

# COVID-19 Emergency Rent Assistance Programs

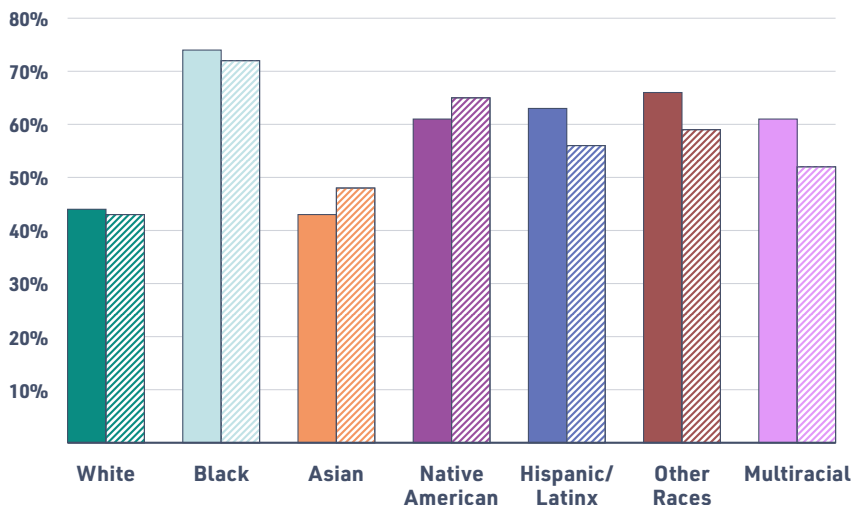
As has been well documented in the State of Housing report, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Portland was facing a housing affordability crisis with few neighborhoods affordable to Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) households. Past State of Housing reports have demonstrated that renters in Portland are much more likely than homeowners to be People of Color and to have lower incomes.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated pre-existing disparities in housing affordability and incomes, disproportionately impacting BIPOC and low-income renter households. The Census Bureau’s Household Pulse Surveys conducted throughout the pandemic have shown that more than half of all renter households lost income in the first year of the pandemic with 86% of those who are behind on rent being low-income households that experienced job and income losses. While income loss was most severe during the early months of the pandemic, there is indication that pandemic related income reductions continued through 2021.

