

March 2021

Dream Big!

A Publication of Oshkosh/
Winnebago County
Housing Authority's
Family Self Sufficiency Program



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- FSS Connection Meeting
- WERA Rental Assistance

Dear FSS participants and Community Members,

Spring comes March 17th! A time to renew and grow. And speaking of growth....Our FSS program now can assist residents in the Oshkosh and Winnebago County Scattered site units along with the Housing Choice voucher (Section 8) program. If you know anyone who is living in our Family scattered sites in Winnebago County, please let them know about the FSS program! FSS has immediate openings! **\$25 Kwik trip gas cards** are available for those that enroll by April 1, 2021. While you are waiting for spring, check out these cool events in the area:



Understanding and Improving Your Credit Score online workshop is scheduled for **March 17 at 6 pm**. Please contact me to register and I will send you the link closer to the workshop date. This workshop normally has a cost but the cost is waived if you join now! Don't miss this great workshop! See page 5 for more information.

FSS Connection Group Meeting is on **March 8th at 9:00 am**. All are welcome! **Danielle Bittelman**, Program Director of Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh, will talk about how they are helping families during COVID. See page 14 for more details.

Free Tax Preparation is available. Please check out page 11 in this newsletter for more details. What will you do with your income tax refund?

Please read the rest of this newsletter with educational, employment and community opportunities. I wish you and your family a very Happy and Healthy March! Let's continue to strive to meet your goals and strengthen your self sufficiency. And as always, please let me know how I can help you by calling me at 920-424-1470 ext. 133 or emailing me at kayh@ohawcha.org. **Your success is my success.**

Warm Regards,
Kay Hinton
FSS Coordinator



March 14, 2021!!



Rent Smart

Taught by Extension Educators

Helping to make renting a great experience for you!

Upcoming Class Dates & Times:

February: 2, 4, 9, 11, 16, 18; 7-8 PM

March: 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26; 9-10 AM

April: 5, 12, 15, 19, 22, 26, 29; 1-2 PM

May: 4, 11, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27; 7-8 PM

Location: Live, online instruction via Zoom; Zoom links sent after completing registration.

Online registration form: <https://go.wisc.edu/Rentsmartregister>

Cost: FREE!

What you will learn:

- Planning for and meeting monthly expenses
- Tips for finding and maintaining affordable housing
- How to complete an application and why landlords screen applicants
- Strategies for building positive relationships with landlords and neighbors
- Responsibilities and rights of landlords and tenants
- **Participants must complete all 6 modules to earn the Rent Smart certificate**
- **For more information, please contact rentsmartwi@office365.wisc.edu or call 262-741-4951**

An EEO-Affirmative Action Employer, UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX, and ADA requirements.



Moratorium on Evictions for Non-payment of Rent and Other Fees Extended



As of January 20, 2021; President Biden has extended the eviction moratorium through the end of March 2021.

This Moratorium On Evictions is separate from the moratorium provided under the CARES Act, which is still in effect for those properties under forbearance. If a tenant has not already done so, legal leaseholders must provide an executed copy of the CDC Declaration Form (or a similar declaration under penalty of perjury) to the owner/agent. A version of the Declaration Form is available on HUD [COVID-19 web page](#).

JOB OPENINGS!

We're hiring!



Oshkosh Food Co-op

Another big moment for our store- we're hiring! Oshkosh Food Co-op is a new, member-owned, full-service grocery store in the heart of Oshkosh. Check out the job posting for both Centerstore Manager and Kitchen Manager. Questions can be directed to oshkoshfoodcoop@gmail.com. Opening in July!

WE NEED YOU NOW MORE THAN EVER!

Substitute teachers and teacher assistants are an integral part of our schools and this year more than ever, we need you! If you enjoy working with children and are looking to make a difference - become a substitute in the Oshkosh Area School District!

Although this school year looks different, we remain committed to the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff. If you or someone you know is able to join our team and help us keep our kids in school for in-person learning, we want to hear from you! Daily and long-term opportunities are available in all areas, schools, and grade levels.

REQUIREMENTS & SALARY: No teaching degree needed!

