



ADDRESSING CLIENTS' NEEDS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC April 13, 2020

- **Have a question?** Review our COVID-19 FAQ [here](#).
- Need to have your subsidized rent recalculated due to income loss? The Rent Recalculation Request tool can be accessed [here](#) in Spanish and English.
- Save the Date: September 10, 2020 is our annual Richard and Mildred Loving Civil Rights Awards Reception

What happened on April 10, 2020:

- African-Americans continue to be disproportionately affected by the virus: There is a growing awareness of the toll that the COVID-19 virus is taking on the African-American community and on African-American men in particular. And while many of the models show a slowing of the virus transmission, the fear is that African-Americans will continue to be vulnerable to infection long after the rest of the country have resumed their normal lives. For more on this story, click [here](#).
- Governor issues an executive order regarding evictions: On April 10, the Governor issued [Executive Order 7X](#), which expands protections for residential tenants. To reach the center's updated FAQs on the how this Executive Order affects tenants, click [here](#).
- No help for tenants who cannot pay rent: Tenants, advocates, and landlords continue to ask for financial assistance to assist tenants who are out of work pay rent. A landlord interviewed by NBC 30 predicted that the Governor's moratorium on evictions would result in tenants never catching up on April, May, and June rent leaving landlords bearing the burden of the economic shut down. You can read the article [here](#).
- Outreach: Center staff, David Lavery, Sarah White, Shaznene Hussain, Greg Kirschner, Erin Kemple, and Fionnuala Darby-Hudgens wrote a response to West Haven's discriminatory behavior, published in the New Haven Register. Read it [here](#).
- Outreach: Staff has produced a comprehensive FAQ for tenants and advocates on how the COVID-19 crisis is affecting tenants and how to respond. The FAQs are updated to include information on the Governor's new Executive Order regarding evictions. It can be accessed [here](#).
- Outreach: Staff created a Rent Recalculation Request letter generator to help tenants living in subsidized housing ask that their rent be reduced as the result of a loss in income. The Rent Recalculation Request tool can be accessed [here](#) in Spanish and English.
- Outreach: The Center's website doubled the number of views it receives in one day to more than 1,241 unique views on COVID-19 resources.
- Outreach: Staff distributed this [daily housing update](#) to over 600 advocates and had more than 700 unique hits on the update on our website. If you want this daily update delivered to your inbox, click [here](#).

What has NOT happened:

- Help for tenants who cannot pay their rent. Effective assistance for tenants includes:
 - Extending the May 1 stay on already issued executions.
 - Money to pay rent or utility bills for people whose employment is affected by the COVID-19 crisis.
 - Money for utility shut-off restoration once the moratorium ends and people are again faced with loss of utilities.
 - Making automatic adjustments to subsidized rents.
 - Setting reasonable time limits on landlord access to rental units.
 - Creation of a rent bank to help tenants who have lost their jobs pay rent.
 - Announcing self-help evictions are not allowed now that the courts are closed.
 - Ensure judgments dismissing summary process cases are being entered.
 - Keeping the eviction moratorium in effect long enough to allow tenants whose income was reduced to apply for and obtain any relief benefits.
 - Additional lawyers to represent tenants in evictions and homeowners in foreclosure filed after the current moratoriums on filing new cases is lifted.
 - Housing counselors who can advise tenants and homeowners of the resources available to them to keep their homes after the current moratoriums are lifted as well as to avoid scams that may result in them losing money and their housing.
 - Additional mediators for Connecticut's Foreclosure Mediation Program to assist the homeowners who will be faced with foreclosure actions once the moratorium on filing new foreclosure cases is lifted.
- Bar on mortgage companies filing foreclosure complaints. About 500 have been filed since the Governor declared a public health and civil preparedness emergency.
- Despite guidance from HUD on March 31, 2020, there has been no effort by housing authorities to notify their tenants of new procedures and requests for rent calculations during the current pandemic. A review of housing authority websites to determine what they were telling their tenants about COVID-19 procedures and whether there was any information in Spanish. The majority still have no information about changes to housing authority procedures in light of the current crisis. [Click here](#) for a summary of what we have found.
- People continue to live in substandard conditions and cannot get assistance in moving out even though the conditions are harming them and their families.

What we are learning from our clients

- The Center has nearly tripled its call volume during the past month compared to the same period last year. The majority of calls received by the Center and other housing advocates ask whether there is any assistance for tenants who cannot pay their rent.
- The Center's Rent Recalculation Request tool has been used to request a rent recalculation more than 40 times since it was created on April 1, 2020. The Rent Recalculation Request tool can be accessed [here](#) in Spanish and English.
- Tenants continue to call because they are being asked to show their apartments to prospective tenants without regard to COVID-19 precautions. The Center is advising tenants that under Connecticut landlord/tenant laws they have the right to refuse entrance to anyone if it would cause a safety hazard.
- Because not all mortgage servicers are participating in the federal or state forbearance programs, homeowners continue to receive notices of default.

- Mortgage servicers continue to file foreclosure complaints.
- Homeowners do not know what to do when they receive a foreclosure summons and complaint since many courts and court information centers are closed.
- People without legal status continue to face deportation and are unable to access services to stay in their homes.
- People who were laid off from their jobs as the result of the pandemic are moving in with parents and friends sometimes causing overcrowding or lease violations. Foreclosures of homeowners will now affect many more people.

More external COVID-19 resources can be found on our website [here](#).

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR FAIR HOUSING RIGHTS IN ENGLISH, SPANISH, MANDARIN, VIETNAMESE, FARSI, RUSSIAN, ITALIAN, KREYOL, AND ARABIC, CLICK [HERE](#)

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