



community alliance of tenants

CAT Board Agenda
COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OF TENANTS (CAT)
Monday, April 22, 2024
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

6:00 Welcome

Board introductions. check-ins and staff introductions

*Board role: Agenda approval, ground rules review, approval of March minutes.

6:10 CAT program reports hotline, and tenant engagement and advocacy

Board Role: Listen

6:20 Policy Committee Proposal to Fair Shot

Board Role: Decide on a policy proposal for Fair Shot

6:30 Finance Report

*Board Role: Listen, Questions, Motion to approve the Finance Committee report.

Make policy decisions about the spending choices outside of the budget that must come to the board

6:50 Public comment and new business

Board role: Get information and ask questions

7:00 Break and transition to executive session

7:05 Procurement issues and hiring procedures that support DEI and address possible conflicts of interest.

*Board Role: Review strategies for centering CAT regarding DEI and other CAT values in contracting and hiring. Discuss circumstances where we support board members doing work for CAT and the procedures that we should follow.

8:00 – Adjourn

*These are action items

Announcements

- Fair Housing Council of Oregon Fundraiser- April 25, 2024 from 4:00 – 8:00 p.m., FHCO will host their second annual Fair Housing Month Fundraiser. Let's attend and connect. Invite friends. Will be emceed by none other than Bolivia Carmichael. There will also be a silent auction. No cost to attend.

CAT Board Report

Community Alliance of Tenants
For the period ended March 31, 2024



Prepared by
Kim McCarty, Executive Director

Prepared on
April 13, 2024

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Executive Director commentary

Dear CAT Board

This CAT Board packet represents the detailed reports that will be summarized for the full Board meeting on Monday, April 22, 2024.

Activities at CAT

- Increase of hotline hours
- Tenant Survey
- Summer outreach events
- Energy Trust Workshops
- Tenant Union 101 trainings
- Contacted potential contractors about DEI training

Future Policy Initiatives

- Fair Shot proposal
- Rent Assistance
- Rent Control
- Portable Applications
- Improvements to rent stabilization

Future Projects

- Upgrades to hotline software for phones and reporting
- Rent Well Training
- Office Move
- Use Quick Books online
- Upgrade Every Action

Initiatives endorsed, supported or adopted

- NCRC opposition to the Capitol One merger.
- Support of better housing for agricultural workers

Fundraising

- In March we proposed working with the consultant Pamela Oakes who has experience helping small non-profits. The board agreed to contract with Pamela. From that discussion, I plan to expand our investment in fundraising to add some additional elements depending on funding First, a consultant to help us with the plan and apply for unrestricted funds. Second, prepare to hire a development manager, maybe as soon as June. The development manager will also assist, if qualified, with setting our culture and value statements needed for fundraising. Lastly, hire a contractor to manage our membership and donor database by adding to the database. I will confirm the soundness of this strategy with the Interim Finance Director and Development Consultant and ask them for further guidance about staffing needs.
- New grants: We have not applied for any new grants
- Grant Renewals: In May we will be redrafting the scopes of service for the PHB and OHCS grants. The Multnomah County grant is in place for five years.
- Our social media fundraising campaign launched in March.
- We are considering an application to the Give Guide.

For Committee Approval (**Reminder Note and New Request**):

- Policy regarding spending limits.
- Policy regarding contracting with board members.

Reports to be submitted to funder

- PHB quarterly report
- OHCS quarterly report

Community Alliance of Tenants

Annual monitoring or audits

All ESG contractors in the state are being audited for OHCS for the ESG grant awarded in 2021-2022. We are following up on their questions. We have explained to the auditors that some documentation is lacking due to the transition in finance staff. We have also received monitoring letters from PHB and Multnomah, which are being presented now for both Fiscal and Program, as part of their mid-year grant review. All concerns have been resolved.

April 2024 Board Blurb

Hotline

In March, we completed 116 hotline calls across the state and 9 Live calls. The top calls were about Fair Housing, Harassment, Repairs - Essential Service, Termination/Eviction - non-payment

FY 23-24 OHCS Hotline Goal: 1,500-2,000 callers

FY 23-24 PHB Hotline Goal: 1,000

TPT

Annual Goal for TPT referrals with each partner:

APANO: 30-40

IRCO: 30-40

SEI: 30-40

Annual Goal for Legal Referrals through TPT: Up to 100

Thuy took the month of March off to take care of family abroad.

Joy covered TPT referrals.

SEI: 14 referrals. 5 were sent to Troy.

7 referrals were sent to Troy from the Hotline.

HCV

Fitsum continues to join and participate in the Home Forward HCV orientation every Tuesday, Wednesday and sometimes on Thursday.

Fitsum presented a combined total of 15 HCV workshops and mini-presentations at Home Forward Orientations with 45 participants reached.

