

# WAGAP receives \$2M in grant funds to prevent evictions

## Renters and landlords in Skamania and Klickitat counties may be eligible to apply

Two million dollars in grant funds have been made available to Washington Gorge Action Programs (WAGAP) to help prevent evictions of low income households affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in Skamania and Klickitat counties.

Funds come from the Federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act.

"WAGAP is thrilled to bring these funds to our communities," said Leslie Naramore, WAGAP's executive director. "We know that many households have been struggling to pay rent in the midst of other ongoing hardships as well. These funds are unique in that landlords can apply on behalf of their tenants. We encourage anyone who needs assistance to reach out to determine eligibility. We're here to help."

The Treasury Rental Assistance Program (T-RAP) is being administered by Washington State Department of Commerce. According to T-RAP Guidelines (Version 1 March 2021), funds are intended to prevent evictions that would contribute to the spread of the virus by paying past due, current due, future rent, and utilities, targeting limited resources to those who have

experienced financial hardship due to the COVID-19 outbreak and are at risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

The program goals are to prevent evictions, target resources to very low income households who are unemployed, and promote equity in who is served. The focus on equity is for groups of people who historically have not been provided equitable access to rent assistance and those who have disproportionately been impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Per the Guidelines, households must meet three criteria:

- Have income that is at or below 80 percent of Area Median Income (AMI).
- Be experiencing a financial hardship directly or indirectly due to the COVID-19 outbreak that threatens the household's ability to pay the costs of the rental property when due.
- Be at risk of experiencing homelessness or currently experiencing housing instability.

The program also provides assistance with rental payments that are past due, and with unpaid utility and home energy costs, including electricity, gas, water and sewer, trash removal and energy costs, such as fuel oil.

Eligible households can receive up to 12 months of financial assistance. WAGAP has until Dec. 31 to disburse the funds which can be used for lease agreements which were in place as early as March 13, 2020.

To learn if you are eligible or to request an application, contact WAGAP at 509-493-2662 or email [info@wagap.org](mailto:info@wagap.org).



## Gorges Beer in CL

The three-story Gorges Beer Co. building is quickly taking shape in Cascade Locks. A crew installs woodwork in the eaves of the third-story. Co-owner Willis Boyer said paving and kitchen and final fixture installation will happen over the next two months and "we hope to be open by June, but July may be closer as COVID has slowed down a few key elements." The brewery will have outdoor seating in addition to several indoor dining areas. "The third floor decks and views are amazing and the rest of the building is perfect for entertaining large groups of people pretty separated if that's our reality still," Boyer said. The facility will be family-friendly with some spaces for adults only, Boyer said. "Our two acres should be a fun place to explore while people are in town and we hope to excite people about our gem of a town," Boyer said. The brewery is located just east of Columbia Inn, near the entrance to Port Marine Park.

Kirby Neumann-Rea photos



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