

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic
Information for Renters in West Sacramento

(Updated March 25, 2020. This document will be updated regularly.)

Q 1: Can my landlord evict me during the Coronavirus Pandemic?

In California, a landlord can only evict a tenant after giving the tenant a written notice to move out, or, in some circumstances, at the expiration of a term lease. The landlord must then get a court order if the tenant does not move out.

Landlords must follow this same process right now during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Q 2: Has the Governor of California stopped evictions?

No. The Governor of California has not stopped evictions in the state. If you get a notice from your landlord or eviction court papers, you should call us for legal advice about what to do next and how to respond.

Some cities and counties are passing local laws to postpone evictions for people who have lost income due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. The City of West Sacramento passed a local law that temporarily protects renters from eviction for nonpayment of rent if the reason for nonpayment is due to loss of income from COVID-19.

Q 3: Has the City of West Sacramento stopped all evictions?

No, the City of West Sacramento has not stopped all evictions. The City of West Sacramento passed a new law that temporarily stops landlords from evicting tenants who cannot pay rent because they lost income due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. These temporary laws are in place from March 18, 2020 until the Governor's Executive Order expires (currently May 31, 2020), or earlier if the City Council votes to terminate it.

To be protected by this law, the tenant must: 1) Tell the landlord in writing **before** the day the rent is due that they cannot pay; 2) Provide verifiable documentation to the landlord that the tenant cannot pay because of the Coronavirus Pandemic; and 3) Pay as much rent as they can afford.

Reasons covered under the new law include: 1) sickness with COVID-19 or caring for a household or family member with COVID-19; 2) being laid off, experiencing a reduction in work hours, or other loss of income related to COVID-19; 3) following the government's recommendation to quarantine, stay at home, or not congregate with others during the state of emergency; 4) missing work to care for a home-bound school-age child.

This law only applies to renters who live in the City of West Sacramento. The City has information about this new law on their website and a sample [notice](#) to email to the landlord. The law does not define the types of writings that are acceptable. However, a text, email, or letter from the tenant to the landlord stating that the tenant is unable to pay rent on time, stating the reason why (using the language in the above paragraph), and attaching proof should be sufficient. Examples of documents you can use to prove that you are unable to pay rent due to COVID-19 may include copies of your

pay stub, a letter from your supervisor stating your hours were reduced, a note from your doctor or your child's doctor, an order from a health care professional to quarantine, or notice of school closure.

Q 4: Is the Yolo County courthouse closed?

As of March 16, 2020 the court is closed temporarily for in-person filing. The court also postponed most trials and hearings in civil cases, including unlawful detainers. This means that the landlord cannot file a new eviction lawsuit right now, and the court is not hearing eviction trials until after May 31, 2020. However, tenants must still comply with lease terms and pay rent. The landlord can still serve notices to terminate tenancy for reasons not covered by the new law. If you have an eviction case or if you have received eviction papers (notice to terminate tenancy or summons and complaint), call our office right away for advice about what you need to do and how to respond to the court papers.

Q 5: Do I have to pay my rent during the Coronavirus Pandemic?

Yes. Renters still have to pay their rent and can be evicted for not paying rent. And, the City's temporary law prohibiting evictions for nonpayment of rent related to COVID-19 applies to renters who live in the City of West Sacramento. Several of the neighboring cities, including the cities of Davis, Woodland, Sacramento, and the County of Yolo, enacted similar, but different, eviction protections for renters impacted by COVID-19. If you will be unable to pay your rent due to COVID-19, you should call our office as soon as possible for legal advice.

Q 6: I have lost income due to the Coronavirus Pandemic and cannot pay my rent - what should I do?

If you live in the City of West Sacramento, you may be protected by the City's new law that temporarily stops landlords from evicting tenants who cannot pay rent because they lost income due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. See Q 3 above for more info.

Workers who have been laid off, lost hours, or could not go to work because they had to stay home to take care of kids due to school closures may be eligible for Unemployment Insurance Benefits.

Workers who have to take care of an ill or quarantined family member may be eligible for Paid Family Leave, which is up to 6 weeks of benefits. Workers who are sick with the Coronavirus can apply for State Disability Insurance.

Workers can get more information and apply for benefits at [EDD](#).

Low income families with children might also be eligible for cash aid, emergency housing payments for rent, and food assistance through [Yolo County's Health and Human Services Agency](#).

There is more information about public benefits for people financially harmed by the Coronavirus Pandemic on our website www.lsn.net.

Q 7: Is there a limit on how much my landlord can raise my rent during the Coronavirus Pandemic?

Yes. Right now a landlord cannot raise rent more than 10%. California's anti-price gouging law says that landlords cannot raise rent more than 10% during a declared state of emergency. The Governor of California declared a state of emergency due to the Coronavirus Pandemic on March 4, 2020 that is currently extended until at least May 31, 2020. This means that all landlords in California cannot raise rent by more than 10% until at least May 31, 2020.

There are other laws that limit how much a landlord can raise rent, such as California's new Tenant Protection Act of 2019. If you get a notice raising your rent, call our office for advice about whether the rent increase is lawful.

Q 8: Will my utilities shut off if I cannot pay?

At least some utility providers will not disconnect services right now. [PG&E](#) has announced that it will temporarily suspend shutoffs for nonpayment. You still owe for services during this time, but will not face a shutoff.

Q 9: How do I get more information about my rights as a renter?

Call us for free legal advice at 530-662-1065, or email us at woodland-office@lsnc.net. You may also visit our website for more information: www.lsnc.net.

This handout is intended to provide accurate, general information regarding renters' legal rights in California. Because laws and legal procedures are subject to frequent change and differing interpretations, LSNC cannot ensure the information in this fact sheet is current nor be responsible for any use to which it is put. This is not legal advice. Do not rely on this information without consulting an attorney or the appropriate agency about your rights in your particular situation. This information is current as of the date of publication, March 25, 2020.