- **Substitute Teachers:** To be a substitute teacher you must have an Associate's or Bachelor's degree in any field, and complete an 8-hour training course.
 - Daily Rate: \$115 per day
 - Long-term Rate: \$150 per day
- **Substitute Teacher Assistants:** To be a substitute teacher assistant you should be comfortable working with students with special needs.
 - Daily Rate: \$77 per day
 - Long-term Rate: \$85.75 per day



APPLY TODAY: Visit oshkosh.k12.wi.us/district/human-resources or call 920.424.1254

The Oshkosh Area School District is an equal opportunity employer.

Join the Winnebago County Housing Authority's
Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) workshop on:

Understanding and Improving Your Credit Score

This workshop addresses questions about what a credit score means, who uses credit scores and how to maintain a good one. You will learn what is on your credit report, ways to build your credit, and tools to get you started.

Join Renee Waterman, Financial Counselor/
Education Coordinator from
Goodwill NCW on:



Date: Wednesday, March 17, 2021
Time: 6:00 p.m.—7:00 p.m.

FSS Participants: If you attend this online workshop, you will have met your plan goal of attending a FISC (Financial and Debt Solution Services) appointment. One more way to work through your FSS plan and reach your ultimate goal!! Please contact Kay at: kayh@ohawcha.org or leave a message at 920-424-1470 ext 133.

Register Today!

Find YOUR pot of Gold!



1-2-3 Magic™

Parent Connection | Parent Workshop



For parents of children 3-12

A two-week video-based behavior management workshop.
We will discuss positive discipline, praise & reinforcement,
how to stop the behavior you don't want, how to start the behavior
you do want, avoid the talk-persuade-argue-yell-cycle,
how to deal with testing & manipulation.

Join us!

Dates: Thursdays, March 11 & 18

Time: 6:00 pm (On-line 60-90 minutes)

Cost: \$5.00 per person

Register On-line:

- Website: www.familyservicesnew.org/parenting-classes
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ParentConnectionWI>, see our Events Page!
- Or contact Jen DiMatteo | jdimatteo@familyservicesnew.org | (920) 739-4226 ext. 109



Like us on Facebook for the most up-to-date
workshop information.

www.facebook.com/ParentConnectionWI



Parent Connection is a program of Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, Inc.

Fox Cities: 1810 Appleton Road, Menasha WI 54952 | (920) 739-4226

Oshkosh: 36 Broad Street, Suite 150, Oshkosh 54901 | (920) 233-6630

Shawano: 100 County Road B, Shawano, WI 54166 | (715) 853-0923

www.familyservicesnew.org/parent-connection



ATTENTION:

LOOKING TO SAVE THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?



ENROLLMENT IS OPEN FOR THE FAMILY SELF SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM. THE FSS PROGRAM CAN NOW SERVE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (SECTION 8) AND PUBLIC HOUSING SCATTERED SITES IN ALL OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY

How Does the FSS program work?

Participant Enrolls and sets personal goals



Participant Meets Goals



Increases Income and Saves in the Escrow Account



Graduates and Celebrates!



Services Available:

- ♦ Employment Search
- ♦ Education
- ♦ Credit Counseling
- ♦ Money Management
- ♦ Homeownership
- ♦ Health Care
- ♦ Child Care

Please contact Kay Hinton at
(920) 424-1450, ext. 133 or
kayh@ohawcha.org.

**\$25 Kwik trip gas cards are available
for those that enroll by April 1, 2021.**

SURVIVOR SUPPORT GROUPS

VIRTUAL SPACES OF HEALING OFFERED BY
REACH COUNSELING

Women's Survivor Support Group - Oshkosh

For adult women survivors of sexual abuse and assault.

Women's Survivor Support Group - Neenah

For adult women survivors of sexual abuse and assault.

Women of Color Support Group

Open to adult women of color who are survivors of sexual assault and abuse.

Anti-Trafficking Support Group

For all survivors of labor and sex trafficking.

Native American Women's Talking Circle

Talking Circle is open to all women survivors of domestic and sexual violence and incorporates Native traditions.

Latina Women's Group

Open to all Latina women survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence. Groups are held in Spanish.

LGBTQ+ Survivors of Violence Group

For adult LGBTQ+ survivors of physical, emotional, sexual, intimate partner, hook-up, or social violence.

Please call ahead prior to attending the first group session.