Tenant Engagement Plan

Objective:

The objective of this engagement plan is to actively involve tenants in the state of Oregon in the housing policymaking process, ensuring their voices are heard, needs are addressed, and rights are protected. This plan aims to foster meaningful dialogue, empower tenants, and facilitate collaboration between tenants, policymakers, and community stakeholders.

Components:

1. Survey Development and Distribution:

- Develop a comprehensive online survey to capture the current status, situations, and needs of tenants within Oregon by [3, 28, 2024].
- Utilize various communication channels, including social media, email newsletters, community forums, and partner organizations, to promote and distribute the survey widely by [April 1, 2024].
- Ensure the survey is accessible, available in multiple languages, and designed to gather diverse perspectives and experiences.

2. Collaboration with Community Partners:

- Forge partnerships with community organizations, tenant advocacy groups, and housing nonprofits to amplify outreach efforts and reach underserved communities by [May 13, 2024].
- Leverage the networks and expertise of partner organizations to facilitate survey distribution, encourage participation, and ensure the survey resonates with diverse tenant demographics.

3. Engagement Strategies:

- Organize virtual town hall meetings, focus groups, and community forums to engage directly with tenants and discuss their housing concerns, experiences, and priorities throughout [May 13, 2024r].
- Host tenant-led workshops and discussion sessions to empower tenants with knowledge about their rights, eviction prevention strategies, and available resources by June 6th, 2024; with 9 comprehensive workshops completed.
- Conduct door-to-door outreach in targeted neighborhoods to connect with tenants who may face barriers to online engagement, providing them with information and assistance to participate in the survey and engagement activities.

- Portland Metro (Alexis, Vesper, Jensi)
- Central Oregon (Brendan, Vesper)
- Southern Oregon (Jennifer De La Mancha)

4. Policy Development and Advocacy:

- Establish an in-house policy committee comprised of tenant representatives, policymakers, and community stakeholders to review survey findings, identify key issues, and develop legislative concepts aligned with tenant feedback by [4/19].
- Advocate for tenant-centric policies and legislative reforms based on the insights gathered from the survey and engagement activities, ensuring that tenant voices are central to the policymaking process.

5. Follow-up and Support:

- Provide ongoing support and assistance to tenants throughout the engagement process, including access to resources, legal aid, and housing assistance programs by [6/6]; with 2 program proposals per coordinator.
- Maintain open lines of communication with tenants, offering opportunities for feedback, follow-up surveys, and updates on advocacy efforts by [6/6].
- Collaborate with partner organizations and community stakeholders to implement recommendations, address identified issues, and advocate for systemic change to improve housing conditions for all tenants in Oregon.

Evaluation

Regular monitoring and evaluation of engagement efforts will be essential to assess participation levels, gather feedback from participants, and measure the impact of tenant engagement activities on informing policy development and advocacy efforts. Key performance indicators may include engagement metrics, survey response rates, legislative outcomes, and qualitative feedback from tenants.

OHCS and other corresponding grants should be used for tracking and alignment.

Conclusion:

Through proactive engagement, collaboration, and advocacy, this tenant engagement plan aims to empower tenants in Oregon, amplify their voices, and drive positive change in housing policy and practice. By centering tenant experiences and priorities, we can work together to create more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable housing solutions that meet the needs of all tenants in the state.

Community Alliance of Tenants

Board Report

Community Alliance of Tenants

For the period ended March 31, 2024



community alliance
of tenants

Prepared by

Tracy Baird, Interim Finance Director

Prepared on

April 19, 2024

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Interim Finance Director commentary

Dear Board of Directors,

This packet represents the summarized reports that was reviewed in detail by the Finance Committee on Thursday, April 18, 2024.

Staff and Service (Update)

We have been contacted by the CLU to begin bargaining agreement negotiations.

We will need the Finance Committee & Board's participation with compensation, benefit, and personnel policy approvals.

Accounts Payable (Information)

We have made good progress paying down past due balances, and are near current.

Accounts Receivable (Information)

All prior month invoices have received or will receive payment in April. All March invoices are current and are being sent out for payment.

Fundraising (Update)

We have secured Pamela Oakes as a fundraising consultant to begin immediately and work through December 2024. She will be contacting the board and volunteers about fundraising, and will be putting together a revenue goal strategy for sustainable giving.

Revenue strategies for unrestricted support is critical. We need the Board and all hands to make light work of sourcing large undesignated donations, preference for non-grants but general donations from affinity corporations and individuals.

Cash Flow (Information)

The need to spend money to receive money remains difficult, as all of our grants are reimbursement. Unrestricted cash continues to be elusive and overall cash is not being replenished.

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget (Update)

We are beginning plans for the FY25 Budget, to be approved at the June Finance Committee and Board Meetings. The Finance Committee will review the company budget in detail in June to make their recommendation to the board for approval at that June board meeting.

