

RENT STRIKE 2020

CANCEL RENT OR WE STRIKE

Resource and Organizing Package for the 2020 Pandemic

#CANCELRENT #RENTSTRIKE #CANTPAYWONTPAY

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INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS RENT STRIKE 2020?

 <p>5 DEMANDS</p> <p>FOR EMERGENCY COVID-19 SURVIVAL</p>	 <p>FREE HEALTHCARE Free testing, treatment and healthcare for all.</p>
	 <p>NO WORK Suspend work obligations. Guarantee food stamps and sick pay for all.</p>
	 <p>NO PAYING — NO DEBT Suspend all rent, mortgage, utilities, loans, foreclosures, evictions and parking enforcement.</p>
	 <p>FREE THE PRISONERS End bail for jails, deactivate ICE, release detainees, and stop all sweeps of homeless camps.</p>
	 <p>HOMES FOR ALL Open up unoccupied homes to anyone who needs one.</p>

Rent Strike 2020 is part of the larger [Care Strike](#) movement, perhaps the tip of the iceberg in terms of people taking control of their situation during the pandemic. If we can't work, we can't pay rent, or mortgages, and need to use what small resources we still have for other things.

[This resource list](#) is a living document. Feel free to add resources, links, and templates. Please be respectful and don't delete content! *Please help us fill in this document with things you think may be missing, especially local and regional contacts, tactics, success stories, etc.*

Join [this](#) rent strike Telegram if you are interested in being more involved in coordination. ([es](#))

GENERAL RESOURCES:

[Keepyourrent.com](#): website for a rent strike group. Toronto-specific information as well as useful general resources for organizing.

[RentStrike2020.org](#): petitions for state governments to suspend rent, mortgage, and utility payments for at least two months.

[RentsDue.org](#): website with templates for calling and writing your local representatives to advocate for financial relief (in the United States).

[Covid-19 Emergency Tenant Protections Map of USA](#): a map of the United States documenting where tenant protections have been passed, with policy summaries.

[Covid-19 Resources for Undocumented Communities](#): a Google sheet with resources for undocumented families in English and in Spanish. Linked resources available in further languages.

[Pandemic Financial Resources Info](#): a Google Doc with some links to news stories documenting unemployment and eviction relief. Very incomplete, so if your area is not on there it doesn't mean there aren't new local policies in place.

[Collective Care is our Best Weapon Against Covid-19](#): a Google Doc with links to many mutual aid networks and relief funds across the United States and internationally

[Rent Strike Podcast](#): Includes a concrete how-to interview with a tenant organizer and talks about why people should participate.

SAFETY

[Security Culture](#) "Required Reading" ([audio version here](#))

[Stay secure during the Covid-19](#): some resources from online security activists at the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

[Tips for Tenants on Police and ICE](#): in English and in Spanish.

Anonymous file hosting websites: Mega.nz, Anonfile.com via tor browser on tails, [vshare.is](#)

LETTER AND FLYER TEMPLATES:

Trying to draft a letter to your landlord to notify them you won't be paying rent, or reach out to your neighbors to organize together? Check out these templates people have been using for some guidelines/inspiration:

[Landlord Letter Template](#): a draft letter to landlords, stating an inability to pay rent on April and May 1.

[Tenant Outreach Template](#): a draft letter to send to your neighbors! And [Another One!](#) And [one that could help you establish a mutual aid network within your building](#).

[More letter templates](#) from a WA law firm for letters to landlords, employers, credit card companies, banks, courts, and more.

ORGANIZATIONS & TACTICS:

[Moms 4 Housing](#): Twitter page for a collective of unhoused and insecurely housed mothers in the Bay Area, organizing to reclaim vacant homes from real estate speculators.

[Covid19 Mutual Aid](#): Instagram page focused on collective well-being through class solidarity, disability justice, anti-racism, abolition. Based out of Seattle, WA.

[Reclaiming Homes](#): Twitter page of homeless and housing insecure families in LA reclaiming vacant houses owned by the state to fight for housing as a human right.

[Never Again Action against ICE](#): Twitter page for an organization of Jews, immigrants & allies taking action against ICE to keep detainees safe from COVID-19.

[Seattle Solidarity](#): a Pacific Northwest group using creative tactics to support the vulnerable.

[Phone Zap Campaign](#): Interview with Oakland Chapter of IWOC with ideas for mounting and winning a call-in campaign.

Squatting Resources: [How-to manuals](#), [Foreclosure Site Maps](#), [Foreclosure and Foreclosed Homes](#), [Squatters Handbook: Political Squatting Tips](#)

[Tactical Podcast about Organizing \(/vs mobilizing\)](#) Labor organizer Jane McAlevey gives a master class in political organizing.

NEWS & RESEARCH

[Mutual Aid Groups During Coronavirus](#): [Scroll to the bottom of this article for helpful overview of ongoing mutual aid organizing efforts in different cities]

[Naomi Klein Endorsement & Twitter thread](#) with tons of links, memes, ideas, and different ways people have been getting organized for a #RentStrike on April 1st

[Vermont - Landlords, tenants worried; advocates seek eviction moratorium](#): includes useful language for defusing landlord-tenant antagonism and pushing the conflict up towards banks and policy

[NYC - Cuomo says NY “took care of rent issue.” but has no policy in place](#)

[NYC - De Blasio says he will pursue rent moratorium](#)

[Federal Mortgage Giants provide Coronavirus Relief for Landlords](#)

[About 43% of multifamily property mortgages are federally backed](#)

[FHFA Moves to Provide Eviction Suspension Relief for Renters in Multifamily Properties](#)

NPR: [US Gov't Orders Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to give mortgage relief for 12 months](#)

REGIONAL:

Information specific by place but very often with cross-applicable idea and possibilities
State-by-state petitions to enact a rent and mortgage moratorium can be found at [this site](#).