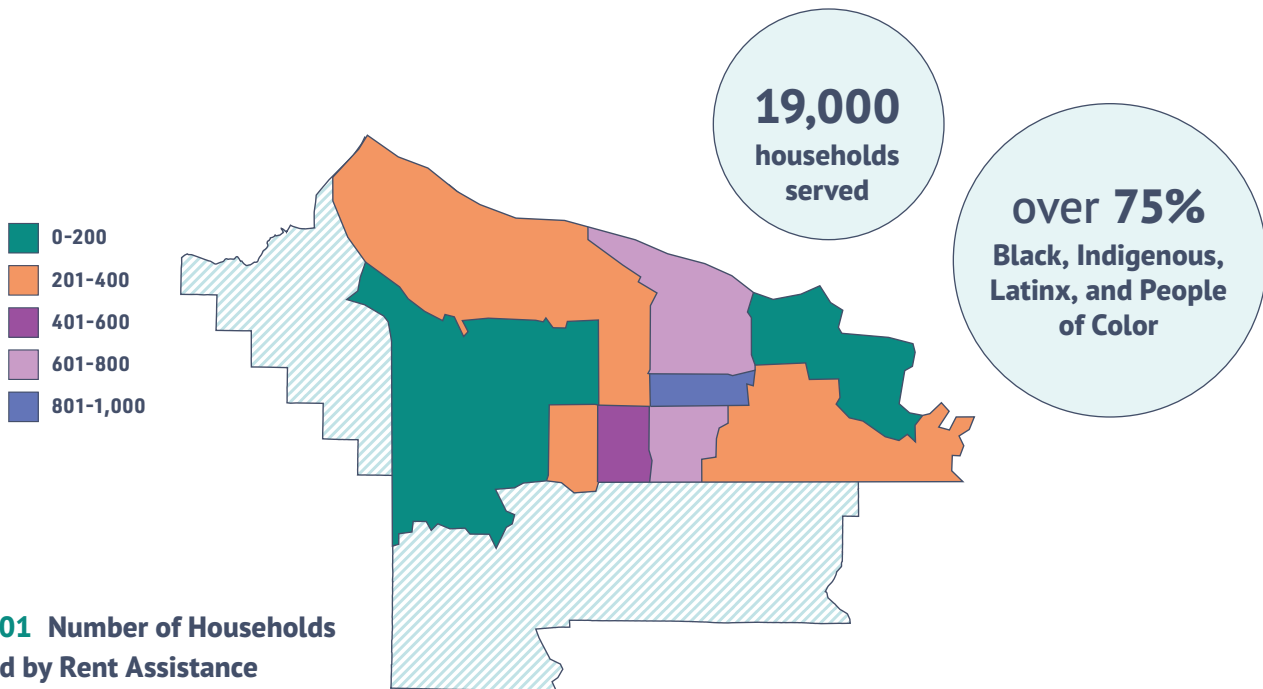
Portland renters who lost income have relied on a variety of resources to pay their bills, including rent. Financial support from government rent assistance programs has been an important way for renters to make ends meet. The Portland Housing Bureau, Multnomah County Joint Office for Homeless Services, Department of County Human Services, and Home Forward’s COVID-19 Emergency Rent Assistance Program (ERAP) was created to prevent evictions caused by the financial and health impacts of COVID-19. The program provides emergency rent assistance to low-income households in Multnomah County, with priority in serving BIPOC communities experiencing the greatest impacts from COVID-19.

**Fig 1.01 Share of Communities Renting Compared to Share Earning Below \$60,000/ year, by Race and Ethnicity**

■ Renting  
 ▨ Earning below \$60,000



Source: 2020 U.S. Decennial Census



**Fig 1.01** Number of Households Served by Rent Assistance

PHB April 2022

The COVID Emergency Rent Assistance program is entering its fourth phase of funding, with the program in operation since the summer of 2020. As of April, 2022 Portland's local rent assistance program has assisted 19,000 households with nearly \$87 million in financial assistance. Rent assistance is provided through referrals to our local Housing Authority, Home Forward, from a network of service providers with experience in providing culturally specific services to BIPOC communities. Partner agencies include:

## Partner Agencies

- African Family Holistic Health Organization
- African Youth Community Organization
- Bienestar de la Familia
- Black Community of Portland
- Black Education Achievement Movement
- Black Parent Initiative
- Bridge (Oasis of Praise Coalition)
- Brown Hope
- Cascade AIDS Project
- Cascadia Behavioral Health
- Center for African Immigration and Refugees
- Constructing Hope
- Doulas Latinas International
- DV Consortium—Volunteers of America
- El Programa Hispano Católico
- Hacienda CDC
- HAKI Community Organization
- Home Forward
- Human Solutions
- Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO)
- Impact Northwest
- Insights Teen Parent Program
- JOIN
- Latino Network
- Mt. Hood Community College
- Mt. Olivet Baptist Church
- Multnomah County—Department of County Human Services
- Multnomah County—Joint Office of Homeless Services
- Native American Rehabilitation Association
- Native American Youth & Family Center
- New Avenues for Youth
- Northwest Pilot Project
- Oregon Chinese Coalition
- Oregon Tradeswomen
- Outside In—Collaborative
- Play Grow Learn
- Portland Community College
- Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives
- Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center
- Portland Youth Builders
- SE Works
- Self Enhancement, Inc.
- Transition Projects, Inc.
- United Territories of Pacific Islanders Alliance—Portland Chapter (Utopia PDX)
- Urban League of Portland
- WorkSystems, Inc.
- Youth Organized and United to Help (Y.O.U.th)
- 211 Info