The FY25 Budget, like last year, will be based on known grants and anticipated revenue goals, this year provided by Pamela Oakes' revenue strategy.

Policy amendments are also recommended to be effective with the fiscal year, and we'll begin review via email as the policy drafts are available.

Reports (Information)

Added to the standard reports is a glimpse of grant budgets and expense tracking, for the committee to see how grants are being recorded. There are still items that are a work in progress, yet we wanted to demonstrate the transparent detail going into the accounting, and share a sample of what the manager will be utilizing for expense tracking against their budgets. These will not be presented at the board meeting.

Tracy Baird, with Kim McCarty

Statement of Activity by Month

July 2023 - March 2024

	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Total
REVENUE										
4000 Contributions & Gifts	38.00	144.07	60.91	2,821.00	168.21	1,056.00	1,238.85	23.00	338.79	5,888.83
4110 Foundation Grants		5,000.00						100,000.00		105,000.00
4120 Government Grants	19,520.61	21,677.40	19,803.12	33,704.02	56,886.13	90,329.50	99,284.42	113,137.45	123,428.20	577,770.85
4130 Sponsorship								500.00		500.00
4135 Membership	931.10	2,067.45	3,233.80	968.30	1,789.80	1,478.30	1,233.30	1,371.30	617.45	13,690.80
4139 Refunds Given	-343.14	-306.04								-649.18
Total 4135 Membership	587.96	1,761.41	3,233.80	968.30	1,789.80	1,478.30	1,233.30	1,371.30	617.45	13,041.62
4140 Contracts	8,688.45	1,852.38	4,415.22	5,566.98			10,000.00	1,500.00	500.00	32,523.03
4150 Other Revenue	204.00	47.50	77.50	57.50	3,049.78	47.50	47.50	47.50	163.57	3,742.35
4160 Interest Income	4.45	4.46	4.17	4.61	6.15	5.97	6.80	5.98	5.98	48.57
4999 Release From Restriction	8,333.33	8,333.33	8,333.33	8,333.33	8,333.33	8,333.35				50,000.00
Total Revenue	37,376.80	38,820.55	35,928.05	51,455.74	70,233.40	101,250.62	111,810.87	216,585.23	125,053.99	788,515.25
GROSS PROFIT										
	37,376.80	38,820.55	35,928.05	51,455.74	70,233.40	101,250.62	111,810.87	216,585.23	125,053.99	788,515.25
EXPENDITURES										
6000 Salaries, Wages, & PTO	37,809.96	24,340.54	24,773.07	32,790.22	47,572.51	73,649.08	76,374.10	90,025.63	91,796.49	499,131.60
6100 Payroll Tax - Federal	2,892.15	1,861.31	2,099.20	2,508.44	3,629.83	5,951.26	5,894.65	6,898.39	7,068.04	38,803.27
6105 Payroll Tax - State/Local	151.45	97.80	99.31	131.32	177.29	260.69	807.15	1,018.00	850.81	3,593.82
6110 Payroll Tax - Unemployment	462.40	204.68	597.64	296.46	555.66	1,034.78	1,533.94	2,665.38	2,644.27	9,995.21
6120 Payroll Tax - Worker's Comp	7.86	0.31	0.36	8.37	618.23	17.14	28.20	26.09	22.89	729.45
6130 Benefits - Health	19,629.98	3,736.18	321.73	1,898.51	6,722.31	6,291.47	15,443.93	11,271.24	25,333.96	90,649.31
6140 Benefits - Dental	2,047.78	370.66	370.66	199.06	723.02	907.21	1,293.88	509.08	2,646.11	9,067.46
6180 Benefits - Telecom Stipend	160.00	40.31	80.00	320.00	440.00	680.00	680.00	680.00	680.00	3,760.31
6200 Payroll Related Expense	851.12	297.52	293.77	331.19	286.00	375.95	886.69	532.99	1,005.22	4,860.45
7110 Advertising-Promotional	164.49			2,880.55						3,045.04
7130 Bank Fees			30.00	29.97	30.00			0.00	90.00	179.97
7135 Merchant Fees	110.24	119.70	160.55	721.19	403.27	148.95	160.13	341.23	310.73	2,475.99
7150 Business Insurance	3,107.36				949.50	12,119.49	-1,424.00		200.00	14,952.35
7160 Interest Paid		813.22	205.99	614.69	1,267.69	1,270.94	1,313.30	1,313.30	1,228.57	8,027.70
7170 Licenses & Registrations	50.00	287.61	287.61	287.61	293.98	293.98	293.98	20.00		1,814.77
7200 Fundraising			449.00	3,657.33	3,771.60	3,918.03	4,031.04	3,752.33	1,108.00	20,687.33
7310 Office Lease	3,642.42	3,642.42	3,642.42	3,642.42	3,642.42	3,751.70	3,751.70	4,045.68	4,070.64	33,831.82
7345 Utilities	662.61	447.93	375.00	375.00	375.00	415.26	447.69	447.51	457.90	4,003.90
7400 Legal & Professional	17,565.88	26,137.57	18,310.74	20,029.38	16,016.32	17,123.13	13,554.63	10,500.63	6,028.11	145,266.39
7550 Dues & Subscriptions	50.00				495.00	535.00	330.00			1,410.00
7560 Supplies & Materials		37.55	73.80	10.20		109.07	156.26	214.16	308.04	909.08
7570 Technology & Software	5,303.90	4,266.90	2,172.91	3,470.92	5,540.90	3,913.34	3,030.34	3,648.75	6,861.13	38,209.09
7575 Telecommunications	2,139.71	2,077.06	1,973.36	1,977.03	1,678.04	2,083.24	2,025.94	1,950.54	1,987.62	17,892.54
7600 Program Direct Services		3,130.00	80.00	13,341.20	90.00	123.80		668.49	1,525.05	18,958.54
7720 Travel & Mileage					569.25	1,966.94	124.41	1,194.77	1,365.59	5,220.96
Uncategorized Expense									531.41	531.41
Total Expenditures	96,809.31	71,909.27	56,397.12	89,521.06	95,847.82	136,940.45	130,737.96	141,724.19	158,120.58	978,007.76

