



2023 Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance Annual Report

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| Tenant Advisory Committee Introduction

The Tenant Advisory Committee (TAC) is honored to provide these introductory remarks and to support Boulder tenants in need of such critical services. The TAC appreciates the dedicated and hardworking city staff that have continued to implement the EPRAS program with competence, compassion, and talent. In the program's third year, the nuances, underlying causes and issues contributing to eviction in the city of Boulder have only become more complicated. The needs of Boulder's renters have intensified in turn.

As highlighted in this report, in its third year, EPRAS experienced a surge in demand, and more community members sought eviction prevention assistance than in any previous year. While the program offers legal services, mediation and rental assistance, rental assistance was the most widely sought resource. Eviction filings have been on the rise and external sources of funding have dwindled, putting increasing pressure on EPRAS and the residents it serves. Despite all this, for tenants at eviction court engaged in EPRAS services and receiving either rental assistance, legal support or mediation services, most were able to avoid an eviction ruling. This is incredible and cause for celebration. Despite the obstacles and constraints that have mounted since the inception of EPRAS, the program continues to demonstrate success.

The TAC recommends that EPRAS funding be expanded to accommodate inflation and to more fully resource the desperately needed rental assistance fund. EPRAS has kept hundreds of our neighbors housed and provided education and resources to tenants previously unaware of their rights. The mission remains the same and the work of staff and this committee continues to reach deeper into the community. We thus support efforts to sustain and expand access to rental assistance for even more community members in need. With an increased rate of evictions as the new normal in our community, EPRAS will be a necessary city service to keep our city safe and our neighbors housed. Thank you for your time and consideration.

| Summary

In its third year, the Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance Services (EPRAS) Program experienced a surge in demand. While the program offers legal services, mediation and rental assistance, rental assistance was the most widely sought resource, accounting for 80% of all inquiries. In 2023, more community members sought eviction prevention assistance than in any previous year.

Distribution of rental assistance was erratic in 2023, fluctuating with the changing availability of other statewide supports. Early in the year, EPRAS filled the gap in local rental assistance needs after funding through the state's Emergency Rental Assistance Program drastically diminished and EPRAS spent a significant portion of its annual budget in the first three months of the year. With limited funds remaining, EPRAS focused on supporting tenants facing imminent eviction. For tenants at eviction court who engaged in EPRAS services, 96% were able to avoid eviction. EPRAS expects to face consistent demand for services in the future as eviction rates continue to steadily increase.

While EPRAS is a city funded program and the data shared below reflects work for city of Boulder residents only, it is important to note that eviction court operates at a county level. Through additional county and state funding, a collaborative regional team attempts to fill the gap, so all county tenants receive some level of support, if not at the same level as city residents. Throughout the county, there were 1,398 eviction filings in 2023 compared to 1,315 filings in 2022 and 638 filings in 2021.

| 2023 Snapshot

Clients

EPRAS served 809 tenants facing potential eviction, a 51% increase over 2022.

- 469 had received eviction paperwork (a demand for compliance or court date).
- 62% have been living in their current rental for 1 year or more.
- 47.5% of those reporting had children in the household.
- People of color were disproportionately represented.

Legal Services

[Bridge to Justice](#), a non-profit organization that provides civil legal services to low- and moderate-income Coloradans who do not qualify for legal aid, provided legal services to 133 tenants in the City of Boulder at eviction court through EPRAS funding. Bridge to Justice also supported county residents through statewide grants.

Rental Assistance

Early in the year, EPRAS rapidly deployed its budget to fill the gap left by the state's dwindling Emergency Rental Assistance Program funding. With limited funds remaining by April 2023, EPRAS funds were focused on helping tenants at the later stages of evictions. A total of \$714,545.00 was spent between funds distributed through EPRAS directly and through the [Emergency Family Assistance Association](#) (EFAA).

- \$364,545 was distributed directly to 175 households. An average of \$2,095 per household (a slight increase from \$2,046 in 2022).
- \$350,000 was distributed to 214 households through a partnership with EFAA. An average of \$1,675 per household.

Mediation

Mediation services helped prevent eviction at court for 40 individuals within the city of Boulder and 61 additional individuals in Boulder County. Through mediation, the parties might agree on a payment plan, how the tenant will address a lease violation, or develop a timeline for moveout that works for all parties. Mediators are available both prior to and at eviction court.

Tenant Advisory Committee

The Tenant Advisory Committee (TAC) added two new members. TAC members are provided a \$1,000 stipend, meet quarterly to advise on the implementation of the program and identify areas to expand support to tenants.

Mental Health Support

EPRAS piloted a partnership with the [Crisis Intervention Response Team](#) (CIRT) and a social work intern was integrated into the EPRAS team to provide case management for tenants in need of deeper levels of support. The program was beneficial and the team will explore a longer-term plan for sustained case management.

| Outcomes and Conclusion

Evictions were prevented in 76% of all city of Boulder eviction court cases and success rates increased to 96% when tenants appeared at court and engaged with EPRAS services.

The EPRAS program continues to prove successful in preventing eviction and keeping community members housed. Consistent with previous years, rental assistance is the primary concern for the vast majority of tenants facing eviction and the need continues to rise with the rising cost of housing. There is a new statewide rental assistance program, the [Temporary Rental Assistance Grant](#), available to tenants at earlier stages of the eviction process but it remains to be seen how this new source of funds will help meet current needs in our community.