



Renter Resources from the Texas Apartment Association

February 15, 2021

As we continue to respond to the impacts of COVID-19 and its ripple effect on jobs and the economy, it's important that we work together as a community to help prevent people from being displaced from their homes. We have included answers to some frequently asked questions, as well as other resources to help navigate through these uncertain times.

Frequently Asked Questions

What should I do if I am unable to pay my rent?

First: Contact your Property Manager. The most important thing that you can do is communicate your situation with your Property Manager.

Providing documentation from an employer or other documentation that shows how you have been impacted by this crisis will improve your chances of getting the help you need.

Ignoring notices and requests to contact your Property Manager will only make your situation worse. Frequent and timely communication is best.

The Texas Apartment Association has encouraged rental property owners to waive late fees and set up payment arrangements for residents impacted by the COVID-19 crisis when possible.

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

What financial assistance is available to help me pay rent?

While there are still many details to be worked out, Texas has been allocated an estimated \$1.9 billion from the recently passed federal Consolidated Appropriations Act. Of that amount, 55 percent of the funds will be administered by the state and 45 percent has been allocated to cities/counties with populations of 200,000 or more. Eligible households must be delinquent at least one month and meet income eligibility requirements, including:

- A household income below 80 percent of area median income (AMI);
- A demonstrable risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability; and
- One or more household members who qualify for unemployment benefits or experienced financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the pandemic.

The federal legislation also provides that priority will be given to households that do not exceed 50 percent of the area median income for the household. However, it has not yet been determined how that will be implemented.

In addition to the new federal funding, many local governments and community organizations are offering emergency rental assistance and other financial aid during this crisis. See the resources we've included here and ask your property manager or local apartment association about additional resources that may be available in your community. Program requirements, deadlines and availability may vary.

Can I be evicted even though there is a public health crisis?

Maybe. Texas does not currently have a statewide ban on evictions. An order by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention barring evictions for non-payment of rent for qualified individuals, which was issued in early September was recently extended by federal legislation through March 31. Some local ordinances may also affect the eviction process.

Someone may also still face eviction if they breach the lease for something other than non-payment such as posing an imminent threat of physical harm to others or engaging in criminal activity.

Even with the eviction moratoria, your Property Manager might send you a letter if you have not paid rent or in some cases might issue a *Notice to Vacate (NTV)*. An NTV is an indication that the rental property owner intends to pursue an eviction if rent is not paid (or for other lease violations). An eviction proceeding will usually occur if you fail to respond to notices/requests to contact your Property Manager. Properties covered by the CARES Act are required to provide the resident with a 30-day NTV. Properties covered by the CARES Act have either federally backed financing or participate in federal housing assistance programs. [More information on the federal legislation can be found here.](#)

Due to overlapping local, state and federal orders regarding the eviction process, we recommend you check with local apartment associations, legal counsel or local tenant advocate groups for additional information about the eviction policies where you live.

What is the Texas Eviction Diversion Program? How can I participate?

The Texas Eviction Diversion Program (TEDP) helps renters who are behind on their rent and facing eviction because of impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic stay in their homes by providing **up to six months** of rental assistance. This temporary, voluntary program is a unique partnership between the state Office of Court Administration, the Texas Supreme Court and the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA).

The program utilizes a special court process to provide rental property owners and residents an alternative to the eviction process. Lump-sum payments are provided to property owners for rent in exchange for allowing residents to remain in their homes during the period of assistance and forgiving late fees. Both the renter and the property owner must agree to participate and meet eligibility criteria. This program is in a pilot phase and scheduled to be available statewide in 2021.

Rental property owners must agree to waive late payment fees and their claims (both for non-payment of rent or others), and the funding will be direct-deposited to the property owner. Renters must meet income eligibility requirements (at or below 200 percent of poverty or 80 percent of Area Median Income) and be financially affected by COVID-19. [See the eligibility requirements and documents needed.](#)

What should I do if I receive a “Notice to Vacate”?

A “Notice to Vacate” (NTV) is a notice from your property manager indicating that there has been a breach of your lease and the property intends to file an eviction case in Justice of the Peace court. Guidance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) states that the CDC moratorium does not prevent a property owner from issuing an NTV and beginning the eviction process, as long as no residents are actually evicted (legally removed from a property) before the end of the order, which was recently extended by Congress through March 31. Similarly, the CDC moratorium does not apply to evictions based on criminal behavior or for anyone posing an imminent threat of harm to others or the property. Note: Properties located in certain jurisdictions that have ordinances affecting the eviction process may be prohibited from issuing NTV for non-payment of rent at this time.

If you receive a “Notice to Vacate,” you should talk to your property manager to discuss your situation and see if any accommodations can be made in these unusual circumstances. The Texas Apartment Association is encouraging its members who are able to waive late fees, work on payment plans, and take other steps to help renters who have been economically impacted or otherwise affected by COVID-19.