	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Total
NET OPERATING REVENUE	-59,432.51	-33,088.72	-20,469.07	-38,065.32	-25,614.42	-35,689.83	-18,927.09	74,861.04	-33,066.59	-189,492.51
NET REVENUE	\$ -59,432.51	\$ -33,088.72	\$ -20,469.07	\$ -38,065.32	\$ -25,614.42	\$ -35,689.83	\$ -18,927.09	\$74,861.04	\$ -33,066.59	\$ -189,492.51

Statement of Financial Position Summary - Preliminary Unreconciled

As of March 31, 2024

	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	271,309.65
Accounts Receivable	220,634.05
Other Current Assets	1,689,372.01
Total Current Assets	2,181,315.71
TOTAL ASSETS	\$2,181,315.71
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	44,397.26
Credit Cards	2,754.67
Other Current Liabilities	145,358.22
Total Current Liabilities	192,510.15
Total Liabilities	192,510.15
Equity	1,988,805.56
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$2,181,315.71

A/R Aging Summary

All Dates

	Current	1 - 30	31 - 60	61 - 90	91 and over	Total
Beneficial State Bank				500.00		500.00
Energy Trust						0.00
Energy Trust	500.00	1,500.00				2,000.00
Total Energy Trust	500.00	1,500.00				2,000.00
Home Forward						0.00
Home Forward 2023	3,325.44	3,973.90	4,744.97			12,044.31
Total Home Forward	3,325.44	3,973.90	4,744.97			12,044.31
Metro						0.00
Metro 2023		182.58		47.73	272.30	502.61
Total Metro		182.58		47.73	272.30	502.61
Multnomah County						0.00
Mult Cty 2024	16,621.86					16,621.86
Mult Cty CDBG 2024	1,101.51					1,101.51
Total Multnomah County	17,723.37					17,723.37
OHCS						0.00
OHCS 2024	63,035.07					63,035.07
Total OHCS	63,035.07					63,035.07
PHB						0.00
PHB 2024	39,898.73	2,794.07				42,692.80
Total PHB	39,898.73	2,794.07				42,692.80
Port of Portland			200.00			200.00
Unite Oregon				10,000.00		10,000.00
TOTAL	\$124,482.61	\$8,450.55	\$4,944.97	\$10,547.73	\$272.30	\$148,698.16

A/P Aging Summary

All Dates

	Current	1 - 30	31 - 60	61 - 90	91 and over	Total
BenefitHelp Solutions	85.00					85.00
CFS	3,272.50	5,558.44	2,021.25			10,852.19
Comcast	330.33					330.33
COPYTRONIX					45.07	45.07
Golden Solutions			-2,000.00			-2,000.00
Minuteman Press Powell					-800.00	-800.00
Miscellaneous					23,566.42	23,566.42
Moda Health	16,860.27					16,860.27
NIA	1,030.65					1,030.65
Ogletree Deakins					7,490.00	7,490.00
Upward Technology		2,852.50				2,852.50
Waste Managment	82.61					82.61
TOTAL	\$21,661.36	\$8,410.94	\$21.25	\$0.00	\$30,301.49	\$60,395.04

CAT Board Meeting March 25th 6:00 PM Pacific time.

President Alex Rhodes – Present

Vice President – Musonda Mwango

Treasurer – Amanda Caffall - present

Secretary – Delfina Andrade – Present

Others Attending:

Matthew Edmonds

Kim McCarty

Carolina Miori

Ivonne Rivero

Jennifer De La Mancha

Check – in

Approving of last month's Board Minutes

Alex makes the motion Musonda 2nds Minutes are approved.

