

Eviction Moratorium

under COVID-19 Emergency Declaration

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated April 16, 2020

On April 16, 2020, the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners took additional action to continue supporting residential tenants during the COVID-19 pandemic by voting to align County policy with Oregon's statewide eviction moratorium (Executive Order 20-13) and establishing a six-month repayment grace period.

Read the full text of [Ordinance No. 1284 here](#).

Does the residential moratorium on evictions apply to all reasons for an eviction?

No, the residential moratorium applies only to residential evictions due to nonpayment of rent, fees or utility service charges (hereafter referred to collectively as "rent") payable to the landlord. Nonpayment of rent *does not* have to be due to wage loss resulting from COVID-19.

This moratorium does not apply to evictions for any other lawful purpose.

Does this mean residential tenants are not obligated to pay rent?

No. Residential tenants are legally obligated to pay rent as usual. However, if they are unable to pay rent, they must provide notice to their landlord as soon as reasonably possible. In addition, tenants in Multnomah County will have a six-month grace period to pay back their rent owed after the Governor's order is lifted or the County's emergency declaration ends, whichever is later.

Landlords and their residential tenants may enter into payment plans so long as both parties are willing. But there is no legal requirement that tenants enter into a payment plan.

How will residential tenants be able to ensure they will not be evicted because of COVID-19?

Residential tenants must notify their landlords as soon as reasonably possible that they are unable to pay rent. Tenants are not required to provide proof of their wage or income loss.

Though residential tenants in Multnomah County do not need to provide landlords with proof of their income loss to be protected by the eviction moratorium, state and/or federal financial assistance programs, if made available, may require proof of loss of income related to COVID-19. That's why it is still recommended that tenants collect and save documentation that demonstrates wage loss resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes items like:

- Letter from an employer citing COVID-19 as a reason for reduced work hours or termination;
- Letters from clients or customers citing COVID-19 as a reason for reducing or canceling purchase orders, requests for services-for-hire, or other profit-generating contracts;
- Letter from a school or other government-issued documentation declaring a school closure related to COVID-19; or

- Letter from a medical doctor recommending rest at home, self-quarantine, hospitalization, or similar measures for the affected tenant or a family member.

Does the moratorium protect residential tenants from utility service interruptions due to nonpayment?

The moratorium does not directly protect residents from utility service interruptions due to nonpayment. However, the [Portland Water Bureau](#) stated that it will not disconnect water service for non-payment of sewer, stormwater and water bills during the declaration of emergency. Likewise, [Pacific Power, Portland General Electric \(PGE\) and Northwest Natural](#) have temporarily suspended service disconnections for nonpayment and will extend their services without late fees.

What should I do if I think my landlord is violating the moratorium?

If a landlord threatens to evict tenants, applies late fees, requires agreement to a payment plan, or violates the eviction moratorium in any way, tenants should contact an attorney or community advocate like the Community Alliance of Tenants or Legal Aid Services of Oregon for help.

When will the eviction moratorium end?

This residential eviction moratorium is effective until the Governor's order is lifted or the County's emergency declaration ends, whichever is later. Residential tenants in Multnomah County will then have a six-month repayment grace period to pay back any outstanding rent owed.

