

Three things to know about paying rent during a pandemic: Information for Renters during COVID-19

Open and honest communication with your landlord is very important.

Unless your landlord tells you otherwise, **you still have an obligation to pay rent during this period of time.**

If you think you might not have rent money by the due date, get in touch with your landlord and explain what's going on. They might be able to work with you to **establish a payment plan** or **defer your rent payment to a later date**, though it's important to note that they are not legally obligated to do so.

If you do work something out with your landlord, make sure to **get it in writing.**



Even if you do not pay rent, your landlord can not legally evict you right now.

Even before the coronavirus outbreak, landlords could not legally evict tenants without going through the court system and then paying the local sheriff's office to conduct the eviction. Landlords can NEVER legally evict tenants without the help of the local sheriff's office. The governor of the state of Maryland has issued an order halting all residential evictions for the duration of the State of Emergency. We do not know when this State of Emergency will end. This means that right now, your landlord cannot legally force you out of your home, even if you have not paid rent or if you have been diagnosed with the coronavirus.

If you do miss a payment, you will still owe that money to your landlord, even though they cannot evict you right now.

Our state court system is currently running limited operations, and every county and Baltimore City is handling matters differently. Once your local district court opens up to rent court hearings, trials may be scheduled for those who have not paid their rent. If you get to this point, you are liable for unpaid rent and also maybe fees and court costs. If you do not have this money by the hearing date, your landlord may be able to begin working with the sheriff's office to schedule an eviction.

Legal Services Department at St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center at 410-366-8550, extension 209.



The most important thing to know is that your landlord CANNOT force you to leave your rental property during this state of emergency.

If you are having trouble dealing with your landlord, or have any other questions regarding housing law, please call the Legal Services Department at St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center at 410-366-8550, extension 209.

