

WHO DOES THE ORDINANCE PROTECT?

The COVID-19 Ordinance applies to all rental units in the City of Chicago, except for some non-traditional units, like hotels, college dormitories, and cooperatives. The Ordinance applies even to rental units in smaller buildings, like owner-occupied two flats, which are not included in the general Chicago Residential Landlord Tenant Ordinance. The Ordinance applies to tenants with housing subsidies.

WHAT DOES THE ORDINANCE PREVENT?

The COVID-19 Ordinance prevents landlords from filing evictions for past due rent when the tenant's ability to pay rent has been hurt by the COVID-19 pandemic until the landlord and tenant have made a reasonable attempt to work out a payment arrangement.

HOW DOES THE NEW ORDINANCE OPERATE?

If the tenant is behind in rent, the landlord must give the tenant a written statement explaining rights under the Ordinance. Tenants then have **five days** to tell the landlord **in writing** that their income has gone down because of COVID-19. The tenant can use **text, email, or letter**. If the tenant tells the landlord that their income has gone down, then the landlord must negotiate with the tenant during the next **seven days** to try to work out a reasonable arrangement. For example, the landlord and tenant may enter into an agreement that the tenant will pay the rent over the next sixty days or that the landlord will take the rent from the security deposit.

The Ordinance contains other protections like preventing the landlord from:

- asking about assets or personal property
- rejecting an agreement because the tenant has rental assistance from the government or another third party
- charging unreasonable interest or late fees

You may have other rights under other laws. You may want to talk with Legal Aid, especially if you have a housing subsidy. These protections apply even if the landlord has already filed a case against you. The landlord still must try to work out an agreement.

The new ordinance does not:

- Prevent evictions for lease violations for reasons other than non-payment of rent
- Mean that the tenant does not need to pay rent
- Prohibit the landlord from filing an eviction if the landlord and tenant **are not able** to work out an agreement

Legal aid groups and mediation services want to help landlords and tenants work out agreements and avoid eviction court. You may be eligible for FREE services to help you reach an agreement.



Call

312.341.1070

Monday to Friday
between 8 AM and 4:30 PM

OR



Apply Online

www.legalaidchicago.org