

**Subject:** Joint Special Committee On Coronavirus Response  
**To:** Co-Chairs Senator Roblan and Representative Paul Holvey and all the members of the Joint Special Committee on Coronavirus Response  
**From:** Mercedes Elizalde, Public Policy Director, Central City Concern  
**Date:** 3/18/2020

As we are all working towards understanding the broad impact COVID-19 is having across many sectors like health care, employment, education we encourage the state to look at this impact from a cross sector and multi-disciplined lens.

We want to highlight the economic impact to nonprofit organizations serving the communities who are going to be the hardest hit by this crisis, not just during the time of the state of emergency but potentially for years to come.

As our clients, patients and residents fall on hard economic times we are also struggling to ensure we can continue to keep our doors open for as long as possible. We provide health and stability through affordable housing, health care and social services. We operate on razor thin margins using rental revenue to covering a wide range of services, many that are (and have for a long time been) under-funded by local human services contracts. We have increased janitorial services in our buildings in an effort to combat COVID-19, especially in building with lots of community space like SRO buildings or supportive housing properties.

- All facilities services are paid for with rental revenue and additional cleaning services are needed now more than ever, again especially in buildings with shared bathrooms.
- All front desk staff are paid for through rental revenue, these staff are critical for emergency response and safety in the buildings.
- Peer Case Manager, Peer Support Specialist and Case Managers are also paid for through rental revenue when other social service contracts under-fund supportive services at our buildings. If there is a major loss of rental revenue, we will have to scale back supportive service at a time when people may need them the most.
  - For example, we may get funding for 2 case managers but require 4 based on the level of need of our residents and we will back fill those contracts with rental revenue to double the number of case managers available on site.

Additionally, we want to point out that just deferring rental payment will harm households least able to manage mounting debt. Providing rent assistance to cover missed payments will better support lower-income households impacted.

As you begin to work through the health care, housing and economic impacts of COVID-19 please keep in mind that people are seeing impacts across multiple sectors of their



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lives and non-profit organizations have always been asked to fill in the gaps. Providing direct financial support to nonprofits and low-income communities must be done to maintain our social safety net during and after this crisis.

Central City Concern thanks you for your leadership in these difficult times and we are available to help provide any information needed regarding these Affordable Housing issues.

Central City Concern is a non-profit direct service organization that provides integrated primary and behavioral health care, supportive and affordable housing, and employment services to people impacted by homelessness in the Tri-County area. Central City Concern operates about 2,300 units of affordable housing, serves 9,000 patients annually through our 13 Federally Qualified Health Centers, makes 1,200 job placements annually and operates social services for the community justice programs in Multnomah and Clackamas counties.