Teen Support Group

For survivors that identify as female affected by domestic, sexual and/or interpersonal violence (Ages 13-17).

All groups are provided free of charge.

For more information on current dates, times, or location, please contact

Reach at
920-722-8150

Goodwill NCW offering Financial and Debt Solutions Services 2021 Workshop Schedule.

Open to the public, registration required. All virtual; may change later in the year to in-person.

Lunch n Learn – Who We Are and What We Do: 12-12:30pm. No charge.

To Register: Send an e-mail with your contact information to: financialsolutions@goodwillncw.org

Join us to learn some of the common financial challenges people face and how we provide personalized counseling and coaching to assist in gaining control over money to support your journey to financial stability.

- Wednesday, January 20th
- Wednesday, February 17th
- Wednesday, March 17th
- Wednesday, April 21st
- Wednesday, May 19th
- Wednesday, June 16th
- Wednesday, September 15th
- Wednesday, October 20th
- Wednesday, November 17th

Workshops 6-7 pm. \$10 per person/couple.

To Register: Send an e-mail with contact information to: financialsolutions@goodwillncw.org

1	January	1/19/2021	What to do with your Tax Refund
2	February	2/16/2021	What Budget is Right for You?
3	March	3/16/2021	Scams, Traps & Avoiding Identity Theft
4	April	4/27/2021	Managing and Coping with Debt
5	May	5/18/2021	Understanding and Improving Your Credit Score
6	June	6/15/2021	Dealing with Student Loan Debt
7	September	9/21/2021	For Richer or Poorer – Couples & Finances
8	October	10/19/2021	Holiday Spending – Are You Ready
9	November	11/16/2021	Saving and Paying for College – Know the Facts

The Power of Money. \$15 per person/couple

To Register: Send an e-mail with contact information to: financialsolutions@goodwillncw.org

This three-part series helps attendees learn to spend less, save more and build a budget that works. Each class builds on the previous one and shows how to reduce the stress of unexpected expenses. You will learn where your money is going now, identify top financial needs, prioritize spending and have money for future dreams and goals. With practical tips, worksheets and real-life examples, this workshop has helped numerous people reduce debt, decrease stress, talk about money more easily and enjoy life to the fullest.

- Thursday, January 14th, 21st, 28th. 6-7:30pm
- Tuesday, March 9th, 16th, 23rd. 12:00 pm – 1:30pm
- Thursday, May 6th, 13th, 20th. 6-7:30pm
- Tuesday, June 15th, 22nd, 29th 12:00pm – 1:30pm



Oshkosh Public Library will reopen in a limited capacity on **Wed., Feb. 10**. Browsing and checkouts will be allowed but gatherings continue to be prohibited. Computers are available without an appointment. Library programs and events remain virtual. Meeting rooms are closed, and tables and chairs are spaced to discourage gathering.



Physical distancing and masks that cover both nose and mouth are required for everyone ages 2 and older. Children ages 12 and younger must be accompanied by an adult. Disposable masks are available onsite as needed.

Those who are unable to wear a mask should plan to use curbside service. Schedule an [appointment](#) online or call (920) 236-5203.

Current Onsite Services:

[Browse and check out materials](#) (beginning Feb. 10.).

[Apply for a library card or renew your card](#) at the First Floor Service Desk.

Pick up holds

Use a computer

Charge a device

Public WiFi

[Photocopy or fax](#)

[Purchase a bus pass](#) at the First Floor Service Desk.

Schedule an [appointment](#) for notary service.



What is VITA?

VITA = Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

The mission of the program, which is coordinated by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), is to provide free basic tax return preparation for low-to-moderate income and elderly taxpayers. The VITA program has operated for over 50 years, offering free tax help to qualified individuals:

- People who generally make \$56,000 or less
- Persons with disabilities;
- Limited English-speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns.



UW-Oshkosh site: Appointments available from February 13 to April 3, 2021. UW-O offers the VITA program (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) that provides free basic tax return preparation for low-to-moderate income and elderly taxpayers. The program is run by student and other community volunteers. Please call **920.424.3486** to schedule an appointment.