Finance Report: Fully Staffed as of right now, Accounts Payables past due balance is dwindling slowly, Accounts Receivables All Invoices have been sent out. Our goals for these next few months are focusing on taxes and unrestricted funding.

Tenant Engagement: See Packet for Details.

Right to the City Report: Delfina and Jenifer De La Mancha Presenting

6:53 PM Break

7:00 Return Executive Meeting Board Members only

Fundraising Support report: Kim McCarty

Alex Makes motion to Sign a Contract for A fundraising Support specialist Pamela Oaks

Musonda 2nd.

All Board members Approve.

Support Proposals: Kim McCarty & Musonda Mwango

Staff Support Training.

Amicus Brief v. Important case: Kim

Opportunity for CAT to get engaged.

Case is about Rights of homeless.

whether local governments can Criminalize Homelessness

Requesting to Be co Signers Supporting the Briefing against the criminalization of Homelessness.

Alex Motions, Musonda 2nds, No one objects

Request to Grow the Board: Kim

Recommends a Board member staff of 12

7:45 Alex Motions to Adjourn

Program Report
Tenant Education, Tenant Engagement
and Membership
April 2024

Education Department Hotline Progress (Quarter 3-4)

Contracts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Monthly Goal
OHCS	✓	✓	☼				157
PHB	✓	☼	☼				130
Mult. Co. YFS	✓	☼	☼				125
Mult. Co. CDBG	✓	☼	☼				3



Met term goal



In progress

Tenant Engagement Progress (Quarter 3-4)

Contracts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Annual Goal
Workshops	✓	☀️	☀️				9
Outreach Events	NA	☀️	☀️				9
New Culturally Specific Partnerships	NA	☀️	☀️				2-4
Direct Advocacy (legal services, letter writing)	NA	☀️	☀️				50
Member Survey and 2 focus groups	NA	☀️					4000
Training Series	NA	NA					2



Met term goal



In progress

Membership/Volunteer Progress (Quarter 3-4)

Contracts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Annual Goal
Members Renewals	☀️	☀️					2000
Hotline Volunteers	☀️	☀️					4
Committee Volunteers	☀️	☀️					4
Summer Member Meeting	☀️	☀️					50
inclusion of hotline records into Every Action	☀️	☀️					6000



















Met term goal



In progress

Education and Engagement. Workshop/Outreach Progress (Quarter 3-4)

Contracts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Quarterly Goal
OHCS							Annual Goal: 500
PHB							1
Mult. Co. YFS							1-2
Mult. Co. CDBG							1-2
Energy Trust: Phase 1/Curriculum Planning	NA	NA					N/A

 Met term goal

 In Progress

 Met annual goal

Education Department Tenant Protection Team (TPT) Progress (Quarter 3-4)

TPT Referrals	Jan.	Jan. (Legal)	Feb.	Feb. (Legal)	Mar.	Mar. (Legal)	Apr.	Apr. (Legal)	May	May (Legal)	Jun.	Jun. (legal)
SEI	✓	☼	✓	✓	☼	✓						
APANO	✓	☼	✓	✓	☼	☼						
IRCO	✓	☼	✓	✓	☼	☼						
Hot-line	✓	☼	✓	✓	☼	✓						

✓ Met term goal

☼ In progress

Regional Engagement Progress (Quarter 3-4)

Contracts	Partner ships	Training Series	Energy Trust	Outreach	Work shops	Annual Goal
Metro Oregon	✓	☀️	4			9
Mid-Valley Oregon	☀️	NA				1
Southern Oregon	☀️		4			2
Central Oregon	☀️	Na		☀️	☀️	1



Met term goal



In progress

April 23, 2024

Governor Tina Kotek
900 Court Street, Suite 254
Salem, OR 97301-4047

Director Andrew Stolfi
Administrator Renee Stapleton
Department of Consumer and Business Services
350 Winter Street NE
Salem, OR 97309

Dear Governor Kotek, Director Stolfi and Administrator Stapleton,

We are a coalition of farmworker advocacy groups, labor unions, legal aid providers, civil rights, environmental justice organizations, housing and healthcare organizations, and farmworker community-based groups, bringing together extensive collective experience serving farmworkers in Oregon. We are writing to you today because we are increasingly concerned about the shortcomings of the current regulations regarding farmworker labor housing. We are worried that the RAC process and scope of proposed changes fall short in addressing necessary and long overdue infrastructure improvements.

For years, we have urged OR OSHA to require agricultural labor housing standards that protect the health and safety of farmworkers and their families. The current regulations are alarmingly outdated, allowing for cramped living and sleeping spaces, a lack of essential amenities like flush toilets in the housing units, proper sinks, or hygienic food preparation in the housing units, and immediate proximity of housing to hazardous pesticide application to fields surrounding farm labor housing.

