



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 3/26/2020

El City Council Adopts an Urgency Ordinance Enacting A Temporary Moratorium on Evictions for Residential and Commercial Tenants Financially Impacted by the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

El Cerrito, Calif: At last night's City Council meeting, March 25, 2020, the El Cerrito City Council adopted a temporary moratorium on residential and commercial tenants who have been financially impacted by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

El Cerrito's eviction moratorium is set to expire on May 31, 2020, consistent with the [Governor's Executive Order](#), unless extended through a future action. The Ordinance does not establish rent forgiveness but provides temporary rent forbearance to qualified tenants, including:

- Qualified tenants are those residents or businesses who can demonstrate loss of income or revenue due to COVID-19.
- Provides 6-months, from the Ordinance expiration date, to catch up on unpaid rent.
- Suspends late fees from being charged.
- Applies to nonpayment eviction notices and unlawful detainer actions, served or filed on or after March 16, 2020 and until the expiration of this Ordinance.

City staff reported that the State and County stay at home orders have caused residents and businesses to immediately experience the fiscal impacts of reduced work hours, business closures, and layoffs. The orders have impacted the ability for some businesses and residents to meet their monthly obligations. School closures have also impacted workers needing to stay home to care for their children.

Several Bay Area cities have enacted such moratoriums, including San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose, Alameda, Richmond, Emeryville, and they are under consideration in many other cities. Similarly, commercial property owners and residential property owners, and their associations, are often recommending similar forbearance.

Governor Newsom's Executive Order issued on March 16, 2020 suspends "any provision of state law that would preempt or otherwise restrict a local government's exercise of its police power to impose substantive limitations on residential or commercial evictions..." until May 31, 2020. The order gives local governments authority to consider a moratorium on evictions for residential or commercial properties.

CONTACT:

Maya Williams, Assistant to the City Manager
City of El Cerrito
(510) 215-4318
mwilliams@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

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