Goodwill Menasha site: Valet VITA in-person assistance. Schedule a 20 minute drop-off appointment online at: <https://www.goodwillncw.org/vita/valet/schedule/>. Meet with an intake specialist and let our IRS-certified volunteers prepare your return. Pick up your return when it's ready (typically 5-7 business days). We are located inside the Goodwill Retail Store and Training Center at 1800 Appleton Road, Menasha, WI 54952. If you need more info, call (920) 968-6044.

[MyFreeTaxes.com](https://www.myfreetaxes.com)

For the 12th year, United Way is providing **MyFreeTaxes**, a free online tax filing software to help taxpayers easily and accurately file simple federal and state tax returns from their computer or smartphone. United Way provides the service as part of our fight for the financial stability of every person in every community.

Key features include:

1. Screening for credit and deduction eligibility such as the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit to ensure you receive your maximum tax refund
2. Showing how and why your refund amount is changing in real time
3. Live tax assistance from IRS-certified specialists
4. Opportunity to claim any missed stimulus payments

Go to [MyFreeTaxes.com](https://www.myfreetaxes.com) for more information.

Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity Homebuyer Readiness Info Sessions

Wednesday, March 3rd, 2021 at 10am

Wednesday, March 3rd, 2021 at 6pm



Meetings held by Zoom. Please go to the Habitat website <https://foxcitieshabitat.org/> on March 3rd and there will be a link to a virtual meeting at 10 a.m. or 6 p.m.

Habitat will host a brief one-hour Homebuyer Readiness informational session. This session will take place at **10 am and 6pm Wednesday March 3rd, 2021** via Zoom. They will cover general information about Habitat's housing ministry and how applicants qualify to purchase a home with Habitat. If you want to learn more about Habitat before you apply, please join us! Applications can be printed off the website starting March 3rd or picked up outside of Habitat in a little box attached to the Little Free Library, 921 Midway Road, Menasha, WI. Please feel free to contact Habitat if you have any questions at 1-920-967-8887.

FREE FOOD OPTIONS FOR THE OSHKOSH COMMUNITY

FARMERS TO FAMILIES FOOD BOX

When: Wednesday, February 24
4:30 - 6:30 pm

Where: Oshkosh West High School

375 N Eagle Street, Oshkosh

NEW TIME IN MARCH

Wednesdays,

March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

5:00 - 6:30 pm (do not arrive before 4:30 pm)

Where: Oshkosh West High School
375 N Eagle Street, Oshkosh

The USDA is partnering with farmers, distributors and nonprofits to ensure that **everyone** has access to the fresh produce, meat and dairy they need during the COVID-19 crisis. Receive your food box at the Oshkosh drive-thru distribution. First come, first served basis.

Each party accepting a box is certifying that they are food insecure, lack money or other resources, and are in need of the Farmers to Families Food Boxes for their household use.



Oshkosh logistics partners: Oshkosh Area Community Foundation, Oshkosh Area United Way, Father Carl's Place 2B, Oshkosh Corporation, Amaal, UW Oshkosh, J.J. Keller Foundation, Oshkosh Area School District

OSHKOSH AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT FOOD DISTRIBUTION

When: Wednesday, February 24
4:30 - 6:30 pm

Where: Oshkosh West High School

375 N Eagle Street, Oshkosh

NEW TIME IN MARCH

Wednesdays,

March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

5:00 - 6:30 pm (do not arrive before 4:30 pm)

Where: Oshkosh West High School
375 N Eagle Street, Oshkosh

Meals are free to any child age 18 and under. Children do not need to be Oshkosh Area School District students or enrolled in school to receive meals.

Each child will receive 5 days worth of meals along with milk. Children do not need to be present to receive meals - a parent/guardian or sibling may pick up meals for the child.



Save the Date!

*Family
Self-Sufficiency (FSS)*

**FSS
CONNECTION
GROUP**

A program coordinating committee
for Winnebago County Housing
Authority's Family Self-Sufficiency
Program.



*Family
Self-Sufficiency (FSS)*

Date: Monday, March 8, 2021

Time: 9:00 a.m.—10:30 a.m.

Danielle Bittelman, Program Director at Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh, will be talking about Boys and Girls Club and what they are doing to help families during COVID. Everyone is welcome to attend!

