

HOUSING STABILITY SERVICES

Jonathan Wright, Housing Policy Advisor

Social Services & Public Safety Committee

July 2, 2024



LEXINGTON



What are housing stability services?

As defined by the federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program:

- **eviction prevention and eviction diversion programs;**
- mediation between landlords and tenants;
- housing counseling;
- fair housing counseling;
- housing navigators or promotoras that help households access ERA programs or find housing;
- case management related to housing stability;
- housing-related services for survivors of domestic abuse or human trafficking;
- **legal services or attorney's fees related to eviction proceedings and maintaining housing stability;**
- and specialized services for individuals with disabilities or seniors that support their ability to access or maintain housing.

Put simply, all the things you might do to prevent an eviction except pay the rent.

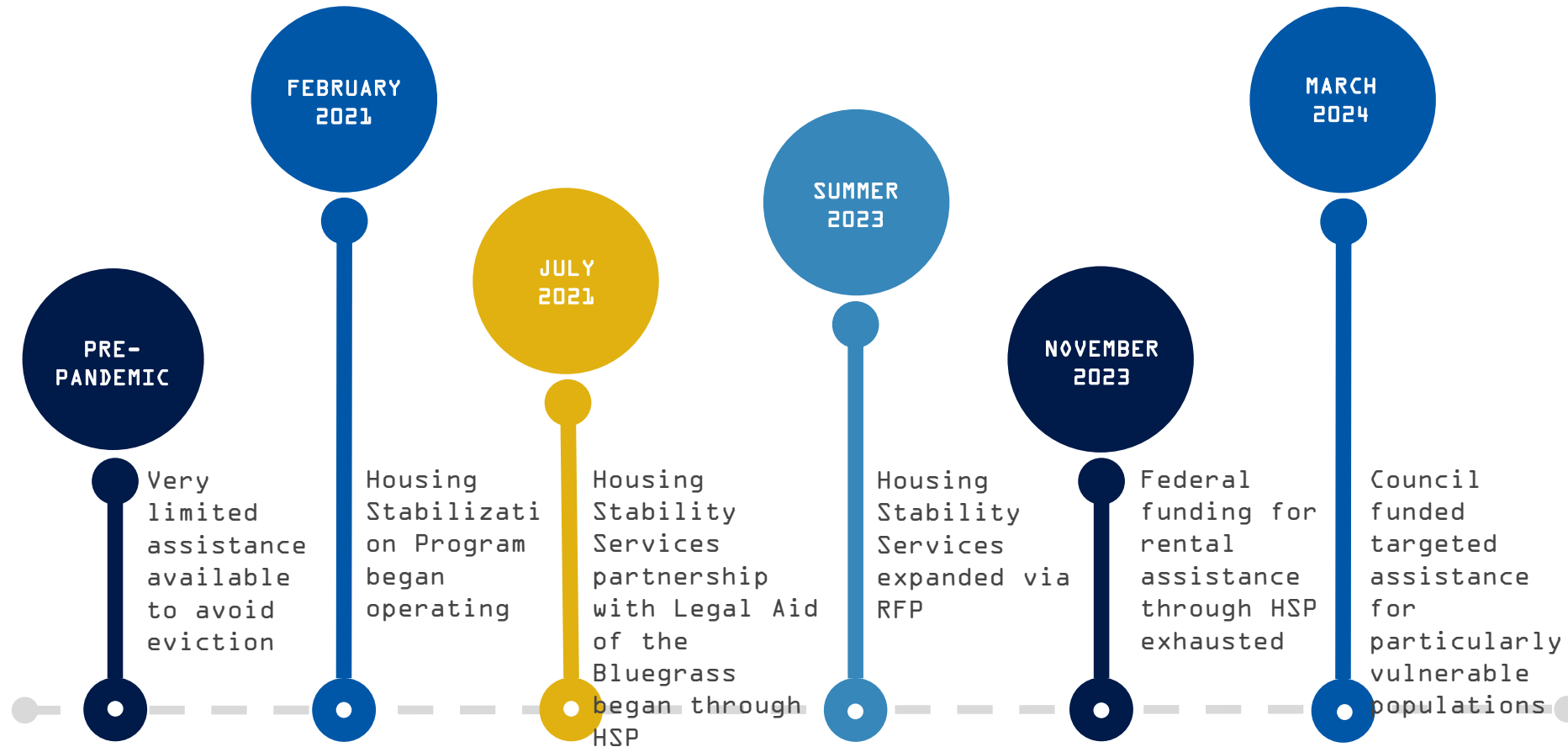


Why are we talking about housing stability services?

