness](#) to track, on a monthly basis, the number of eviction filings and judgements for eviction in all 72 counties in the state to track the state's housing economy, the efficacy of homelessness prevention programs, and to inform the public on housing policy needs throughout Wisconsin.

The [Wisconsin Emergency Rental Assistance program](#) is an initiative administered by the Wisconsin Department of Administration and funded by the Federal Emergency Rental Assistance Program through the U.S. Department of Treasury. The counties of Brown, Dane, Milwaukee, and Waukesha, as well as the cities of Madison and Milwaukee, are operating their own emergency rental assistance programs. More information is available at wiscap.org/wera and doa.wi.gov/Pages/WERA.aspx.