Improving agricultural labor housing is a racial justice, housing justice and labor rights issue, impacting approximately 15,000 farmworkers and their families, some of whom live year round in this housing. The overwhelming majority of farmworkers are immigrants and latinx individuals. Increasing number of farmworkers are also indigenous, and navigate various immigration statuses. These workers often face high levels of poverty, as well as cultural and language barriers. **We are deeply disappointed by the lack of priority given to this critical racial justice issue.**

Prioritizing infrastructure improvements such as electrical, septic, water, plumbing, and structural soundness in employer-provided housing is necessary in our state's goal towards an equitable housing landscape. It also affirms the inherent dignity and rights of these workers. Farmworker housing should be of a quality that we would all be comfortable living there. **We urge OR OSHA and the Governor to prioritize the**

continuance of the rulemaking process, with an intentional and serious consideration of substantial infrastructure improvements in agricultural labor housing, and ultimately, the adoption of provisions requiring such improvements.

Agriculture is an economically and historically significant industry in Oregon. Migrant and seasonal farmworkers perform much of the work of planting, pruning, and harvesting Oregon's highly prized, diverse fruit and vegetable crops.

Despite the existence of reasonable and feasible solutions, and the state's investment of millions of dollars towards agricultural labor housing throughout the years, including: millions in COVID-19 relief to ALH operators to comply with temporary COVID-19 rules, \$5 million allocated in HB 2001 for ALH housing improvements, and the Agricultural Workforce Tax Credit, there have been long standing objections from farmers to the state adopting more protective provisions in labor housing. Oregon must remain competitive nationally and good ALH housing is central to remaining competitive and attracting experienced farmworkers to plant, tend and harvest many of its crops.

History & Background

According to OR OSHA's 2023 data, 516 Agricultural Labor Housing registered sites house approximately 15,318 farmworkers and their families across our state. These numbers have dramatically climbed in the past five years, despite the notion that migrant and seasonal farmworker populations have dropped in Oregon. OR OSHA regulates ALH through [OAR\) 437-004-1120](#). These rules set vastly inadequate ratios for bathing, hand-washing, laundry, toilets, and cooking, as well as provide miniscule living and sleeping area square footage requirements. They also lack strong requirements regarding insulation, site distance from fields, water availability/pressure, and sanitation, among other important provisions to ensure a safe and healthy home. Since the Landlord Tenant Protection Act appears to arguably not cover the habitability of Agricultural Labor Housing, the ALH standards provide the major framework to ensure some habitability and basic standards. Hence, OR OSHA's enforcement is practically the only source of protection and enforcement for migrant and seasonal farmworker housing in our state.

Regulations on ALH are decades old and have undergone *minimal revision* since then. There are three significant periods worth noting where there were minor changes. In 2008, Oregon OSHA opened a rulemaking process, prompted by members of this coalition, to align OR OSHA standards to the federal standards. Operators of ALH were given ten years to comply with this rule.

In 2018, OR OSHA adopted its own requirements regarding the federal Worker Protection Standards (WPS), allowing employers, with rare exceptions, to *keep workers in their labor housing when applicators apply pesticides within 100 feet of the housing*. This is known

as “shelter in place.” Advocates were not pleased with this framework and believed it put workers at serious risk of being *regularly exposed to pesticides*. Partially in response to this concern, former OR OSHA Administrator Michael Wood reiterated their intention to open up discussion of farmworker housing standards, including the proximity of housing to the fields, as well as the soundness of the structures and enclosures, in future rulemaking, while adopting the shelter in place rules despite the serious concerns of advocates.¹

The third notable period was in 2020, when farmworker advocates petitioned OR OSHA to reduce overcrowding and improve ventilation in ALH during COVID-19. Agricultural workers were some of the hardest hit by COVID-19, and ensuring their safety in this housing became imperative. OR OSHA issued temporary rules, which expired at the end of the public health emergency.

Current rulemaking

The farmworkers' ideas and requests collected over the years and communicated through our coalition to OR OSHA and other agencies serving farmworkers are essential to occupational health and safety of farmworkers and their families but also necessary for a vibrant agricultural sector in Oregon.

For decades, members of this coalition have urged OR OSHA to reopen rulemaking on ALH. OR OSHA in response, has held sporadic rulemaking meetings over the last couple of years, which largely did not constitute an intentional process for debate and discussion with the intention of improving the labor housing standards. We were glad to see OR OSHA set a regular schedule for ALH rulemaking, starting in February 2023. Since then, there have been 10 RAC sessions. Throughout, farmworker advocates have been deeply frustrated with the process. For the most part, there has been an unclear timeline and process regarding when we can expect proposed rules, coupled with a lack of commitment to discussing infrastructure and other substantial impact items. The process has also lacked a structured system to foster productive discussion and debate. The advisory committee is heavily imbalanced, with employers significantly outnumbering worker advocates.

