**Virginia's Response to COVID-19**

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| The State of Virginia and local Northern Virginia jurisdictions are exercising an abundance of caution and taking significant steps to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus). Today, Governor Ralph Northam announced additional steps to help Virginians impacted by the spread of the virus in the Commonwealth. Below, please find information on closures and policy changes, including the temporarily suspension of evictions, undertaken at the State and local level in response to coronavirus. Evictions: Governor Northam announced a statewide suspension for all non-essential, non-emergency court proceedings in all district and circuit courts absent a specific exemption from Monday, March 16 through Monday, April 6. This includes a prohibition on new eviction cases for tenants who are unable to pay rent as a result of COVID-19. All non-exempted court deadlines are tolled and extended for a period of 21 days. Utilities: The State Corporation Commission (SCC) issued an [order](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001uX7SacF0SMUp4HEeY7IOzLgIOUQMs5Dpb5lMLLxgp8iQz3ZaTTKh7m7hSprEnxHWGycbzA6ajnKhQEogi91LHuYtm8vbheW3HHIhy-VRh2N07QJGoX-r-m9L0xskWesxLljyn4xd-32z7XzkHK16aAFYfjyQ6E_azh7dYoAUc8birsfWDInQLo51Rpa5mXhN&c=yY7tGy2O3dURpGgT3aA9D61_hw0zDHap-ZE0S5h7dm2-G3E5Dcb0Xw==&ch=IR5_GCiReBKRinTbHhFGV-QbdY-wq9KXGM5AInTRt5ppPMBnv1FN-A==) directing utility companies in Virginia, including electric, natural gas, and water, to suspend service disconnections for 60 days to provide immediate relief for any customer, residential and business, who may be financially impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. Rental Assistance: The City of Alexandria has issued a list of voluntary suggestions that multifamily rental properties may take to assist tenants who are current on their rent through March who may be impacted by COVID-19:* Ask residents who will not be able to pay their April rent on time to submit a written request for relief by March 31 which includes a general description of their hardship.
* Offer an installment payment plan to those who seek relief that allows residents who will miss the April rent an opportunity to make up the amount over the next twelve months, with no fees or penalties.
* Waive late fees and/or penalties for those paying the April rent partially, or in increments, at any time during the month.
* Prior to filing eviction proceedings against a tenant who is late on April rent, instead ask those who are delinquent to contact the Office of Housing's Landlord and Tenant  Division Chief Melodie Seau (melodie.seau@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-3078) to assist them with additional resources.

Arlington County has issued a list of voluntary suggestions that multifamily rental properties may take to assist tenants who are current on their rent through March who may be impacted by COVID-19:* Ask tenants who will not be able to pay their April or May rent on time to submit a written request for relief which includes a general description of their hardship or household situation.
* Offer an installment payment plan to those who seek relief that allows tenants who will miss April or May rent an opportunity to make up the amount over the next twelve months, with no fees or penalties.
* Waive late fees and/or penalties for those paying April or May rent partially, or in increments, at any time(s) during the month, as they are able.
* Do not file eviction proceedings against any tenant who is late paying April or May rent.  Currently, the General District Court has removed all civil cases – except for protective orders – from the docket which were scheduled to be heard from March 17th through April 6th, including eviction cases (unlawful detainers).  This information was shared in [an Order for Docket Management effective March 16, 2020](https://nam03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flnks.gd%2Fl%2FeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDMsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMDAzMTguMTg5MzkyMDEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwOi8vd3d3LmNvdXJ0cy5zdGF0ZS52YS51cy9uZXdzL2l0ZW1zL2NvdmlkLzIwMjBfMDMxN19hcmxpbmd0b25fZmFsbHNfY2h1cmNoX2dkLnBkZiJ9.QuAOjj_GdQAIzveQpWC7Gkg0bfVEN_8-vGDn7rww9ww%2Fbr%2F76290577267-l&data=02%7C01%7Crschroeder%40arlingtonva.us%7C6f7312916d344de483d908d7cb6e899d%7C803548041fdf428e9f5f5091e994cf54%7C0%7C0%7C637201547922936717&sdata=Pch6qA3%2FjTW%2Fxjs7DLs2hmLEI2czVtDJGJlFdSohThg%3D&reserved=0).
* Refer tenants who may be struggling to Arlington County’s Department of Human Services for emergency assistance at 703-228-1350.
* As of now, Arlington County’s housing programs are continuing operations and rental subsidy programs (e.g., Housing Grants, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Housing Choice Vouchers) should experience no disruption that would impact payments to housing providers. Further, the County is exploring options for providing financial support to housing providers who experience hardship as a result of uncollected rents and will provide further information as resources are identified.

Loudoun County is requesting multi-family rental owners and managers take voluntary actions for tenants current on rent through March 2020 to prevent evictions. For residents paying rent late or unable to pay rent for April, Loudoun County urges residents to take the following actions:* Submit a written request to your rental management company
* Ask for an installment plan
* Ask to waive late fees or penalties

Click [here](https://www.nmhc.org/research-insight/analysis-and-guidance/emergency-preparedness/coronavirus-resources-for-apartment-firms/) for a list of resources for members compiled by the National Apartment Association and the National Multifamily Housing Council.  |

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**Loudoun County Launches Rental Assistance Program in Response to COVID-19**

The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors has decided to re-allocating $200,000 from the Eastern Loudoun County Home Revitalization Program to form a rental assistance program to ensure housing stability for low-income workers who have been furloughed, unemployed or had work hours reduced due to COVID-19.

Logistics of the program include:

* Income based on household size for households earning up to 70% of the state median income ($60,332 for a family of 4).
* Direct payments made to property management companies on behalf of residents who qualify for the program.
* Assistance may be provided for up to three months’ rent.

Tenants who are current in their rent payments as of March 30, 2020 and who now need help rental assistance may contact the county’s Information and Referral program at 703-777-0420. Applicants will need to verify income eligibility, conduct a case assessment, verify rent need and job impacts related to COVID-19. Additionally, they will be asked to submit related documents, including a current lease and paperwork showing job loss or reduced income.

The program will continue as long as the local emergency declaration is in effect and funding is available. Click [here](https://www.loudoun.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=5698&fbclid=IwAR2FtwrBOekjMTrsZrZ0hzJxzkfZJPomOfEIVO4pfRA4CJrqMbGlJ43Qh_I) for more information on the County’s rental assistance program for households impacted by COVID-19.