An NTV is the first step in the eviction process and is required under state law before any eviction case can be filed with a Justice of the Peace court. After it is issued, the court will schedule a hearing to consider facts in the case.

NOTE: Some charities providing rental assistance are requiring those who apply to present an NTV and will not approve renters aid without one. If you have received an NTV, it may help you get rental assistance so you can prevent an eviction.

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

Please check directly with your utility provider on what options they may be offering during this time. Remember that even if disconnection is suspended, your charges will continue to accrue on your bills.

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

Yes—none of the various temporary eviction moratoriums or orders, including the CDC order, ended your obligation to pay rent. In fact, in order to qualify for the CDC Order’s protections, residents are required to certify under the penalty of perjury that they are using best efforts to make timely partial payments that are as close to the full payment as the individual’s circumstances may permit. Continuing to pay your rent protects your rights as a renter under Texas law. If you are concerned you will not be

able to pay your rent, communicate with your property manager with specific information about your situation to see what options they may be able to offer.

This crisis has affected all of us and TAA members want to do their part to help people remain in their homes. Like every other business, we have employees and suppliers who depend on us for their paychecks, as well as other obligations we have to meet like insurance and utility bills.

Failing to pay your rent hurts our ability to pay bills including the utilities, maintenance and employees you rely on at the property where you live. Ultimately it may also hurt your credit or result in an eviction.

What if I've lost my job and need to file for unemployment?

[Apply for state unemployment benefits here.](#)

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, keep maintenance staff from entering your unit where they could be exposed to the virus, and 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 with your elbow when sneezing or coughing). Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water often.
- 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, credit cards, 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. Wash your hands after your visit is concluded, and avoid touching your face or surfaces, especially in common areas. Use hand sanitizer. Wear a mask and maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from others.
- Many properties now offer virtual tours for prospective renters.
- Ask 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, like gyms and laundry rooms. They may be stationing hand-sanitizer around the building. Masks may be required in common areas, or mandated by local ordinances or state emergency orders. Finally, ask how the unit you plan to rent has been sanitized.
- Before scheduling your move, ask what sanitation procedures your moving company has in place. Ask for movers to wear masks and gloves to avoid spreading the virus and contaminating your belongings. Or, consider moving your belongings yourself to minimize your risk of exposure, but make sure to ask about sanitation procedures your moving van rental company has in place.

Resident Service and Access to Amenities

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

- Close some or all amenities, or limit hours, capacity or access
- Require masks in common areas, or as mandated by local ordinances or state emergency orders
- Ask you to pay rent online
- Close the office to non-employees
- Limit repairs to emergency situations only

We realize 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 (use tissues, cover your mouth with your elbow when sneezing or coughing).
- Avoid contact with people who are sick. Keep six feet apart from others in the community.

- 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 if they remain open; use disinfecting wipes before and after you use any equipment. Do not use common areas and amenities if you are sick. Masks may be required in common areas, or mandated by local ordinances or state emergency orders.
- Limit visitors—Practice social distancing by limiting visitors to your unit or inviting friends/family to share common areas with you.

Where do I go for more information?

Renter Information: www.taa.org

General information on COVID-19: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov)

Emergency Financial Assistance

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

Texas Coronavirus Relief Bill Rental Assistance Program

www.texasrentrelief.com | **1-833-989-7368** | Monday-Saturday, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. CST

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.

Resident Relief Foundation

As an organization designed specifically to help responsible residents stay in their apartments during an unexpected financial emergency, Resident Relief Foundation is assisting renters nationwide who are not in areas where an eviction hold is in place.

Visit [Resident Relief Foundation](https://www.residentrelief.org) for more information about potential rental assistance.

Austin/Travis County

[Advocacy Outreach of Elgin Texas](https://www.elgin.org)—512/281-4180

[AIDS Services of Austin, Inc.](https://www.aidservicesofaustin.org)—512/458-2437

