



RentWell™

A PROGRAM OF TRANSITION PROJECTS
KNOWLEDGE • RESPONSIBILITY • STABILITY

Oregon Transition Conference 2018
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What is Rent Well?



A 15-hour tenant education course, taught by certified instructors at community partner agencies that teaches individuals how to be a successful renter.

This course can help those who have been denied housing identify their screening barriers, take steps to address those barriers, and prepare to be successful, stable tenants in the future.

Rent Well History

- ▶ Rent Well was created in 2009 by the Renter's Education Alliance (REAL) with oversight by The Portland Housing Bureau and Home Forward
- ▶ Written by a professional curriculum writer
- ▶ Piloted in by several community agencies
- ▶ Reviewed by landlords, the Fair Housing Council of Oregon, Legal Aid, Community Alliance of Tenants, Multifamily Northwest
- ▶ As of July 2016, all management and oversight of Rent Well transferred over to Transition Projects to make it a self-sufficient program

Rent Well Today

- ▶ In the last state legislative session, HB2724 passed, which made the Rental Guarantee Program available throughout the state of Oregon
- ▶ As of January 2018, Rent Well rolled out a new version of the curriculum and a program focused on helping instructors better navigate the housing field with their students.



In Rent Well, students learn to:

- Identify what barriers to housing might be
- Identify how a person's choices can impact housing situations
- Understand how laws affect the landlord/tenant relationship
- Understand the landlord's perspective
- Understand the screening process
- **Communicate effectively with landlords and neighbors**

In Rent Well, students learn to:

- Set goals and action steps to achieve housing
- Create a personalized housing portfolio
- Understand the different types of housing
- Create a workable household budget
- **Recognize their own housing needs and how to search for housing**

In Rent Well, students learn to:

- How to apply for housing
- Read important rental documents
- Know what the landlord's responsibilities are
- Identify types of termination notices and what the eviction process looks like
- Maintain a clean, safe, and healthy home
- **Move-in and move-out the right way**

What Rent Well Can Do

Refer students to free or low-cost legal services and tax professionals

Give information about where to look for rent assistance or other services

Help students understand their basic rights and responsibilities as a tenant

Give students tools to help make good housing choices

Give students tools that may help them access housing, even if they have screening barriers

Teach students how to best present themselves to a possible landlord

Upon graduation, students will receive a graduation certificate. *This certificate may make some landlords more willing to rent to someone who has rental screening barriers.*

What Rent Well Cannot Do

Give students advice around legal issues, financial planning, etc.

Automatically give students access to rent assistance, housing, or other services

Pay deposits or rent for a new rental unit and ongoing rent

Teach students everything they need to know about landlord-tenant law

“Undo” any past choices that have negatively impacted housing

Erase screening barriers or undo evictions

Guarantee that they will be accepted into housing.

Landlord Incentive Funds

This is an incentive for landlords to rent to Rent Well graduates.

The Rent Well Certificate is good for 18 months. During that time if a graduate finds and their landlord registers the incentive at the time of move in, then if the graduates vacates a rental unit within the first year of tenancy, the landlord can recoup up to \$2000 for unpaid rent, damages to the unit, or legal fees beyond the amount of the security deposit.



The Success

In 2016-2017, the Rent Well program, in Multnomah County alone, had

- ▶ 55 partner agencies
- ▶ 712 graduates
- ▶ Only 1 graduate had to access the fund

Since the beginning of the program in 2009, **less than 1%** of graduates need to use the fund.



Bringing Rent Well to You

Rent Well welcomes partnerships with Oregon and Washington based organizations that are nonprofits, publicly funded agencies, and government housing providers.

The program hosts Train the Trainer events across the state for your staff to attend and become either a fully certified instructor or a trained professional.

Train the Trainer Events

In order to become a provider, instructors must be trained for a 2.5 day training session. Costs are a one time licensing fee of \$200 per agency and \$400 per instructor for training.

Scheduled Upcoming Trainings:

- ▶ **Oregon City's Train the Trainer Event**
April 10th, 17th, and 19th
- ▶ **Albany's Train the Trainer Event**
May 23rd - 25th

Sign up and pay via our website: rentwell.org

Thank You



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