- Item referred to the SSPS committee on January 24, 2023 by VM Wu: Eviction Diversion & Right to Counsel - Tenants' Bill of Rights
- Solicited proposals during Spring 2023 via RFP #12-2023 for Housing Stability Services; selected vendors and began implementation during Summer 2023
- Commissioner Lanter presented an update on Financial Assistance Programs to the SSPS committee in January 2024; identified an opportunity for “smaller, targeted programs that work closely with a vulnerable population (seniors, families with children, households fleeing DV)”

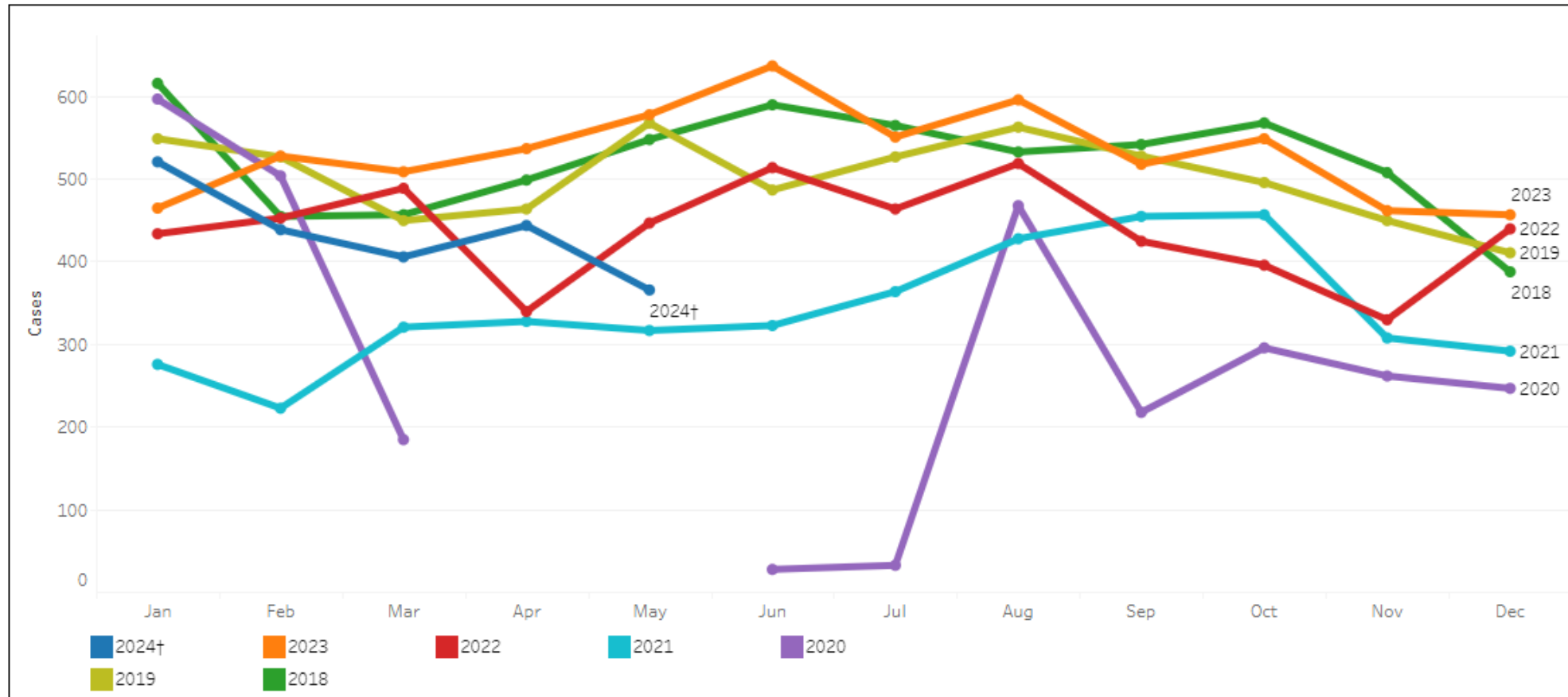


How did we get here?



How did we get here?

