

# COVID-19 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

## Information for Tenants

The Manitoba government has made temporary amendments to *The Residential Tenancies Act* to address the social and economic impacts on landlords and tenants due to COVID-19. Rent increases are temporarily frozen from April 1 and later. Late fees are prohibited for failure to pay rent during this time.

Landlords are prohibited from issuing a notice of termination other than for impairment of safety or unlawful activities that pose an immediate health and safety risk. Non-urgent eviction hearings are also postponed effective March 24. These temporary changes will remain in effect until they are repealed by proclamation.

### **Do I have to pay my rent if my income has been affected by COVID-19 and I can't be evicted?**

A tenant is still obligated to pay their rent in full and on time. If a tenant fails to pay rent on the date specified on their tenancy agreement, a landlord cannot charge late fees regardless of whether the ability to charge late fees is included in the tenancy agreement. Landlords are also prohibited from issuing a notice of termination other than for impairment of safety or unlawful activities that pose an immediate health and safety risk. If a tenant has not paid their rent, a landlord may still initiate an application for an Order of Possession for non-payment of rent once the suspension is lifted. Hearings for Orders of Possession for non-payment of rent will be scheduled once the suspension is lifted.

If you can't pay your rent on time, talk to your landlord right away to see if alternative payment arrangements can be made. Try to come up with a payment plan that you both agree with and set out the agreement in writing. Try to keep supporting documentation, like a Record of Employment or proof of EI claim in case it is needed.

### **I received a notice of rent increase that took effect on February 1, 2020. Do I still need to pay the increase now that rent increases have been frozen?**

Only rent increases scheduled to take effect on April 1 or later are frozen. If the rent increase took effect before April 1, tenants are required to pay the amount that they were given three months written notice.

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## **Will I be reimbursed for the excess amount of rent I paid as a result of a notice of rent increase with an effective date for rent increase being on or after April 1, 2020?**

Yes, landlords are required to reimburse the excess amount of rent to the tenant who paid it based on the notice of rent increase given by their landlord with an effective date for rent increase being on or after April 1, 2020.

## **If I received a notice of termination from my landlord to vacate the rental property on or after March 24, can I stay past that date?**

If a tenant has received a notice of termination on or after March 24 for anything other than an immediate risk to health and safety (including illegal activity), the notice of termination is void. Tenants may speak with their landlords directly to come to a new agreement.

## **Are there any financial relief measures available for tenants to pay rents?**

Rent increases are frozen from April 1 and late fees are prohibited for failure to pay rent during this time. These temporary changes will support tenants experiencing economic hardship due to COVID-19.

The federal government has announced a comprehensive COVID-19 economic response plan for individuals, families, seniors and students. For more information, visit: [www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html).

The Manitoba government has also announced new measures in the Manitoba Protection Plan to provide extra support and relief to individuals and families. For more information, visit: [www.manitoba.ca/covid19](http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19).

## **Who can I call on for assistance?**

The Residential Tenancies Branch remains available over the phone, by email and by appointment for urgent matters. We are not taking in-person walk-in inquiries at this time.

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## Can I still appeal an order issued by the Residential Tenancies Branch?

The Residential Tenancies Commission office continues to receive appeals and leave to appeal applications. If you have any questions regarding filing an appeal or leave to appeal application you can contact the Commission at 204-945-2028 or [rtc@gov.mb.ca](mailto:rtc@gov.mb.ca).

## When will my appeal hearing be scheduled?

Non-urgent appeal hearings are not being scheduled at this time. This includes orders of possession for non-payment of rent. Appeal hearings to deal with urgent eviction orders involving immediate health and safety matters will proceed by teleconference or in person with social distancing measures in place. Parties are encouraged to participate by teleconference if possible. Urgent issues could include a landlord illegally shutting off utilities or locking tenants out of their rental unit, or a tenant conducting illegal activities from their rental unit.

### Contact us:

Residential Tenancies Branch: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/cca/rtb/index.html>

Residential Tenancies Commission: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/cp/residtc/index.html>

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Phone: 204-945-2476  
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**Residential Tenancies  
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**Residential Tenancies  
Commission**  
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