Let's also share agency updates. Come join us as we learn more at:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/98708145448>

Meeting ID: 987 0814 5448

One tap mobile +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

WISCAP

For questions regarding this document call us at (608) 244-4422 or visit www.wiscap.org/wera

From June through November 2020, WISCAP's network, in partnership with the state, distributed over \$28 million in rental assistance through the Wisconsin Rental Assistance Program (WRAP). Now, given additional federal funds, WISCAP and its statewide network will be helping to get Wisconsin Emergency Rental Assistance (WERA) to those in need. Please read the Frequently Asked Questions sheet for program guidelines and eligibility.

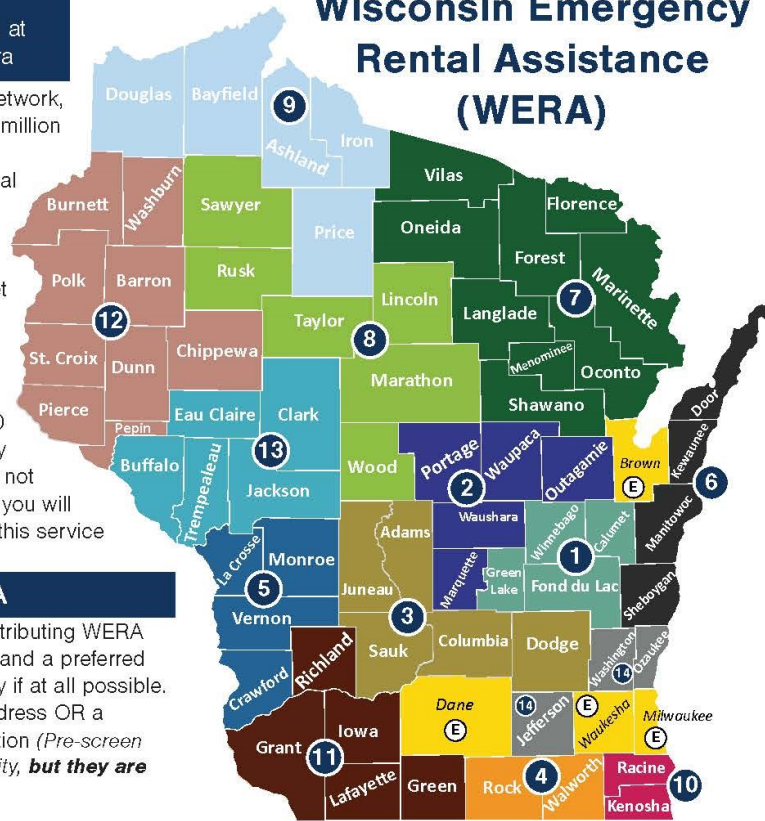
Entitlement Areas

In the federal relief package that funds WERA, areas of Wisconsin with populations over 200,000 are considered entitlement areas. This means they are receiving funding for rental assistance but are not a part of WERA. If you live in an entitlement area, you will need to contact the local organizations providing this service for information on their program.

Agencies Operating WERA

The table below lists the 14 agencies who are distributing WERA funds. For each agency there is a phone number and a preferred online contact listed. Please contact them this way if at all possible. The preferred online contact is either an email address OR a link to their website that has a pre-screen application (*Pre-screen applications help the agency determine your eligibility, but they are NOT a formal WERA application*).

Wisconsin Emergency Rental Assistance (WERA)



Agency	Phone Number	Online Contact
1. ADVOCAP	920-922-7760	Website: www.advocap.org
2. CAP Services	844-314-8004	Website: www.capservices.org/wera
3. Central Wisconsin CAC	608-254-8353	Email: wendys@cwccac.org
4. Community Action, Inc	608-313-1337	Website: www.community-action.org/housing/rental-assistance-in-rock-and-walworth-counties/
5. Couleecap	844-267-0033	Website: www.couleecap.org/rental-assistance
6. Lakeshore CAP	920-682-3737	Website: www.lakeshorecap.org/wera-rental-assistance-program/
7. Newcap	800-242-7334	Website: https://www.newcap.org/newcap_programs/wisconsin-emergency-rental-assistance-wera-program/
8. North Central CAP	715-842-0681	Email: outreach@nccapinc.com
9. Northwest CSA	715-392-5127, Extension 102	Email: sjohnson@northwest-csa.org
10. Racine Kenosha CAA	Racine: 262-637-8377 Kenosha: 262-657-0840	Website: www.rkcaa.org/WERA
11. Southwest CAP	608-935-2326, option 3 or ext. 290	Website: www.swcap.org
12. West CAP	715-265-4271, Extension 0	Email: westcap@wcap.org
13. Western Dairyland EOC	Clark: 715-530-5044 Eau Claire: 715-530-5054 Jackson & Buffalo: 715-530-2802 Trempealeau: 608-863-4000	Website: www.westerndairyland.org/wera Email: wera@wdeoc.org
14. Energy Services, Inc.	833-900-9372	Website: www.esiwi.com/
E Entitlement Areas	See www.wiscap.org/wera for more information	

