

December 3, 2020

## **NAMI Supports Legislative Extension of Eviction Moratorium**

Individuals living with serious mental illness and substance use disorders experience significant access and affordability barriers to stable housing even in normal times. The economic and social restrictions in place due to Covid-19 have significantly exacerbated these issues.

As such, NAMI Oregon supports the extension of Oregon's eviction moratorium:

- Individuals with serious mental illness are more likely to live with co-occurring medical conditions that place them among those at significant risk of serious illness and death due to Covid-19. As such, some have made the prudent decision to delay seeking employment to protect their health.
- When employed, individuals living with serious mental illness work in industries that are most impacted by Covid-19 restrictions, such as the food service, retail, and hospitality sectors. Even if they seek employment, it's currently difficult to find.
- Given the high risk of housing instability that individuals living with serious mental illness experience, even short-term economic disruptions can lead to homelessness. Oregon's economy is in its ninth month of Covid disruptions.
- Ongoing recovery and stability is impossible without stable housing.

For these and other reasons, NAMI encourages Oregon lawmakers to legislatively extend the state's eviction moratorium beyond Dec. 31, when the current moratorium is scheduled to expire. We believe it is prudent to prevent a significant increase in homelessness among our population, which would further burden other public systems such as emergency rooms and first responders.

NAMI also encourages Congress and legislators to approve stimulus measures that help renters and landlords mitigate the accumulation of unpaid rent. Simply deferring mass evictions only delays the catastrophic outcomes that would be inevitable under such circumstances.

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