[All Saints Episcopal Church](https://www.all-saints-episcopal.org)—512/476-3589

[Austin & Travis County Homeless Prevention Services](#)—512/234-3630
[Austin and Travis County Church Assistance Programs](#)
[Austin and Travis County Transitional Homelessness Housing](#)
[Austin based Green Doors](#)—512/469-9130
[Austin Texas Health and Human Services Department \(HHSD\)](#)—512/972-5011
[Baptist Community Center](#)—512/478-7243
[Caritas of Austin](#)—512/472-4135
[Catholic Charities of Central Texas](#)—512/651-6100
[Christian Service Center Austin Assistance Programs](#)—512/476-9584
[Family Support Services Community Center Manor](#)—512/854-1550
[Greater Mt. Zion Church Community Assistance Center](#)—512/469-9020
[Housing Authority of Travis County](#)—512/854-8245
[HUD VASH](#)—512/823-4000
[Immanuel Lutheran Church](#)—512/251-4168
[Lake Travis Crisis Ministries](#)—512/266-9810
[Loaves and Fishes Outreach Ministry](#)—512/476-3589
[Master's Hand](#)—512/832-7811
[Resources from Advocacy Outreach](#)—512/281-4180
[Round Rock Serving Center assistance programs](#)
[Society of St. Vincent DePaul](#)—512/251-6995
[Holy Cross Catholic Church](#)—512/472-7210
[Sacred Heart Catholic Church](#)—512/926-1171
[St. Austin Catholic Church](#)—512/477-1589
[St. Louis King of France Catholic Church & School](#)—512/419-1667
[St. Paul Catholic Church](#)—512/280-4460
[St. Theresa Catholic Church](#)—512/451-5121
[St. Elizabeth Catholic Church](#)—888/801-7837
[St. John Neumann Catholic Church](#)—512/328-3220.
[St. Julia Catholic Church](#)—512/928-8629
[St. Mary, Our Lady of The Lake Catholic Church](#)—512/267-2644
[St. Matthew's Episcopal Church](#)—512/345-8314
[St. Thomas More Diocese of Austin](#)—512/258-1161
[St. Vincent de Paul, St. Austin's Catholic Church](#)—512/477-9471
[Texas National Guard Family Support Foundation](#)—512/782-6953
[Texas VFW Foundation, Inc.](#)—800/997-7096
[The Austin Texas Salvation Army](#)—512/634-5955
[Travis \(Central\) County Catholic Charities](#)—512/651-6100
[Travis County Christmas Assistance](#)
[Travis County Family Support Services Division](#)—512/267-3245
[Travis County Family Support Services website](#) or call 211 or 512/854-9020
[Travis County Health and Human Services](#)—512/854-4100
[University Avenue Church of Christ](#)—512/476-9584
[Veterans Services](#)—512/854-9340
[Westover Hills Church of Christ](#)—512/345-6386

Collin County

[Allen Community Outreach](#)—972/422-1850
[Assistance Center of Collin County](#)—972/422-1850
Salvation Army of Collin County—972/423-8254
[Frisco Family Services Center](#)—972/335-9495
[Community Lifeline Center](#)—972/542-0020
Anna Christian Community Outreach—214/884-6871
Salvation Army Plano—972/423-8254
[McKinney Housing Authority](#)—972/542-5641
[Plano Texas Housing Authority](#)—972/423-4928
[Wylie Community Christian Care Center](#)—972/442-4341

Dallas/Dallas County

[United Way of Metropolitan Dallas](#)—214/978-0000—info@unitedwaydallas.org
[Dallas Rental Assistance Collaborative](#) (city of Dallas residents only)
[Dallas Housing Authority Rental Assistance](#)
[Dallas County Rental Assistance](#) (open to residents of Dallas County, except city of Dallas)
[Human Rights Initiative](#)
[Voice of Hope](#)
[Refugee Services of Texas](#)
[Dallas Leadership Foundation](#)
[The Stewpot](#)
[Abounding Prosperity](#)
[International Rescue Committee](#)
[American Red Cross | North Texas](#)—512/928-4271
[Catholic Charities](#)—866/223-7500
[Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance](#)—972/638-5600
[Dallas County Health and Human Services](#)—214/819-2000
[Interfaith Dallas](#)—214/827-7220
[Dallas Housing Crisis Center](#)—214/828-4244
ULGD Urban League of Dallas—214/915-4600
[Metrocrest Services](#)—972/446-2100
[Garland Housing Authority](#)—972/205-3393
[City of Garland Neighborhood Development](#)—972/205-3310
[City of Grand Prairie Department of Housing & Neighborhood Services](#)—972/237-8040
[Housing Crisis Center](#)—214/828-4244
[Lancaster Housing Assistance Program](#)—972/275-1750
[Mesquite Housing Assistance Program](#)—972/216-6424
[North Dallas Shared Ministries](#)—214/358-8700
[White Rock Center of Hope](#)—214/324-8996
[Irving Cares](#)—972/721-9181
[West Dallas Multipurpose Center](#)—214/670-6530
[Movement Ministries](#)—260/693-7283
[Irving Community Service Center](#)—972/251-4054
[Salvation Army of Dallas County and Irving](#)—972/721-9503
[Jewish Family Services of Greater Dallas](#)—972/437-9950

[Duncanville Outreach Ministry](#)—972/296-4986
[Salvation Army Corps of Garland Texas](#)—972/272-4531
[Christian Community Action](#)—972/221-1224
[Salvation Army Plano Service Center](#)—972/423-8254
[Mesquite Social Services](#)—972/285-3000
[Richardson East Care Corps](#)—972/231-8231

