

# 2025

# Annual REPORT



TENANT RESOURCE CENTER

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🌐 [www.TenantResourceCenter.org](http://www.TenantResourceCenter.org)

📍 2510 Winnebago Street  
Madison, WI 53704

# Message from the Board President and Executive Director

Dear members,

In 2025, TRC reached a major turning point. After five years on the front lines of the community's response to the COVID-related rental housing crisis, we marked the close of the federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program. From 2020 through September 30, 2025, TRC distributed nearly \$62 million in rental assistance to low-income families in Dane County. We helped prevent over 7,600 evictions and our partners provided legal representation to more than 1,700 households through the Eviction Diversion & Defense Partnership. These services were lifelines for our neighbors, friends, and families.

This ERA program, funded through the City of Madison and Dane County and administered by TRC and other community partners, kept thousands of our neighbors housed during the pandemic and provided long-term housing stability for families. When that funding ended, it marked a reimagining of what comes next for our neighbors at risk of an eviction. On October 1, TRC officially transitioned to a new phase. We are continuing our eviction court services while expanding housing case management services to provide one-on-one assistance for families experiencing housing insecurity. We will also continue to offer limited rental assistance in 2026, prioritizing long-term housing stability.

2025 was also a deeply challenging year. Amid the wind-down of ERA funding, TRC navigated fears, uncertainties, cutbacks, and harm from a new federal administration. Proposed budget cuts, shifting agency priorities, and a chilling effect on future aid made financial planning difficult for TRC and our partners. These pressures compounded the emotional toll on our staff and community, many of whom faced daily stress from being personally and professionally affected, with increasing demand from the community and decreased resources. Even in this climate, TRC never stopped showing up.

The changes and challenges happened alongside a new internal structure designed to strengthen our flexibility, sustainability, and responsiveness. In 2025, TRC reorganized to better balance service demands with workplace well-being. We maintained our core programs of Health & Housing, Housing Counseling & Mediation, and the Eviction Diversion & Defense Partnership. We are striving to make our services more accessible, while we build on a culture that sustains staff through living wages, inclusive practices, and a pace of work that resists burnout. We are building a stronger administrative backbone, guided by best practices, to help us navigate future funding volatility.

Our mission continues to shape how we serve, partner, and lead: *TRC defends housing as a human right and strengthens housing stability in our communities by preventing evictions and educating and empowering individuals and families.* Our values remain our compass: *Empowerment, Collaboration, Accountability, Accessibility, Equity, and Anti-Racism.*

We are deeply grateful to the staff, volunteers, partners, donors, and community members who carried this organization through immense growth and challenge. Our future is only possible because of our collective work and vision of Housing Justice for All. Together, we remain steadfast in the belief that housing is a human right, and that TRC has a vital role to play in building a more just community for all.

Thank you for being a part of TRC,  
Laura & Hannah

# Board of Directors, Staff, and Volunteers

## Leadership and Staff

### Leadership

Hannah Renfro, *Executive Director*  
Chrisbely Antimo, *Associate Director*  
Mary Pfothenauer,  
*Director of Administration*  
Jeff LeMessurier,  
*Housing Services Program Manager*  
Bryan Antimo,  
*EDDP Program Manager*

### Staff

Amy Lindley  
Claire Allen  
Coleman Ubl  
Diego Colorado  
Jude Stallworth  
Judith Cosme  
Katherine Garcia  
Levi Waniorek  
Lilia Paz  
Mya Simms  
Oscar Guzman  
Parker Schorr  
Paul Hermann  
Rose Manjon  
Vesna Dzamonja  
Ximena Linares-Rodriguez

## Board of Directors and Volunteers

### Board of Directors

Laura Dixson-Kruijf, *President*  
Enzo Ciarletta, *Vice President*  
Christine Welcher, *Treasurer*  
Sophie Crispin, *Secretary*  
Mary Murray  
David Hollander  
Sharon Bell

