



## Asking for rent assistance during COVID-19

### Has your ability to pay rent been affected by COVID-19? Your landlord may be able to help.

#### Here are some questions you can ask your landlord/ property manager:

- Do you have a process in place for requesting assistance due to COVID-19?
  - Some properties have visible processes, but some will only share their processes if the resident specifically asks for assistance. You may have to specifically say the words “COVID-19.” It may be that if you just say, “I can’t pay rent,” they won’t send you the same application as if you say “I can’t pay rent because I lost my job because of COVID-19.”
- Do you have an FHA mortgage requiring waiver of late fees and evictions?
  - If your landlord received this assistance, they are required to waive late fees and provide [other protections for renters](#).
- Are you required to waive evictions?
  - Many states are requiring landlords to waive evictions. This helps you stay in your home or apartment but doesn’t mean the landlord won’t continue to add late fees to your total bill and then evict you later if you can’t pay. (See section on “notice to vacate.”)
- Can you waive late fees?
- Can you offer a reduction in rent (for example, can you discount rent for May and June by 10%)?
- Can you offer any payment plan?

#### If you receive a notice to vacate (if you are being evicted for nonpayment):

- In Texas, most renters cannot be evicted before May 18.
  - This is a changing situation, so deadlines may be extended—your local news is likely your best source for updates.
- The [Austin Tenants’ Council](#) has a [sample letter](#) you can bring to your landlord. You can replace the wording with information specific to your city or you can replace it with information about orders in the state:
  - “The Texas Supreme Court paused all eviction proceedings until after May 18, and the execution of writs until after May 25, except for cases involving a threat of physical harm or criminal activity.” Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, [COVID-19 Eviction Relief](#).

If you live in federally subsidized housing, you have additional [protections](#).

#### More information for you and your landlord/ property manager:

If your landlord/property manager is willing to help but doesn’t have an application form or a policy in place, let them know that they can download [free templates](#) if they are members of the Texas Apartment Association.

The association also has some [advice for you, the renter](#) (scroll to the bottom of the linked page for phone numbers you may be able to call for rent assistance).

*This is not intended to be nor should it be regarded as legal advice. You may wish to speak with an attorney. Your university may have a student legal services center. Other legal services may be available to you without charge such as [Volunteer Legal Services Central Texas](#) or similar organizations.*