






APARTMENT ASSOCIATION OF GREATER DALLAS COVID-19 RESPONSE

Renter Resources

As we continue to deal with the impact of COVID-19 and its impact on jobs and our 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.

As rental housing providers, we are committed to providing safe and reliable housing to our residents across North Texas, and the safety and well-being of our residents is our top priority.

TO ADDRESS THIS CRISIS, AAGD HAS TAKEN THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

-  Encouraged rental property owners to waive late fees and establish payment plans with residents. We have forms available for our members to use, including a form to adopt temporary payments plans and/or waive late payment fees.
-  Supported the Texas Supreme Court order suspending evictions until after April 30 (except those involving criminal activity or imminent threat of physical harm).
-  Posted resources for renters and rental property owners – whether or not they are members of AAGD – on our website (www.aagdallas.com).
-  Identified and made charitable contributions to organizations providing relief to residents impacted by COVID-19.
-  Advocated at the federal level for emergency rental assistance for renters in need.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q.1 WHAT IF I CAN'T PAY MY RENT DURING THIS TIME?

We value our residents and always strive to maintain open lines of communication. The best thing you can do is communicate with your property manager about your situation. Your property manager may ask you to provide documentation from your employer or other documentation showing that you have been impacted by COVID-19. Providing documentation and maintaining frequent communication with your property manager will help you get the answers you need.

AAGD has encouraged our members to waive late fees, work out payment plans, and take other actions to help keep residents in their homes.

The City of Dallas passed The Mortgage and Rental Assistance program, which will offer \$6.1 million in rental and mortgage aid. Assistance will provide up to \$1,500 for a maximum of three months per eligible household. To qualify for the pre-screening process, applicants must be City of Dallas residents who lost their jobs or were furloughed due to COVID-19. The program is expected to open during the first week of May.

Q.2 CAN I BE EVICTED FROM MY RESIDENCE DURING A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS?

The Texas Supreme Court has suspended evictions in Texas until April 30. There is also an eviction moratorium for certain properties under the federal CARES Act until July 24. Some local ordinances may also affect the eviction process.

Despite these moratoria, someone may still face eviction if they pose an imminent threat of physical harm to others or

are engaging in criminal activity.

During this time, residents may still be issued a notice to vacate by the property manager for non-payment of rent. A notice to vacate 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.

Please note, the Dallas City Council passed an ordinance on April 22 requiring landlords to provide Dallas residents who have been impacted by COVID-19 with a notice of proposed eviction before issuing a notice to vacate. Learn more about the ordinance and your obligations as a resident here ([link to white paper](#)).

Properties covered by the CARES Act are prohibited from delivering an NTV or charging late fees or otherwise proceeding with an eviction for the non-payment of rent during the moratorium, which ends on July 24. The CARES Act further requires owners 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.

Remember, even though evictions are halted during this time, residents must continue to pay rent. Paying your rent protects you as a renter under Texas law. Please communicate with your property manager if you think you might not be able to pay your rent.

Failing to pay your rent hurts our ability to continue operating and maintaining the property where you live. Ultimately it may also hurt your credit or result in an eviction once that process is reinstated.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONT.

Q.3 WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I RECEIVE A "NOTICE TO VACATE"?

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 during these difficult times. The Apartment Association of Greater Dallas is encouraging its members who are able to:

- Waive late fees
- Work with residents on payment plans
- Take other steps to help residents who have been economically impacted or otherwise affected by COVID-19

A notice to vacate 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. Courts may accept these filings during this time but will not schedule hearings or act on them until after the Texas Supreme Court moratorium ends on April 30. There could be further eviction trial delays for properties covered by the federal CARES Act or certain cities that have enacted ordinances affecting the eviction process.

Q.4 WHAT IF I CAN'T PAY MY UTILITY BILLS DURING THIS TIME?

Many utility providers are waiving late fees, reducing down payments, and extending due dates for payments. Your bills will continue to accrue, but your services will not be disrupted. Please be sure to check with your utility to provider on options they are offering at this time.

Q.5 WHAT IF I'VE LOST MY JOB AND NEED TO FILE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT?

The CARES Act (federal legislation) includes provisions to enhance and expand eligibility for unemployment benefits. [Apply for state unemployment benefits Online here.](#)

The CARES Act:

- Adds \$600 per week for four months on top of existing state unemployment benefits.
- Adds up to 13 weeks of additional unemployment benefits to those already enrolled but who are nearing the end of benefits.
- Expands the program to include a number of workers not normally eligible to receive unemployment benefits. This includes:
 - o Freelancers
 - o Independent contractors/gig workers
 - o Self-employed
 - o Those with limited work history
 - o Employees who are still employed, but whose hours have been reduced

Q.6 WHAT ACCESS IS THERE TO AMENITIES AND RESIDENT SERVICES?

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, your property may:

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

Our goal is to keep our residents safe, and implementing these measures helps us protect you and the employees who work on-site at the property.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONT.

Q.7 WHERE CAN I LEARN ABOUT RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS?

Please see the resources section for a list of organizations that offer rental assistance. Many community non-profits also offer emergency financial assistance with additional needs, including utility or medical bills.

Q.8 WHAT IF I HAVE TO SELF-ISOLATE IN MY APARTMENT?

To avoid unnecessary contact, or maintenance staff entering your unit, consider notifying 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, door-knobs, 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.

Q.9 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 inquire about sanitation procedures your moving van rental company has in place.

Resources

WHERE CAN I GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

Renter information: www.aagdallas.com/rescenter

General information on COVID-19: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The following organizations may be able to offer rental assistance and other financial assistance for household expenses.

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.

DALLAS COUNTY

United Way of Metropolitan Dallas	214-978-0000
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

DALLAS COUNTY

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

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

COLLIN COUNTY

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

The Apartment Association of Greater Dallas (AAGD) is a trade association, representing the Multifamily Industry. Since 1959, the association has provided professional resources, training, advocacy, and communication for its industry members. Our association represents 1,000 companies who own and operate 2,700+ properties with 580,000+ units in the eleven counties surrounding the City of Dallas.