

Frequently Asked Questions

COVID-19 Eviction Moratorium

Updated July 07, 2020

On June 26, 2020, the Oregon State Legislature voted to extend the statewide moratorium on evictions for both residential and commercial properties until September 30, 2020. The bill also gives renters until March 31, 2021 to pay back outstanding balances.

Read the full text of [Oregon HB 4123 here](#).

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

No, the moratorium applies only to 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 tenants are not obligated to pay rent?

No. Tenants are legally obligated to pay rent as usual. However they cannot be evicted for nonpayment during the moratorium period. Tenants will have a six-month grace period to pay back their rent owed after the moratorium is lifted.

Beginning October 1, 2020, landlords may provide tenants with written notice of their outstanding back rent. The notice may require the tenant to either (1) pay their back rent or (2) notify the landlord that they intend to utilize the repayment grace period. If the tenant fails to notify their landlord that they intend to utilize the repayment grace period, they may have to pay their landlord an amount equal to half of their monthly rent. 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 tenants be able to ensure they will not be evicted because of COVID-19?

The protections of the statewide moratorium apply automatically. However, tenants may wish to discuss the potential of a voluntary payment plan with their landlord.

Though tenants 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 tenants 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?

The statewide moratorium ends on September 30, 2020, and tenants may face eviction for failure to pay rent beginning on October 1, 2020. However, there will also be a six-month repayment grace period, giving tenants until March 31, 2021 to pay their outstanding back rent from the moratorium period. If a tenant intends to utilize the repayment grace period, they may be required to notify their landlord.