We have repeatedly notified OR OSHA and the Governor's office of our concerns. In response, OR OSHA contracted with a third party mediation company in late January of this year to facilitate the remainder of the RAC session. We were encouraged by this change, and strongly believe this change should have been implemented earlier to allow for a better process and discussion from the onset. Despite these challenges, we have

¹ Explanation of Rulemaking, Final Action Pesticide Worker Protection Standard: Application Exclusion Zones (AEZs) Department of Consumer & Business Services Occupational Safety & Health Division “Oregon OSHA” June 29, 2018, page 70

remained at the table in good faith, providing perspectives and recommendations to OR OSHA that are largely based on direct communications with farmworkers residing in labor housing, coupled with updated scientific information.

Recently, several members of this coalition joined a housing tour organized by some local farmers in the Gorge. We appreciated the invitation and opportunity to spend a day together touring three sites. It was encouraging to see some improved sleeping accommodations, though we noted a lack of kitchen amenities within most of the units, and observed that almost all of the housing was located right next to the fields. The atmosphere during the tour was friendly and cordial. Overall, the housing significantly exceeded the general housing conditions found across the state and in Wasco County.

Given the cordiality and constructive day spent touring these sites, some of us were surprised to learn post-tour that farmers suspended their participation from the ALH RAC process, and opted out of attending the March 27 RAC meeting, with just two farmers in attendance for observation only. Farmers and lobby representatives cited numerous reasons for their resignation from the process, including their assumption that the tour would replace a long awaited RAC discussion on square footage provisions. We strongly believe that all stakeholders should be actively engaged in shaping regulations that impact farmworkers and ALH operators. For advocates, despite encountering challenges with aspects of the process that we may dislike, we remain committed to participating and advocating for the interests of farmworkers. We urge Oregon OSHA to continue with the rulemaking process- updated regulations are essential for improving housing standards and ensuring the safety and well-being of farmworkers across the state.

In the attached appendix, we have included detailed information regarding several of the most important ALH priorities to this coalition, with the recognition that there are many other provisions in the regulations that are of importance to farmworkers and their families.

As a state, we must no longer accept outdated, inadequate provisions as the basic safety net for standards governing employer-provided housing for farmworkers. That is why we urge the Governor's office and OR OSHA to prioritize farmworker health and safety in ALH by adopting improved sanitation ratios, increased square footage requirements, and robust infrastructure improvements for some of the most vulnerable essential workers in our state. We ask for prompt adoption of regulations that afford farmworkers the same standards of living as others in affordable housing. Farmworkers deserve dignity and safety in their living environments, like all of us.

Sincerely,



LatinoNetwork



HOUSING OREGON



INNOVATIVE HOUSING, INC.



Habitat for Humanity® Portland Region



CENTRO

APPENDIX

Detailed Recommendations

Over the years and across various platforms, including RAC meetings, ALH interagency task force meetings, and individual meetings, we have communicated the primary priorities as communicated by farm workers. The serious consideration and adoption of these provisions will significantly benefit farmworker families living in agricultural labor housing.

Appendix one: Kitchens

There are numerous health benefits resulting from the availability of a kitchen in labor housing. A kitchen provides farmworkers and their families the means to prepare nutritious meals, promoting better health and well-being. Access to cooking facilities empowers individuals to make healthier food choices and reduces reliance on pre-packaged or fast food options, leading to improved dietary habits.

The current rules don't require a kitchen, instead, they offer the option to provide one. Advocates strongly urge the elimination of the phrase, "if provided" from the rule language, and instead require a kitchen all together. Throughout years of outreach, farmworkers have shared the need and strong preference for kitchens within the unit, that meet sanitation standards and protect the occupants against the elements and drift. Recognizing that some housing units have some version of a makeshift kitchen immediately adjacent, we strongly urge for the enclosure of outdoor kitchens to protect occupants and their food from pesticide drift, dust, smoke and other particulate matter. Advocates have proposed that enclosing outside spaces immediately outside the housing units of housing, if open to the room, can count toward square footage requirements.

Appendix two: Reduce density in ALH by increasing square footage per occupant.

Adequate square footage in housing units is crucial from a safety and health perspective for several reasons. Adequate square footage allows for proper ventilation and airflow, which minimizes the accumulation of indoor pollutants and reduces the risk of respiratory issues. Sufficient space decreases feelings of claustrophobia and overcrowding, which can contribute to stress and anxiety among farmworkers and impact their productivity and heighten work injury.

The square footage Agricultural Labor Housing (ALH) standards have seen minimal revisions since the 1970's, lagging behind modern standards. In comparison, community housing, like HUD's guidelines of 175 square foot per person for single occupancy,

upholds higher standards²³. The current requirement for sleeping areas is 40 sq. ft per occupant if there are bunk beds or 50 sq. ft per occupant if there are regular beds (no bunk bed). Notably, our current ALH rules already require 100 sq. ft per occupant if housing operators provide cooking, living, and sleeping in the same space.

