

May 6, 2020

Governor Gary Herbert
State Capitol
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Honorable Governor Herbert,

We request that you extend your current eviction/foreclosure deferral order from May 15 to July 15. We also ask that this new order provide additional, necessary protections for tenants during and after the extended rent deferral period.

Extending the eviction moratorium will help assure that everyone is housed for the duration of this early phase of the coronavirus crisis so folks avoid apartment hunting or homelessness and really can "Stay Safe, Stay Home". Deferring evictions to July 15 would more closely parallel the CARES Act moratorium timeframe, and more importantly, would extend the moratorium beyond the expected peak of Utah Covid-19 cases in May/June.

While many renters have received their federal "stimulus" checks or deposits, many still have not and may not for several more weeks. Some immigrants are ineligible to receive them. Likewise, most are receiving their federally enhanced unemployment insurance payments, but that is not the case for renters who have just filed, not yet filed, or are ineligible for UI. These renters may have to defer payment of rent for another month or more. Others remain financially strapped and vulnerable, likely evidenced by the increased demand for emergency food that we are all witnessing.

Extending the eviction deferral order will provide more time for renters to stabilize their incomes until we see greater certainty in the economy that more of us will be able to return to work. Additionally this will allow more time to assure that systems to deliver rental assistance to those who may fall into these gaps are up and running effectively.

We urge you to include in your order these protections for renters:

- Defer eviction cases filed April 1 to May 15 through July 15;
- Prohibit any eviction that is non-essential or not an emergency;
- Prohibit landlords from raising the rent or charging or collecting late fees, penalties, damages or interest during or after April 1 through July 15;
- Allow sufficient time – six to twelve months - for renters who wind up in arrears to be able to pay their back rent without fees, penalties or interest and protects them from retaliatory actions;
- Prohibit termination of tenancy wholly or in part because of a tenant's assertion or exercise of a right under the deferral order, including delinquency in rent;
- For any termination of tenancy that existed during the moratorium for reasons other than delinquency in rent, require a new written 30-day notice to vacate.

These and other provisions are well delineated in this model state statute crafted by the National Housing Law Project: https://www.nhlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020.03.20-Model-Eviction-Moratorium-Act_FINAL.pdf

We understand that landlords' are working with tenants on deferral agreements to avoid evictions and unit turnover costs, and that their incomes and budgets are also impacted by the

crisis and by the moratorium. We support efforts to minimize the economic impacts on them, as well as efforts to find additional options for landlords to remain financially able to continue to provide vitally needed rental housing in this tight and turbulent market. We encourage and we hope that landlords will be able to draw upon other resources through July 15 in order to meet their financial obligations (e.g. accessing state and local bridge loans and small business loans, utilizing other federal assistance, negotiating payment extensions or refinancing with their lenders).

We believe these recommendations are in the best interests of the health, safety and welfare of Utah citizens and the public interest of the State of Utah, and urge your prompt action on this request.

Respectfully,

Crossroads Urban Center

Christ United Methodist Church

Coalition of Religious Communities

Christian Center of Park City

Comunidades Unidas

Community Action Partnership of Utah

Disability Law Center

League of Women Voters of Utah

Legislative Coalition for People with Disabilities

MOSAIC Inter-Faith Ministries

Ogden Chapter NAACP

Ogden Civic Action Network

Project Success Coalition

Road to Independence

The Road Home

Utahns Against Hunger

Utah Black Round Table

Utah Health Policy Project

Utah Manufactured Home Owners Association

Utah NAHRO

Voices for Utah's Children