

New COVID-19 Eviction Protections for Tenants

California passed the COVID-19 Tenant Relief Act of 2020, which prohibits evictions for not paying rent due to loss of income or increased expenses from COVID-19 from March 1, 2020 through January 31, 2021. **If you were financially impacted by COVID-19, your landlord cannot evict you during this time period if you take steps to protect yourself.**

- Before starting eviction proceedings, your landlord is required to give you a 15-business-day notice and a copy of a Declaration of COVID-19-related financial distress.
- Sign and return the declaration to your landlord within 15 business days each time you get a notice to avoid court proceedings.
 - Keep a copy of all notices and signed declarations for your records.
- For rent due between **March 1, 2020 – August 31, 2020**, you can never be evicted for inability to pay rent if you submit the signed declaration to your landlord within 15 business days.
- For rent due between **September 1, 2020 – January 31, 2021**, you can never be evicted for inability to pay rent if you submit the signed declaration(s) to your landlord within 15 business days AND you pay a total of 25% of the rent due for the entire 5-month period by January 31, 2021.
 - Under Sonoma County's eviction moratorium, impacted Sonoma County tenants have until **April 30, 2021** to repay this back rent.
- For any rent payments you can make, indicate which month the rent payment is for and ask for a rent receipt. This is important so that your landlord doesn't attempt to count your most recent payments towards debt that you can't be evicted for.
- These protections apply to all tenants, regardless of citizenship status.
- You are still responsible for paying back the rent.
 - Your landlord can bring a case against you in small claims court after March 1, 2021 to recover any rental debt you owe.
- ALL tenancies are now covered by **just cause** protections until February 1, 2021. Your landlord cannot evict you without stating an allowable reason, like violating the lease or engaging in criminal activity on the premises.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Legal Aid of Sonoma County's Housing Hotline: 707-843-4432 or visit our website at <https://legalaidsoc.org/programs/home/>