Frequently Asked Questions for WERA

www.wiscap.org/wera

Who should I contact to apply for WERA?

You will apply through your local community action agency. You can find them by visiting: www.wiscap.org/wera/. Be sure to contact the agency that serves your county. Applications can also be submitted online (<https://energybenefit.wi.gov/>) or taken at a statewide rental assistance hotline by calling 833-900-9372 (WERA).

Who qualifies for the WERA program?

At least one or more individuals in the household meets the following criteria:

- Qualifies for unemployment or has experienced a significant reduction in income, incurred significant costs, or experienced financial hardship during the period of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Demonstrates a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability; and
- Has a household income at or below 80 percent of their county's median income.

What documentation from the landlord will I need?

The landlord must sign (along with renter) the Renter Verification form. This document provides a way for the landlord/rental agent to verify the terms of tenancy of the applicant. This document can be used in the place of a written lease if completed and signed by the landlord/rental agent. In addition, the Landlord must register themselves as a vendor in the HE+ system to receive payment. Check with your local agency to see if the Landlord is already a registered vendor.

What documents will I need to provide?

- a. The household must provide documentation showing their income was impacted by COVID-19;
- b. Documentation that income for the 2-month period from application date does not exceed 80% of the County Median Income (CMI) OR 2020 IRS Tax Documentation;
- c. A current lease, agreement, or proof (such as check payments) listing the applicant resides in Wisconsin.

If someone applies for rental assistance through a Community Action Agency, while the application is being processed are landlords able to take eviction action?

If the landlord intends to evict, no legal basis exists under the application process to stay an eviction order. On a condition of receiving WERA payments, Landlords would agree not to initiate eviction orders during the duration of the CDC eviction moratorium.

Will any services be offered to displaced families that may require additional cost?

Wrap-around services including financial counseling, budgeting assistance, tenant rights counselling and additional referrals may be provided by CAAs.

What assistance can WERA provide?

Eligible forms of assistance include the following:

- Up to 12 months of rental arrearages and/or rental assistance, plus an additional 3 months if the extra months are determined to be needed to ensure housing stability and funds are available.
 - o Once a household's rental arrears are reduced, assistance is only provided for up to three months at a time.
 - o Recertification of household's income eligibility is necessary after three months.
 - o Only arrears starting March 13, 2020 are eligible.
- Utility and housing energy payments and arrearages including electricity and gas.
 - o Telecommunication services (telephone, cable, Internet) are not considered to be utilities.
 - o Utilities covered by the landlord within rent will be treated as rent.
- Provision of, or referral for, housing stability services.

What if I have received rental assistance elsewhere?

- If a household receives rental assistance other than WERA, then WERA may only be used for tenant's portions of costs (rent, utilities) that were not already covered by the other assistance.
- An eligible household that occupies a federally subsidized residential or mixed-use property may receive WERA assistance, provided that WERA funds are only applied to costs that have not been reimbursed under any other federal assistance.
- If a household receives a monthly federal subsidy (e.g., a Housing Choice Voucher, Public Housing, Project-Based Rental Assistance, or Tenant-Based Rental Assistance) and the tenant's rent is adjusted according to changes in household income, the household may receive WERA assistance for their personal portion of the rental agreement.

What is the turnaround time for program approval and disbursement of checks?

From the time an application is completed payment will be generated within 10 days or less.

Are in-person meetings required? Are virtual meetings allowed?

Applications may be taken by phone or email and virtual meetings are allowed.

Are mortgage payments eligible?

No mortgage payments are not an eligible expense. We urge all landlords to work directly with their tenants.

Does my unemployment count as income?

Yes.