Advocates are pressing for a reasonable adjustment in square footage **increasing to 100 sq. ft per occupant within ALH to improve the living conditions of agricultural workers and their families**. If there are housing operators that already offer cooking and living space in the unit, there should be no impact on them. For those concerned with space availability, advocates have proposed enclosing kitchens directly outside the unit to count towards the square footage.

Appendix three: Sanitation: Improved ratios for toilets, sinks, showers, and laundry facilities.

The following list of recommendations includes improved ratios on essential sanitation amenities. On toilet ratios, we propose improving the current one toilet per 15 occupant ratio to one toilet per 10 occupant ratio, with portable toilets excluded from the count. This reduces waiting times and unsanitary conditions resulting from overcrowding of toilets. We also propose a decrease in the shower ratios from the current one shower for every 10 occupants to one shower for every 7 occupants, which helps promote personal hygiene practices and reduces wait times. Currently, washing machines are not required. However, we are concerned that given the nature of farmwork, the current ratio of one washing machine/tub/tray for every 30 people does not provide an adequate way for farm workers to wash their clothes which often carry pesticide residue and other contaminants. That is why we propose the requirement of washing machines and a ratio of one washing machine for every 15 occupants.

Appendix four: Distance to the fields

The proximity of housing to agricultural fields poses significant risks due to pesticide drift. Advocates have long expressed concerns regarding this issue and have repeatedly raised it with Oregon OSHA. Despite this, the distance between housing units and fields has yet to be included in any agendas. However, it is essential to have discussions on creative approaches to mitigate pesticide drift onto housing units. For example, points of discussion can include a requirement of no aerial spraying within a certain distance from the housing unit, instituting a buffer zone, or requiring a structural evaluation to determine if there is sufficient protection from the elements and drift. At the very least, regulations

² <https://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/development/Documents/Core-Development-Manual/PDM-Version-2016-06-01.pdf>

³ <https://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/development/Documents/Core-Development-Manual/PDM-Version-2016-06-01.pdf>

should require a minimum distance between **new** housing and agricultural fields to ensure the safety and well-being of occupants.

In conclusion, the advocate priorities outlined above represent crucial steps toward improving the living conditions of farm workers and their families. However, it's important to acknowledge that numerous other provisions that we have not highlighted here are also important. Oregon Law Center, PCUN, Legal Aid Services of Oregon, and Northwest Workers Justice Project have submitted a detailed document of comments to Oregon OSHA on January 26, 2024.



Kim McCarty <kmccarty@oregoncat.org>

Fwd: Action Alert: Capital One Merger Opposition Comment Letter Sign On Notice

1 message

Kim McCarty <kmccarty@oregoncat.org>
To: Kim McCarty <kmccarty@oregoncat.org>

Sat, Apr 20, 2024 at 9:51 AM

Policy Committee supported this letter 4.18.24

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Catherine Petrusz** <cpetrusz@ncrc.org>

Date: Wed, Apr 17, 2024 at 1:42 PM

Subject: Action Alert: Capital One Merger Opposition Comment Letter Sign On Notice

To:

Cc: Catherine Petrusz <cpetrusz@ncrc.org>

Dear NCRC Members and Allies,

Thank you for joining us earlier this month for the Just Economy Conference. We hope to see you again next year!

At the conference, you signed an interest form to keep up to date on our work regarding the Capital One proposed merger with Discover Bank. **We're reaching out to invite your organization to sign onto our letter urging the OCC and the Federal Reserve to deny Capital One's application to acquire Discover Bank.**

The Capital One - Discover merger poses a significant threat to all of us.

Click Here to Sign On.

Capital One's profits are built on extracting as much wealth as possible from low- and moderate-income customers. They hunt for those profits in the same streets and neighborhoods that we try to help. If this merger goes through, they will take even more. The proposed merger would make Capital One the sixth largest bank in the country, greatly increasing risks to the entire financial system in the event of an economic downturn. Capital One's merger history, and repeat violations of the law, cast further doubt on how this deal could possibly meet the requirement that mergers benefit the public.

The deadline to sign the letter is Monday, April 22 at 12 pm ET.

For more details, please contact me at cpetrusz@ncrc.org, or Kevin Hill at khill@ncrc.org.

Thank you for your consideration,
Catherine

Catherine Petrusz
Senior CRA Manager
National Community Reinvestment Coalition
202.770.3619
cpetrusz@ncrc.org

4/20/24, 9:51 AM

Community Alliance of Tenants Mail - Fwd: Action Alert: Capital One Merger Opposition Comment Letter Sign On Notice

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

740 15th Street NW, Suite 400, Washington DC 20005



[Check Out Our Impact Report For 2023](#)