### Volunteers

Belinda O'Connell  
Bob Mincberg  
Charlie Ross  
Damien Hoepfner  
Howard Bellman  
Jason Murcko  
Jim Murray  
Joan Schilling  
John Cook  
Joseph Bowling  
Justin Rabensdorf  
Katie Suoja  
Lee Miller  
Mary Anglim  
Paul Matthews  
Shelby Connell  
Wenda Mincberg

## Eviction Diversion & Defense Partnership

The EDDP team proactively engages with every tenant household facing eviction to ensure they have the support, information, and guidance needed to participate effectively in their eviction court hearing. EDDP staff attend every eviction hearing and trial in Dane County to answer questions, provide services, and offer resources. The team also coordinates applications for housing-related financial assistance, including rent, utility payments, and security deposits (referred to as “rental assistance”) to eligible tenant households. Additionally, TRC partners with legal service organizations and attorneys to provide attorney representation at no cost to tenants.

## Health & Housing

TRC, UW Health, and UW Medicine started the Health & Housing program in 2018 to provide housing stability services to improve the health outcomes of patients living with HIV. Medical case managers at the UW Health HIV clinics refer clients to TRC’s housing case managers. TRC assists these clients with finding, securing, and maintaining housing by providing comprehensive services throughout the rental process, such as assisting clients with job and housing applications; providing financial assistance and transportation; educating clients about their rental rights and responsibilities; and scheduling regular check-ins with clients and their landlords.

## Housing Counseling Services

Our Housing Counseling Services team works with tenants and landlords to answer questions about their rental rights and responsibilities and provides trainings to internal staff and volunteers, tenants, landlords, and service providers (e.g. case managers, staff at nonprofit partner agencies). When a tenant’s housing stability is significantly at risk and other extenuating circumstances are present, a housing counselor may refer the matter to an EDDP partner attorney for eviction diversion assistance. In addition, our mediation team helps to resolve disputes between landlords and tenants in court or before an eviction is filed.

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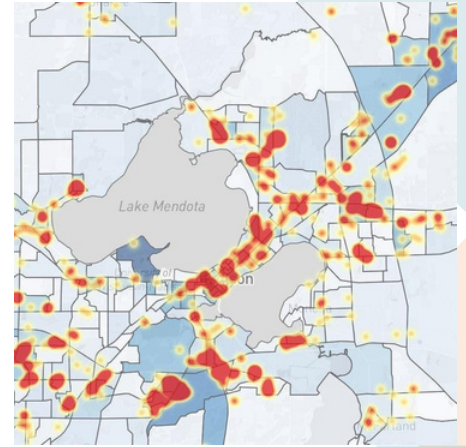
These program teams are, in turn, supported by our **Administrative and Financial** team, which acts as the backbone for TRC’s programs and operations. The team administers all rental assistance and ensures that rental assistance is paid in compliance with landlord-tenant laws, federal rules and regulations, and contract requirements. They support the programmatic teams by maintaining detailed eviction court data and using the data to prepare reports on program operations. They also manage TRC’s internal workflow systems, website, and other written materials to provide current information to staff, clients, and funders. TRC staff on all teams participate in outreach and trainings across Dane County for tenants, landlords, social service providers, and community members.

# Tenant Resource Center in Eviction Court

**Our goal is to ensure no one in Dane County faces eviction alone.** Although we cannot change all of the systems that lead to housing insecurity, TRC can be a hub for information, resources, and support. When a tenant is facing eviction, we provide housing counseling, mediation, court navigation, rental assistance, and referrals to free legal representation. We also collect, analyze, and report on eviction court data. This data is important both for shaping our services to the needs of the community and keeping the community and policymakers informed about evictions in our community.

We contact every household with an eviction filing in Dane County to inform them about their hearing, how to appear, and resources available. In 2025, we provided services at 4,558 eviction hearings and trials. These services included mediation, legal representation, rental assistance, housing counseling, and other support services from TRC staff. We mediated 539 tenant-landlord disputes at court appearances, more than double the previous year, and 389 households were represented by an EDDP legal partner.

As a result of TRC's and our partners' services, 86% of households facing eviction had their cases dismissed.