Forcible Detainer Cases Filed, Fayette County, 2018-2024



* Data provided from the CourtNet database.

† Data for the current year is reported through the most recent complete month.

How did we get here?

Year	Cases Disposed	Judgment for Landlord	Eviction Warrant Issued
2019	5938	56%	20%
2020	2706	52%	21%
2021	3831	37%	19%
2022	5532	41%	18%
2023	6163	38%	16%
2024	2171	49%	16%



What housing stability services are available today?



-
- Mediation for LHA tenants facing eviction
 - Expanded access to counsel for tenants in eviction court
 - Housing counseling/navigation



Kentucky Equal
Justice Center

-
- Tenant outreach/education
 - Expanded access to counsel for tenants in eviction court
 - Housing counseling/navigation



What housing stability services are available today?



- Mediation for LHA tenants facing eviction
- Expanded access to counsel for tenants in eviction court
- Housing counseling/navigation

Since April 2023:

- **1103** households served

Mediations – 78

Legal Counsel – 618

Counseling/Navigation – 407

- **430** households included children
- **50%** of households had a Black head of household
- **58%** of households had income below the federal poverty level



What housing stability services are available today?



Kentucky Equal
Justice Center

-
- Tenant outreach/education
 - Expanded access to counsel for tenants in eviction court
 - Housing counseling/navigation

Monthly average:

- **225** doors knocked
- **90** tenants assisted at Eviction Help Desk
- **43** tenants provided with legal counsel and/or representation in court
- **25** other calls/resource connections with tenants

What other assistance is available to at-risk tenants today?

Legal Aid of the Bluegrass

- Mediation for LHA tenants facing eviction
- Expanded access to counsel for tenants in eviction court
- Housing counseling/navigation

Current contract funded by ERA grant through Dec. 31, 2024

HACD Commissioner's Office

- Housing Advocates

Kentucky Equal Justice Center

- Tenant outreach/education
- Expanded access to counsel for tenants in eviction court
- Housing counseling/navigation

Current contract funded by ERA grant through Dec. 31, 2024

Goodwill & FCPS

- McKinney-Vento rental assistance, Hand Up for Housing (**NEW**, funded w/ ERA interest through FY25)

Community & Resident Services

- Emergency Financial Assistance
- Application fee assistance for rental housing (**NEW**, funded by CDBG, likely through FY25)

Lexington Senior Center

- Emergency assistance for senior citizens (**NEW FUNDING** w/ ERA interest through FY25)



DO YOU NEED A HAND UP FOR HOUSING?

Families with students in Fayette County Public Schools who are experiencing homelessness may be eligible for financial assistance to pay their security deposit and first month's rent!



WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Families with students in Fayette County Public Schools who are experiencing homelessness as defined by the FCPS McKinney Vento Office, including those temporarily living with a friend or relative, sleeping in a car, or staying in a hotel.

WHAT ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE?

After finding a new apartment or home to rent, eligible families may be able to receive assistance paying their security deposit and first month's rent. Monthly rent may not exceed 50% of a family's gross monthly income (families must have some monthly income to receive financial assistance).

HOW DO I APPLY?

Begin by contacting your child's school. Family Resource/Youth Services Centers or the McKinney Vento point of contact at your child's school can help you begin the application process.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AFTER I APPLY?

After you begin the application process at your child's school, the FCPS McKinney Vento Office will review your application. Eligible families will be referred to the Goodwill Lexington Opportunity Center for program orientation, case management, help finding an apartment, and other supportive services. All security deposit/rental assistance payments will be made directly to landlords by Goodwill.

Additional eligibility requirements, terms, and conditions may apply and are subject to change at any time.



APPLICATION FEE ASSISTANCE FOR RENTAL HOUSING

Eligible Lexington residents can receive financial assistance to pay rental application fees!

ELIGIBILITY

- Must be a current Lexington resident
- Household income equal to or less than 80% of Area Median Income

BENEFITS

- Maximum of \$300 or three applications, whichever is less
- Payments will be made directly to landlords

Applicant/tenant must provide all documentation required to determine eligibility, including a completed rental application indicating the fee amount owed and the prospective landlord's contact information. Monthly rent may not exceed 50% of household income. Additional eligibility requirements, terms, and conditions may apply and are subject to change at any time.

**CALL 859-300-5300
for more information or to
schedule an appointment**



Questions?



LEXINGTON