



As we continue to confront the reality of COVID-19 and the ripple effect it has on jobs and the economy it's important that we work together to help prevent people from being displaced from their homes. In this guide we have included answers to some frequently asked questions, as well as links to other resources to help navigate through these trying times.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION ON COVID-19** [\(click for link\)](#)

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **What should I do if I'm unable to pay my rent?**

The most important thing that you can do is promptly communicate your situation with your Property Manager. When you contact them, it will improve your chances of getting the help you need if you provide documentation from an employer or other documentation that shows how you have been impacted by this crisis.

Ignoring notices and requests to contact your Property Manager is not advised. Frequent and timely communication is the best course of action.

Please remember that your property manager can't help you if you do not communicate your situation with them. When court proceedings in the state resume you will still owe any amounts due and may be subject to eviction; therefore, trying to work with your property manager to make payment arrangements is your best course of action.

#### **Could I be evicted even though there is a public health crisis?**

North Carolina Supreme Court has halted most evictions, including for non-payment of rent, until April 17, 2020. Someone may still face eviction for posing an imminent threat of physical harm to others, or engaging in criminal activity.

However, your Property Manager can still file the appropriate paperwork with the courts to begin the eviction process for non-payment of rent. The temporary freeze on evictions does not mean you do not owe rent, it only delays the eviction process until the date set by the Supreme Court, which is currently April 17.

#### **I am a renter and need assistance paying my bills. Where can I go for help?**

If you need rental payment assistance, there are several groups and agencies that can help. Many churches and other community non-profits also offer emergency financial assistance. There may also be assistance to help with other needs, such as utility or medical bills. Attached is a list of organizations that we are aware of which offer rental assistance.

#### **Do I still need to pay rent even though evictions have been halted?**

Yes you do. The court's temporary halt of evictions does not affect your obligation to pay rent, and continuing to pay your rent protects your rights as a renter under North Carolina law.

If you're concerned you will not be able to pay your rent, we recommend that you communicate with your property manager with specific information about your situation to see what options they may be able to offer in this unusual circumstance.

This crisis has affected all of us and PTAA members want to do their part in helping people remain in their homes.

Like every other business, we have employees and supplier partners who depend on us for their livelihood, as well as other obligations we have to meet like insurance and utility bills. Failing to pay your rent hurts our ability to meet those obligations, as well as our ability to operate and maintain the property where you live. Ultimately it may also hurt your credit or result in an eviction once that process is reinstated.

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONT)

### **If you are unable to pay your utility bills during this time of crisis, what should you do?**

Most North Carolina utilities have suspended disconnects and are waiving late fees during the COVID-19 crisis. Please check directly with your provider(s) on what options they offer during this time. Remember that even if disconnection is suspended, your bills will continue to accrue.

### **What if I live at a public housing authority property, affordable housing property, or use housing choice vouchers (Section 8)?**

Both public housing and Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) residents who experience a loss or reduction of wages should contact their housing authority to see what can be done to provide assistance.

### **What should I do if I have to self-isolate in my apartment?**

- To avoid unnecessary contact, or maintenance staff entering your unit, notify the management that you are undergoing self-isolation or quarantine.
- Avoid close contact with other people and pets.
- Maintain respiratory hygiene (use tissues, cover your mouth when sneezing or coughing).
- Keep your apartment clean and organized to maintain a healthy environment. Clean regularly and sanitize often using items like Lysol spray and Clorox wipes on “high touch” surfaces including countertops, tabletops, doorknobs, nightstands, bathroom fixtures, toilets, refrigerator handles, kitchen faucets, light switches, TV remotes, cell phones, computer keyboards and tablets.
- Do not leave your unit unless it’s an emergency. Do not use common areas.
- Postpone non-essential maintenance requests.

### **What if I have to move/ apartment hunt during the pandemic?**

- Practice basic prevention-Take the usual precautionary measures, including not shaking hands, washing your hands after your visit is concluded, not touching your face and not touching surfaces, especially in common areas. Use hand sanitizer.
- Consider virtual tours
- Inquire about safety measures in place-Apartment communities are incorporating additional measures during this outbreak, such as deep-cleaning and disinfecting high-traffic surfaces. They may have closed or limited access to common rooms, gyms and laundry rooms. They may be stationing hand-sanitizer around the building. Finally, inquire how was the unit you plan to rent sanitized.
- Vet your moving/van rental company - Before scheduling your move, inquire what sanitation procedures your moving company has in place. Ask for movers to wear gloves to avoid contaminating your belongings. Alternately, consider moving your belongings yourself to minimize exposure, but make sure to enquire about sanitation procedures your moving van rental company has in place.

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## RESIDENT SERVICE AND ACCESS TO AMENITIES

During this crisis, rental communities are following CDC recommendations to practice social distancing and take measures to limit spread of the virus. As a result, rental properties may:

- Close select or all amenities
- Ask you to pay rent online
- Close office to non-employees
- Limit repairs to emergency situations only

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We realize that these actions may be inconvenient but are intended to help protect you, your neighbors and people who work at the property.

Communal behaviors to limit the contamination spread

- Wash your hands often, avoid touching your face and practice respiratory hygiene
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Clean and disinfect your apartment to maintain a healthy environment
- Limit contamination of common amenities, such as the communal gym, movie room, or a playground, by using disinfecting wipes before and after you use the equipment. Avoid using common areas and amenities if you are sick.
- Limit visitors-Practice social distancing by limiting visitors to your unit or inviting friends/family to share common areas with you.

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## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

### Call 211

[211](#) is a universal number (similar to 911 and 311) for community information and referral services. It is intended to connect individuals and families in need and the appropriate community-based organizations and government agencies. Active 211 systems are in all or part of every state.

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[Emergency Increase in Unemployment](#) (888.737.0259). CARES Act provides most individuals an emergency increase in traditional unemployment insurance (UI) benefits of \$600 per week up to July 31, 2020, likely increasing benefits beyond what many workers were earning before becoming unemployed.

2020 Recovery Rebates for Individuals. CARES Act, qualified single Americans would receive \$1,200, married couples would get \$2,400, and parents would see \$500 for each child under age 17.

**The following organizations MAY be able to assist with housing needs and household expenses.**

#### Triad-Wide Resources

- [Benefits Finder](#) (US)
- [NCDHHS](#) or call (336) 641-3447
- List of [Second Harvest Food Bank Partner Agencies](#) (food pantries, soup kitchens, etc.)
- [Operation Homefront](#) (Veterans, Military families)
- [AuntBertha.com](#) (resource for looking for assistance by zip code)
- [Helping Hands](#)
- [Red Cross](#)
- [Rescue Mission](#)
- [Social Serve](#)
- [NC Serves](#) (serving veteran families)
- [Salvation Army](#) (USA)

#### Greensboro/ High Point / Guilford County

- [United Way of Greater Greensboro](#) or call 2-1-1
- [United Way of Greater High Point](#) or call 2-1-1
- [Salvation Army of Greensboro](#)
- [Salvation Army of High Point](#)
- [Greensboro Urban Ministry](#) or call (336) 271-5959

#### Winston-Salem / Forsyth County

- [United Way of Forsyth County](#) or call 2-1-1
- [Salvation Army of Greater Winston-Salem](#)
- [Crisis Control Ministry Inc.](#) or call (336) 724-7453

#### Alamance County

- [Salvation Army](#)
- [United Way of Alamance County](#) or call 2-1-1
- [Alamance County Community Services Agency, Inc.](#)

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