## 4,558

hearings and trials in which TRC staff provided services

## 539

landlord-tenant disputes mediated by TRC staff and volunteers

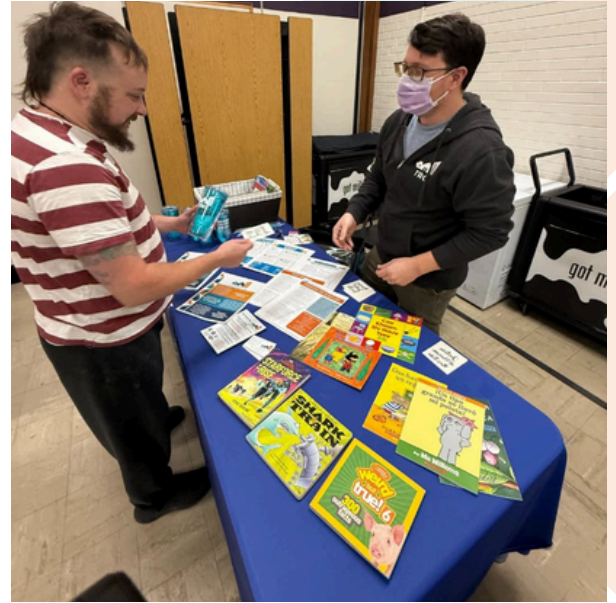
## 389

households were represented by an EDDP legal partner

**“AS THE RESULT OF TRC’S AND OUR PARTNERS’ SERVICES, 86% OF HOUSEHOLDS FACING EVICTION HAD THEIR CASES DISMISSED.”**

# Empowering Communities

**TRC volunteers** play an indispensable role in empowering the community with information on their rental rights and responsibilities. Volunteer mediators helped resolve eviction disputes, leading to 81% of those cases being dismissed. In 2025, we recruited and trained 4 new housing counseling volunteers—bringing our total number of housing counseling volunteers to 13. The time they generously donate means that we can return phone calls much more quickly, which is especially important with the growing need for services: Tenant Resource Center’s staff and volunteers responded to 18,250 calls and emails in 2025, an increase of over 3,000 from the previous year.



**Our Housing Counseling and EDDP teams** supported 5,234 in-person visitors to our offices in 2025. We answered questions covering every step of the landlord-tenant relationship: rental applications, non-renewals, evictions, and everything in between. We also helped households complete rental assistance applications, navigate eviction court, and obtain referrals to other organizations. TRC partner attorney organizations assisted 358 households during in-office hours and clinics.

**TRC’s Health & Housing** case managers collaborated extensively with medical case managers in 2025 to provide wraparound, client-centered support to 37 clients referred from UW Health HIV clinics, supporting them with maintaining stable housing and prioritizing their health and well-being.



Through the Health & Housing Program, a client facing a sudden drop in income was able to stay housed during a major household change. With support from their bilingual case manager, the parent - who speaks English as a second language - developed a clear housing plan and stabilized their housing so their family could remain safely in their home.

**18,250**

Calls and emails answered by TRC staff and volunteers

**5,234**

In-person visits to Tenant Resource Center’s four office locations

**37**

Health & Housing clients received holistic, client-centered support

# Financial Support Services

## Rental Assistance

September 30, 2025 was the last day that TRC sent out financial assistance checks under the CORE program – the same day that federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) funding for the program expired. This marked the end of a 5-year period of TRC providing much-needed emergency financial assistance on behalf of renters impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

From January 1, 2020 until September 30, 2025, TRC distributed nearly \$62 million in emergency federal funding on behalf of the most at-risk tenants in our communities. Funds for rental and utility assistance were provided to TRC through grants from the City of Madison and Dane County. This funding also allowed the City and County to partner with TRC in forming the Eviction Diversion and Defense Partnership (EDDP), which remains one of our core programs at TRC.

The vast majority of these payments were made on behalf of tenant households making less than 30 percent of the Area Median Income. Roughly half of these households were led by a person identifying as Black or African American; two-thirds by a person identifying as female; and approximately 15 percent by a person identifying as Hispanic or Latinx. The average household receiving assistance also had at least one minor child in the home.

For more detailed information about this program, see TRC's quarterly EDDP Reports, available at [eddp.tenantresourcecenter.org](http://eddp.tenantresourcecenter.org).