Denton County

[The Salvation Army Denton Corps](#)—940/566-3800
[Giving HOPE Inc.](#) —940/382-0609
[Denton Housing Authority](#)—940/383-1504
[Catholic Charities](#)—817/413-3921
[Christian Community Action Lewisville](#)—972/436-4357
[Helpnet of the Greater Denton Area](#)—940/382-1913
[Pilot Point Goodfellows](#)—940/686-3014
[Denton County Friends of the Family](#)—940/387-5131
[Metrocrest Services](#) - 972/446-2100
[Next Steps](#) (open to residents of The Colony only)—972/445-7770
[United Way of Denton County - Veteran Stability Program](#) (eligible veterans, spouses, and dependents)

El Paso/El Paso County

[Texas Home Program](#)
[Veteran Rental Assistance](#)
[EP Rent Help \(City of El Paso Rental Assistance Program\)](#)

Fort Worth/Tarrant County

[Rental Assistance Programs & Renter Resources](#)
[Tarrant County - Executive Order \(11-24-20\)](#)

Hays County (San Marcos)

[Barnabas Connection-Wimberley Methodist Church](#)—512/847-1664
[Community Action Inc of Central Texas](#)—512/392-1161
[Helping Hands Of Dripping Springs, Inc.](#) —512/858-7219
[Salvation Army - San Marcos](#)—512/754-8541
[Santa Cruz Catholic Church Buda-St. Vincent De Paul](#)—512/415-4012
[Southside Community Center](#)—512/392-6694
[St. Martin De Porres Catholic Church](#)—512/858-5667

Houston/Harris County

[Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries \(Includes Service Area Map of Houston Region\)](#)
[The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston](#)—719/659-5461
[Catholic Charities](#)—713/874-6776
[Chinese Community Center](#)—713/271-6100
[City of Houston rental assistance program](#)
[Coalition for the Homeless](#)—713/739-7514
[Disaster Housing Assistance Program](#)—866/497-6036

[East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry](#)—281/261-1006
[Epiphany Community Health Outreach Services](#)—713/270-0369
[Emergency Aid Coalition](#)—713/522-5903
[Harris County rental assistance program](#)
[Humble Area Assistance Ministries](#)—281/446-3663
[Interfaith Caring Ministries](#)—281/332-3881
[Jewish Federation of Greater Houston](#)—713/667-9336
[Katy Christian Ministries](#)—281/391-5261
[Memorial Area Assistance Ministries](#)—713/468-4516
[My Brother's Keeper](#)—281/498-9933
[Red Cross](#)—713/526-8300
[St. Vincent's House](#)—409/763-8521
[Wesley Community Center](#)—713/223-8131
[United Way](#)—713/957-4357
[US Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#)—713/718-3199
[West Houston Assistance Ministries](#)—713/977-9942

Lubbock/Lubbock County

City of Lubbock Community Development—806/775-2282

San Antonio/Bexar County

[San Antonio Emergency Housing Assistance Program](#)—210/207-5910
[Bexar County Community Resources](#)—210/335-3666
[City of San Antonio COVID-19 Resources for Residents](#)
[Alamo Area Resource Center](#)—210/358-9995
[Catholic Charities - Emergency Assistance](#) —210/226-6178
[Christian Assistance Ministry \(CAM\)](#) —210/223-4099
[Ella Austin Community Center](#)—210/224-2351
[Salvation Army - Social Services](#)—210/352-2020
[San Antonio AIDS Foundation](#)—210/225-4715
[SAMMinistries](#)—210/340-0302
[St. Pj's Children's Home](#) (must have disability)—210/531-8555
[St. Vincent de Paul](#)—210/225-7837

Williamson County (Georgetown)

[Baptist Community Center](#)—512/472-7592
[Caritas of Austin](#)—512/479-4610
[Carolyn T. Smith Loaves and Fishes Outreach Ministry](#)—512/476-3589
[Catholic Charities of Central Texas](#)—512/651-6100
[Christian Service Center Assistance Programs](#)—512/244-2431
[Madella Hilliard Neighborhood Center](#)—512/930-0873
[Rental Assistance in Williamson County](#)
[Round Rock Area Serving Center](#)—512/244-2431
[Salvation Army Taylor and Georgetown](#)—512/365-9093
[St. Helen's Catholic Church-St. Vincent De Paul](#)—512/868-1964
[St. Margaret Mary](#)—512/259-3126

[St. Patrick Catholic Church](#)—512/759-3712
[St. Thomas More Diocese of Austin](#)—512/258-1161
[St. William Catholic Church-St. Vincent De Paul](#)—512/255-2330
[Taylor Neighborhood/Senior Center](#)—512/352-5523
[Water and Sewer bills in Round Rock Texas](#)—512/218-5400
[Williamson County Salvation Army Programs](#)—512/943-8421
[Williamson County Texas Food Banks](#)—512/775-8277