

# COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL EVICTION MORATORIUM

*Urgency Ordinance approved by the Board of Supervisors on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020*



## GENERAL:

- **Who does this ordinance apply to?**

This ordinance is aimed at protecting commercial and residential tenants who are unable to pay their rent and may be at risk of eviction due to a reduction in income, a loss of wages or substantial medical expenses as a result of the corona virus.

- **What is the goal of this ordinance?**

1) To protect the health, safety, and welfare of our community; 2) to provide stability to renters during this time of unprecedented economic challenges resulting from the coronavirus health crisis; and 3) to avoid further homelessness and loss of jobs.

- **Is this ordinance retroactive?**

This ordinance will be applied to any eviction resulting from economic losses related to the corona virus pandemic effective immediately upon its adoption starting March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

- **How long is this ordinance in effect?**

This ordinance shall expire on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020, but can be extended by a vote of the Board of Supervisors.

## TENANTS:

- **Will tenants still be responsible for any unpaid rents?**

Yes, this ordinance does NOT relieve tenants of their rental obligations. Renters should contribute the amount that they are able each month, and will still be responsible for paying any back rent due to their landlords.

- **How and when should tenants notify their landlord if unable to pay their rent?**

Tenants are encouraged to notify their landlord as soon as they know they will be unable to pay their rent. Tenants are required to provide documentation to their landlords showing:

- substantial loss of income from a) job loss; b) layoffs; c) reduction in the number of compensable hours work; d) business closure; e) decrease in business income; f) need to miss work to care for a child or family member; g) similar-caused loss of income resulting from the coronavirus; or h) substantial out-of-pocket medical expenses related to the coronavirus.

- **What resources are available to tenants whose income has been reduced or lost as a result of the COVID-19?**

- The California Department of Labor and Workforce Development [Coronavirus Resources website](#) includes information on: paid family leave, disability insurance, unemployment insurance, paid sick leave, and worker's compensation. See the chart [available at the bottom of the page here](#) detailing the different programs available and how to use them.
- PG&E has initiated a [moratorium on service disconnections](#) for non-payment for both residential and commercial customers, effective immediately and until further notice.
- Many utilities are offering hardship programs to customers whose ability to pay their bills have been disrupted by the COVID-19 outbreak. Many have also suspended services discontinuations for non-payment. Customers are asked to pay what they can.

#### **LANDLORDS:**

- **Can landlords still evict a tenant for non-COVID related issues?**

The Santa Cruz Superior Court issued an [Emergency Order](#) on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020, which prevents tenants subject to eviction (for any reason) from being forced out of their rental unit until, at a minimum, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. This order applies to all residential and commercial rental units in the County of Santa Cruz.

- **What resources are available to landlords who depend on rental income to pay their mortgages?**

Landlords are encouraged to reach out to their lenders immediately following notification from their tenants. The Board resolution that accompanied this ordinance encourages banks and financial institutions to halt foreclosures and related evictions resulting from missed mortgage payments. Additionally, Congress is likely to address this issue in upcoming federal relief packages.