Going forward, TRC will be able to offer a small amount of financial assistance to eligible tenants through generous grants from the City of Madison, Dane County, and UW-Medicine. The amount available will be a tiny fraction of what we saw in 2025, but TRC knows that even this can make a real difference for a family faced with losing their home.

## Understand the Impact: Laurel's Story

Even the strongest and most resourceful people we know need to ask for help sometimes. This was the case for Laurel\*, who made the courageous decision to leave a really bad relationship after 9 years. She experienced homelessness for 2 years before moving into her own apartment. Everything was going well until she got severely ill and had to stay in the hospital. As a result, she fell behind on rent. Her landlord was threatening eviction and the late fees were piling up, so Laurel reached out to Tenant Resource Center.

TRC housing counselors made a referral for diversion rental assistance funding and assisted Laurel with completing the application. Laurel was approved for 5 months of back-owed rent and 3 months of forward rent. She never had to go to eviction court. Today, Laurel lives in the same home, where she just signed a new lease!

*\*Name changed to protect client privacy.*

# Importance of Collaboration

Partnering with other community organizations helps us provide more effective support to those experiencing housing insecurity. By sharing resources, knowledge, and connections, we can better meet the intersecting needs of individuals and families. These collaborations allow us to meet community needs more efficiently and help advance housing justice. Below are a few highlights from 2025.



## Community Shares Change-Maker Award

TRC staff member Ximena Linares-Rodriguez won the 2025 Linda Sundberg Civil Rights Defender Award for providing equitable access to resources for tenants. The award recognized the tremendous community impact that is possible with meaningful collaborations. Ximena and our Associate Director, Chrisbelly Antimo, partnered with Joining Forces for Families to launch Madison Area Partners and Allies (MAPA), a monthly event to bring together providers and Spanish-speaking immigrant community members to connect them with social services. Ximena & TRC also collaborated with professors and students from the Chicanx/e & Latinx/e Studies program at UW-Madison to survey tenants who had accessed TRC services, building important research from the lived experiences of Latinx renters in Dane County.

## Community Resource Fairs

Expanding upon our first annual Community Resource Fair in July 2024, TRC held four mini resource fairs throughout 2025. More than 30 local organizations were brought into TRC's office across four events to offer vital resources, services, and information for the community, along with free food and drinks. Each fair was a connection tool not just for the community but for different organizations around Dane County to share their knowledge and programs.

## Staff In-Service Training

Throughout 2025, TRC found opportunities to deepen our team's knowledge of rental rights, civil rights, and community tools through staff trainings in collaboration with a variety of organizations. During in-service week, all of TRC's staff received extensive in-depth training on thirteen different subjects. Participants included the WI Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), Fair Housing of Wisconsin, Domestic Abuse Intervention Services (DAIS), and many more.



# TRC in the Community

TRC knows our services don't end within the walls of our office. In 2025, we took the initiative to strengthen and expand our housing counseling, eviction prevention, and mediation services throughout Dane County.

## Multiple Offices

Accessibility is one of our core values. In 2025, TRC remained committed to being available throughout Dane County at four locations. Moving into our main office on Winnebago Street in January 2024 has provided space to bring in partner attorneys and organizations during our walk-in hours and expand the onsite resources available to tenants. The UW Madison office at the Student Activity Center has continued to be a resource to the student community and their housing needs for more than 15 years. Our Saturday office at Madison College Goodman South made it possible to serve renters who cannot visit our offices during the week, and our Sunshine Place office widens our reach to the Sun Prairie and surrounding communities.

## Community Events

TRC also stepped outside of our offices into schools, festivals, resource fairs, and many more events across Dane County. We facilitated 30 workshops in 2025, 12 of which were led by bilingual staff. In addition, TRC staff participated in 31 City of Madison Neighborhood Resource Team meetings in 2025, connecting with organizations and city leaders while providing updates on TRC services.



### Understand the Impact: Eviction Prevention Services for Incarcerated Tenants

An EDDP client, who had experienced homelessness for nearly seven years prior to obtaining her current housing, was in the Dane County jail when she received a 5-day notice. TRC staff connected her with one of our partner attorneys, who successfully defended the client. The case was dismissed two days before trial due to a deficiency in the eviction notice.

