

## GOVERNOR LAMONT ANNOUNCES ASSISTANCE FOR RENTERS, HOMEOWNERS, AND RESIDENTIAL LANDLORDS IMPACTED BY COVID-19 EMERGENCY

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Lamont announced today a comprehensive plan to put more than \$33 million in state and federal resources to work providing emergency assistance to renters, homeowners, and residential landlords impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Elements of this plan include:

- \$10 million rental assistance program for Connecticut residents impacted by COVID-19, administered through the Department of Housing, which will provide payments to landlords on behalf of approved tenant applicants, with a priority on lower-income households who have been denied unemployment insurance;
- \$5 million for eviction prevention to help renters who were in the process of eviction before the declaration of the COVID-19 public health emergency;
- \$10 million to provide mortgage relief to homeowners who have suffered impacts from COVID-19 and whose mortgages are not federally insured, administered by the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA);
- \$4 million in rapid rehousing funds to help people pay costs like security deposits and initial rent to exit homelessness to housing, administered by the Department of Housing;
- \$2.5 million rental assistance program for those who are ineligible for emergency assistance through the federal CARES Act, including those who are undocumented, administered by the Department of Housing;
- \$1.8 million in funding for reentry and rehousing assistance for people exiting incarceration, administered by the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness;
- Extending the residential eviction moratorium to August 25, bringing Connecticut's measures in line with federal measures (the CARES Act prevents evictions from most properties until late summer); and
- Extending the opportunity to apply a portion of any security deposit worth more than one month's rent toward rental payments.

All housing assistance programs administered through the state and through CHFA will include housing counseling to help renters and homeowners problem solve and develop plans to pay housing costs going forward.

In addition to this assistance through the state, large Connecticut cities received \$10 million under the CARES Act Emergency Solution Grants program to prevent homelessness and support homeless populations. The Connecticut Department of Housing is encouraging those municipalities to allocate some of that funding to provide rent arrearage assistance for low and very low-income families that are struggling to make ends meet.

Governor Lamont previously allowed and encouraged municipalities to provide homeowners a 90-day grace period on any property taxes due through July 1. His administration also partnered with local financial institutions to provide mortgagors financially impacted by COVID-19 more time to make their payments.

**Governor Lamont said,** "The COVID crisis has taken a toll on many Connecticut families. We know that some renters and homeowners are having a hard time paying the costs of their housing. It's critical that we provide emergency help so that they can stay housed, and to support residential landlords, many of who are mom-and-pop small businesses themselves."

**Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz said,** "During the COVID-19 public health emergency, housing hardships have reached unprecedented heights. Too many families across our state have had difficulty paying their rent or mortgage due to job loss or decreases in wages. We need to do all that we can to ensure families have the assistance they need to stay in their homes. By working with multiple partners to launch this emergency housing assistance package, we can help relieve some of the financial burden our families have faced during this pandemic."

**Housing Commissioner Seila Mosquera-Bruno said,** "Housing stability is critical to the health and wellbeing of Connecticut residents, and COVID has had a significant impact on the ability of many of our families to pay the costs of their housing and maintain that stability. These initiatives, working in coordination with our partners across the housing industry,

including legal services, developers, landlords, lenders and our social service providers, will provide a great opportunity to promote stability, and help our families to weather this epidemic.”

**Nandini Natarajan, CEO of CHFA, said,** “There are many low and moderate-income homeowners with mortgages not covered by CARES Act protections, who need some assistance to meet their mortgage payments. This emergency funding will provide vital assistance, helping them to remain in their homes as they work to regain their financial stability.”

**Social Services Commissioner and Acting Public Health Commissioner Deidre Gifford said,** “When people lose their housing, they may be forced to resort to living in doubled-up situations or to enter homeless shelters. Science is clear that denser housing conditions and less ability to socially distance mean a greater risk to these individuals and families, and to their communities, of catching and spreading the COVID virus. Helping Connecticut residents stay housed is an important part of our public health response.”

**Kiley Gosselin, Executive Director of the Partnership for Strong Communities, said,** “We welcome the governor’s action to extend the eviction moratorium and put in place this package of housing assistance. Housing is a necessity under any circumstances and helping the estimated 230,000 Connecticut renter households at risk of losing their housing to remain housed during this public health emergency is a particularly urgent issue.”

**Cecil J. Thomas, an attorney at Greater Hartford Legal Aid, Inc., speaking on behalf of Connecticut’s three legal services programs (Connecticut Legal Services, New Haven Legal Assistance Association, and Greater Hartford Legal Aid) said,** “We are very pleased that the governor has ordered extension of the eviction moratorium in tandem with the introduction of these new programs to offer rental assistance to low-income tenants. In light of the enormity of the pandemic crisis for both landlords and tenants, we hope that the governor will take additional steps as the need arises.”

**Richard Cho, CEO of the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, said,** “We’ve long known that a stable home is critical to success in reentry. We now know how critical it is to health and to life. We are grateful to the Connecticut state government for ensuring that vulnerable people are not discharged from prison to the streets during this public health emergency, but to a safe and stable home.”

For more information on the resources, please see the following websites:

- Connecticut Department of Housing: [portal.ct.gov/doh](https://portal.ct.gov/doh)
- Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA): [www.chfa.org](https://www.chfa.org)
- Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH): [cceh.org](https://cceh.org)

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For Immediate Release: June 29, 2020  
Contact: Connecticut Joint Information Center  
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