



**COMMUNITY
LEGAL SERVICES**
IN EAST PALO ALTO

LEGAL AID SOCIETY
OF SAN MATEO COUNTY

SAN MATEO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ENACT COUNTY-WIDE EMERGENCY MORATORIUM ON EVICTIONS

On Tuesday morning, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to approve an [emergency regulation](#) that protects eligible tenants from eviction during the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency. Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto and Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County, along with numerous other community partners and impacted residents, advocated for an ordinance that would protect vulnerable tenants across the county. We thank the Board of Supervisors for taking action, and all of our partners for their quick, coordinated advocacy.

These new protections are particularly important for the low-income workers and communities of color we serve. With shelter-in-place orders effective all across the region, many workers have been furloughed or laid off, have seen their hours reduced drastically, have had to stay home from work to care for children who are out of school, or have seen a spike in their childcare or medical expenses. Many of these individuals were already living paycheck-to-paycheck before this pandemic, and do not have access to benefits such as telework or paid time off. Without the protections that this moratorium provides, the most likely outcome for these affected tenants would have been eviction and homelessness.

The ordinance, approved yesterday, took effect immediately until May 31, 2020 and:

- Applies to every residential tenant in San Mateo County (including within city boundaries) regardless of unit type or duration of tenancy
- Prohibits landlords from evicting tenants for failure to pay rent if the tenant has suffered economic setbacks related to COVID-19
- Prohibits no-fault evictions such as a lease expiration or a substantial remodel, unless the owner or an owner's family member needs to move in
- Requires landlords to provide tenants with a county-issued form that outlines the tenant's right and obligations under the new law before taking any action to evict the tenant
- Requires tenants to inform their landlord in writing - including via email or text message - that they have lost income related to COVID-19 **within 14 days after being notified of their rights**
- Requires tenants to provide documentation to their landlords of lost income, out-of-pocket medical expenses or other substantial financial hardship related to the COVID-19 emergency **within 14 days after being notified of their rights**
- Gives tenants a minimum of 90 days and up to 180 days following the emergency to pay any back rent unpaid during the emergency
- Prohibits landlords from charging late fees for unpaid rent during the emergency

We are currently in the process of putting together a **Frequently Asked Questions** document to highlight the most important details of this eviction moratorium. Please be on the lookout for this document, and be sure to share this information as widely as possible. In the meantime, if a tenant lives in San Mateo County and receives an eviction notice during the COVID-19 public

health emergency or has questions about whether they are covered by the provisions of this new law, they should seek legal assistance from:

- **Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto**
Phone: (650) 326-6440 or (650) 422-2885
- **Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County**
Phone: (650) 558-0915 or (650) 517-8911

Rental assistance is available at San Mateo County's core services agencies and the legal aid offices listed above. Residents who have been laid off from their jobs should apply for unemployment insurance online at <https://www.edd.ca.gov/unemployment/> or by calling:

- (800) 300-5616 (English)
- (800) 326-8937 (Spanish)

We are working on developing Spanish versions of this message and the related Frequently Asked Questions. We apologize for any inconvenience this might cause in the meantime.