## Bridging the Gap for Incarcerated Tenants.

Recognizing a critical gap, Tenant Resource Center has established a specialized case management role dedicated to incarcerated tenants facing eviction. Through partnerships with the State Public Defender's Office and Dane County Jail, we ensure tenants in particularly vulnerable circumstances are able to attend their eviction hearings, understand their rights, have access to potential housing case management, and are aware of available resources.

## Supporting Staff

The impact TRC delivers is made possible by a team who bring deep expertise, cultural humility, and an unwavering commitment to housing justice. Our staff and volunteers are skilled, mission-driven individuals who uphold our core values in every interaction. Their dedication ensures that our services remain community-rooted and meaningful. To sustain this level of expert, mission-driven service, we must care for our team with the same urgency we bring to our mission.

That means ensuring our staff have the resources, respect, and benefits they need to thrive at TRC. We offer sustainable wages, fully paid health coverage, paid time off, and an emergency fund, and we invest in professional development and DEI initiatives that foster an inclusive workplace. These are not perks. These are intentional strategies designed to reduce burnout and turnover, and foster a culture of learning, inclusion, and community. Investing in staff well-being is essential to the long-term impact of our mission.

"I love working at TRC because I find it extremely important and valuable to be a resource to the community to educate renters on their rights and empower them to assert them. It's been rewarding to be a part of a program that assisted so many households in remaining in their homes especially when homelessness is a prevalent issue that many people face in our community."

*-Vesna, Compliance Manager*

"TRC is different than any other work place, they support me as a multidimensional person with a life outside of the office. Never expecting [me] to work like I have no family."

*-Rose, Health & Housing Case Manager*

### Understand the Impact: Supporting Staff

"The ability to work from home some days of the week is huge for my mental health."

*-Kat, Bilingual Health & Housing Case Manager*

"I appreciate that TRC provides flexible hours for staff members. I feel fortunate my role allows me to keep tenants informed of their rights before eviction trials by providing info on redaction, illegal eviction, and understanding the court system."

*-Jude, EDDP Client Services Specialist*

# Fundraising, Financials, and Use of Contributions

## Financials

The City of Madison, Dane County, and the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development have provided crucial funding that prevented an immediate break in services for individuals facing an eviction in our community. Our work continues to be supported by them, along with tremendous funders and partners such as Community Shares of Wisconsin, Roots & Wings, Attic Angel Association, the SASY Neighborhood Association, UW Madison ASM, UW Medicine, and United Way of Dane County—along with a community support system of individual donations. With this funding, we can continue our partnerships with experienced, dedicated housing attorneys and paralegals at Legal Action of Wisconsin, Community Justice Inc, H.R. Watson Law, and the University of Wisconsin Law School. We are also collaborating with Ascendium Education Group to provide transformational change against justice inequity.

## Fundraising

To continue serving the community in a similar capacity, TRC has remained focused on a fundraising strategy that diversifies funding sources, strengthens relationships with our supporters, and grows our private donor base. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we once again surpassed our goal during The Big Share this year. Looking ahead, we are excited to host our first-ever golf fundraiser at The Oaks on September 21, 2026. As we grow these efforts, we want to hear from you—why you support TRC, what inspires your giving, and what matters most to you in how we connect through events and communication. Your feedback helps shape our work and our future. Donors are encouraged to reach out to Amy at [AmyS@TenantResourceCenter.org](mailto:AmyS@TenantResourceCenter.org) to share your thoughts!



**TENANT RESOURCE CENTER**

## Copies of This Report

Copies of this report are available on the Tenant Resource Center's website ([www.TenantResourceCenter.org](http://www.TenantResourceCenter.org)), by email request to [Executive@TenantResourceCenter.org](mailto:Executive@TenantResourceCenter.org), and by request at our main office, located at 2510 Winnebago Street, Madison, WI 53704.

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For a list of hours and locations, please visit [www.TenantResourceCenter.org](http://www.TenantResourceCenter.org).

