

## Rental Housing Stabilization Proposal

Governor Brown and the Legislature have worked to protect tenants since the COVID-19 pandemic reached Oregon in March by placing restrictions on residential evictions for renters experiencing financial hardship due to the pandemic. These restrictions on evictions were accompanied by over \$60 million in rent assistance paid directly to tenants.

The latest eviction moratorium is currently set to last through December 31, 2020. The Legislature will not be in session until January 19, 2021, nearly three weeks later. If no action is taken before the end of the year, the result will be catastrophic for tenants. Additionally, many landlords are experiencing significant financial hardship due to lost rental income during the pandemic. The following proposal comes after months of stakeholder meetings between legislators, tenant advocates, and landlord groups to determine the best solution to keep Oregonians housed and the rental market stabilized as the pandemic continues.

### Eviction Moratorium Extension

- The bill will extend a revised version of the residential eviction moratorium through June 30, 2021, with additional protections and considerations for both landlords and tenants.
- **NEW:** Tenants will have to submit a sworn statement that after March 16, 2020 (the date of the Governor's Stay Home, Save Lives order), they experienced financial hardship impacting their ability to pay rent.
  - If a landlord intends to move forward with an eviction notice due to non-payment, they must provide their tenant with the statement form and inform them of their rights. Landlords may not move forward in the eviction process if the tenant has provided this necessary sworn statement.
- **NEW:** Tenants can have experienced financial hardship for the following reasons:
  - Loss of household income;
  - Medical expenses;
  - Loss of work or wages;
  - Increased childcare responsibilities or responsibilities to care for a person with a disability or a person who is elderly, injured, or sick;
  - Increased costs for childcare, caring for a person with a disability or who is elderly, injured, or sick; or
  - Other circumstances that have reduced income or increased expenses.
- Qualifying tenants must pay all rent back by July 1, 2021, to avoid eviction. For non-qualifying tenants, protections from eviction for non-payment will end after December 31, 2020, and there will be a three-month grace period to pay back rent until March 31, 2021.
- The prohibition on late fees and reporting a tenant's nonpayment balance as delinquent to any consumer credit reporting agency during the moratorium, as well as other protections, are extended.
- **NEW:** The 72-hour timeline for landlords to provide tenants written notice of nonpayment and intention to terminate the rental agreement will be extended to 15 days. This change would be in effect through June 30, 2021.
- **NEW:** During the extended moratorium, no-cause evictions are only allowed if a landlord intends to sell the unit to someone who will occupy it, demolish or convert the unit, undertake major repairs/renovations when the home is or will be unsafe to occupy, or move themselves or a family member into the unit.

### Landlord Compensation Fund (NEW)

- To help prevent evictions and stabilize landlords, the proposal will establish a landlord-based compensation fund.
- Landlords will apply for rent assistance through Oregon Housing and Community Services (envisioned as an easy website portal) on behalf of all their tenants who owe rent payments. Smaller landlords and landlords with a higher percentage of unpaid rent will be prioritized for assistance first.
- The agency will process the application and local public housing authorities will issue the assistance checks directly to landlords, reducing the application burden for tenants.
- The fund will grant landlords up to 80% of the total unpaid back rent they are owed; landlords will be required to forgive the remaining 20% to make tenants current on their rent payments.