



**For immediate release**

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## **COVID Housing Impacts: Lewis County Superior Court's New Eviction Resolution Pilot Program to Help Tenants and Landlords**

With many landlords and tenants hit hard by impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Lewis County is proactively working to prevent evictions for nonpayment of rent. In the hopes of reducing the number of evictions based on non-payment of rent in the community, the Superior Court has established an Eviction Resolution Pilot Program (ERPP) that will require problem-solving steps before non-payment of rent eviction cases may be filed in court.

The goal of the program is to bring all parties together with trained Eviction Resolution Specialists to explore solutions that will avoid eviction while bringing much needed rent assistance to the table. The program will work to reduce unnecessary demand on the courts, protect tenants from eviction and facilitate payment of rent assistance to landlords who have waited patiently over the past year and a half. The program was initially developed by the state Superior Court Judges' Association (SCJA) in partnership with the state Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA) and other stakeholders and became law in April 2021.

Landlords must give tenants the option to participate in the ERPP before they can file an eviction lawsuit in court.

It is important for members of the public that receive ERPP notices from their landlords to respond within 14 days. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact us at 360-740-1333 ext 3.

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Landlords and tenants can find details about the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program on the Lewis County Superior Court web site at:

<https://lewiscountywa.gov/offices/superior-court/eviction-resolution-pilot-program/> .

Additional information, background and links are available on the statewide website dedicated to the program at [www.courts.wa.gov/EvictionResolution](http://www.courts.wa.gov/EvictionResolution).

For more information about the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program, please contact the Administrative Office of the Courts at [evictionresolution@courts.wa.gov](mailto:evictionresolution@courts.wa.gov).

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