

TENANT SCREENING

LEASE INTEGRATION



Hi everyone,

Now that we've had a day to come down from yesterday's NARPM meeting, I wanted to share a recap of one of the most informative sessions and pull together the key takeaways.

We heard from Rebekah Near, Founder and VP of Orca Information, Inc, who brought not only a really valuable deep dive into tenant screening practices but also years of hands-on industry experience to the conversation. In addition to leading Orca Information, Rebekah is a proud NARPM member and truly one of NARPM's OGs here in Washington. She offered great perspective on how comprehensive, "deep dive" screening compares to the more automated, surface-level models built into many property management software platforms.

One of the key themes was the difference between surface-level automated screening and more comprehensive, investigative screening approaches that look deeper into court records, identity verification, and rental history. It was a helpful reminder that while automation is efficient, it doesn't always tell the full story.

Rebekah shared several practical tools and best practices, including four important forms designed to strengthen and standardize the tenant screening process. Some highlights included:

- Guidance on criteria for court record screening, including how and where to incorporate it into the rental application packet
- Suggested alternative documentation for screening immigrant populations, with a thoughtful breakdown of ways to establish identity, verify past rental history, and demonstrate creditworthiness or ability to pay rent
- The importance of the Washington State Fair Tenant Screening Act of 2012, which should be provided to prospective tenants to read, sign, and date prior to submitting an application
- Additional clarity around criminal record reporting and how to properly interpret that information within compliance guidelines
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Overall, it was a strong reminder of how important it is to balance compliance, fairness, and thoroughness in our screening processes.

Rebekah Near and her team at Orca Information emphasized that their approach is built around digging deeper, searching widely and thoroughly to provide more complete information for successful tenant placement decisions.

We'll be incorporating some of these best practices into our ongoing processes!

What People are Saying About Orca

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Orca Screening Services Integrates With the Following Property Management Software:

- APPFOLIO *
- APPICANTONE
- ATS ON DEMAND
- BAMBOO HR
- BULLHORN
- GREENHOUSE
- HIREBRIDGE
- iCIMS
- iCIMS PRIME
- JAZZHR
- WORKDAY

*Restrictions Apply

Am I required to give a copy of our tenant selection policy?



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Survey Shows More WA Businesses Looking to Leave

By AWB Communications February 5, 2026

Data from 400+ employers reveals growing interest in moving businesses, personal residence outside of Washington amid deteriorating business climate

OLYMPIA – A new survey of Washington employers shows 44% of business leaders are considering moving their personal residence out of Washington as the state’s rising tax burden and other cost pressures continue to push a sharp decline in economic confidence.

The quarterly survey by the Association of Washington Business (AWB) shows that business confidence, which plunged last year after the Legislature approved the largest tax increase in state history, has not recovered and is now fueling a surge in relocation interest. Forty-four percent of business leaders said they were considering moving their personal residence to states such as Arizona, Idaho, Montana or Wyoming. In addition, the number of employers looking to move their business to another state has nearly doubled in the last year, going from 9% to 17%. In both cases, taxes and the rising cost of living were the most frequently cited reasons.

“Washington employers are growing more pessimistic about the direction of the state economy, largely because of the rising tax burden,” said AWB President Kris Johnson. “With lawmakers back in Olympia and debating even more new taxes, they need to understand that Washington employers, especially small- and medium-sized businesses, are under severe strain right now. They are not feeling good about the direction of the state economy or their own business prospects. One-third of the businesses in the survey said they are struggling or in a downturn, compared to only one-fifth that are growing. Nearly half are flat. We need lawmakers to support a plan to grow the economy, not tax it more, if we want to avoid stagnant employment, worsening competitiveness and businesses leaving our state.”

Taxes remained the biggest challenge identified by survey respondents (64%), almost identical to the previous quarter (65%), followed closely by the cost of health care (62%) and government regulations (54%). Concern about inflation has moderated over the past year, dropping from 52% to 40%, but still ranks No. 4. Concern about tariffs has likewise fallen, down from 37% last quarter to 30%, yet more than half of respondents (54%) continue to report negative impacts from tariffs.

Washington’s tax burden emerged over the last year as the top challenge for employers. In the fall 2024 survey, the state’s overall tax burden ranked No. 4 behind inflation, health care costs and regulation. By spring of 2025, the issue had become the No. 1 challenge, and it has remained there since.

Looking back a year, conditions have worsened across multiple rankings. The share of respondents describing the state economy as weak continued to rise (33%) and only 9% rate the state economy as strong. Confidence in the national economy is somewhat higher with 24% rating it strong or very strong.

Expectations of a recession occurring in Washington sometime in the next year declined from the previous quarter, dropping from 41% to 34%, but remains double what employers reported a year ago (17%).

The Winter 2026 Washington Employers Survey report can be found [here](#).

AWB conducts the Washington Employers Survey quarterly. The Winter 2026 survey is based on 429 responses collected by email from business owners and operators across Washington between Jan. 13 and Feb. 2.

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