WEST:

PUGET SOUND

[Link to join the Puget Sound area Telegram group](#) (Telegram is a free, and relatively secure chatting app)

[Olympia Rent Strike](#) Olympia, Washington's central webform for committing to strike, downloading templates and flyers/posters. Please spread widely. Also can be "copied" through the website if you wanna make one for another city.

[RentStrike Blog](#) with Seattle-specific recommendations, resources, and templates.

BAY AREA

[Link to join the Bay Area Telegram group](#) (Telegram is a free, and relatively secure chatting app)

[A sample letter for San Francisco renters](#). Folks are working for a guide for people who are doing political rent strikes, but either way sending a letter is necessary cover right now to activate protections against eviction.

LOS ANGELES

[Link to join the LA Telegram group](#) (Telegram is a free, and relatively secure chatting app)

[LA rent freeze petition & demands](#); [LA rent freeze Facebook event](#)

[Sample Letters For CA Covid-19 unable to pay rent/rent strike/rent suspension/forgiveness](#)

["Naming the Moment: They Say Rent Hike, We Say Rent Strike"](#); [Specific info on LA demands](#)

[L.A. Tenants Union Handbook](#); [LA Tenants Union Covid-19 Demands](#)

ORANGE COUNTY

[Link to join the OC Telegram group](#) (Telegram is a free, and relatively secure chatting app)

COLORADO

[Colorado Rent Strike and Eviction Defense](#)

EAST COAST:

NEW YORK

[Rent Strike 2020 and Forever Resources](#) (NY specific but generally useful)

[Reclaim Our Homes / Mortgage Suspension Now!](#)

Housing Justice for All has an active petition for a rent freeze in New York State, including demands to house the homeless, and to freeze evictions. Please sign & share!

BOSTON

Email AllstonBrightonMutualAid@gmail.com to get involved: they are working on mapping the major property management companies and, long term, mapping vacant properties.

MIDWEST:

CHICAGO

[CHICAGO](#): website with mostly Chicago-specific resources, with more planned
[FAQ specific to Chicago](#) which may be helpful (modified for your city's landlord-tenant law).
[Keep Your Rent](#) PDF with FAQ on why keeping rent makes sense.
[Midwest Rent Strike Stuff](#) on Twitter.
[Petition to Illinois Gov](#) on Google Docs.

OKLAHOMA

[Oklahoma petition for rent freeze.](#)

SOUTH:

RALEIGH

[Tenants' organizing kit from Raleigh, NC](#) on a Google Doc

AUSTIN

[Austin Rent Strike Declaration PDF](#)

[Austin TX Rent Strike](#): Austin, TX's central webform for committing to strike, downloading templates and flyers/posters. Please spread widely. Also can be "copied" through the website if you wanna make one for another city.

ATLANTA

[Link to join the ATL Telegram group](#) (Telegram is a free, and relatively secure chatting app)

INTERNATIONAL:

CANADA

[Link to join the Carestrike Canada Telegram group](#) (Telegram is a free, and relatively secure chatting app)

[Keepyourrent.com](#): website for a Toronto-based rent strike group. Toronto-specific information as well as useful general resources for organizing.

Sample Landlord Letter

Dear _____

We are living in unprecedented times. The Coronavirus pandemic, and the extreme measures of social distancing, self-isolation, and business closures are impacting all of us. As good citizens and caring individuals, we feel that we must do our part to help slow the spread of the virus by any means necessary, and to assist in providing care for our neighbors and help rebuilding our community when this crisis has passed. But there is another crisis brewing, when the virus has run its course: a major recession and up to 20% unemployment nationwide. It will take months, if not years, for this country and our local community to recover. And there is a third crisis, which would make everything much worse: a wave of evictions across our city, our neighborhoods, our country. How can people shelter in place if they have no shelter?

Our governments are making it impossible for us to earn a wage during this crisis. How can we possibly pay rent if our workplaces are closed? Many people cannot afford to pay rent in April. Even more will be unable to afford it in May. We know that this puts pressure on landlords as well: you depend on our rent payments to pay the mortgage and protect your property. But if we cannot pay, no one else will be there to take our spot. No one has money for rent right now, and certainly no one will have money for security deposits, first and last month's rent, and moving expenses to take over empty homes.

There have been proposals from politicians across the country for a moratorium on evictions due to non-payment of rent. This is a good first step, but it will only delay the crisis. If we don't pay rent for three months, and then are expected to pay it all back once the crisis has passed, how will we afford it? And if millions are evicted in three months, or six months, instead of now, who will you find to move in that can afford the costs? We don't want to lose our home, and we don't want you to lose your investment. But there is a simple solution: a total freeze on rent and mortgage payments until this crisis is done. We can weather this crisis together, and resume business as usual once we've recovered. All we need is for the banks to freeze mortgage collection for the duration of this crisis. No interest, no obligation to re-pay unpaid months of loans, no retribution after the crisis has passed, just a grace period that lasts for long enough for all of us to make it through to the other side. We urge you to ask your representatives and bankers for a freeze on mortgage and rent collection. It will benefit you as much as it benefits us.

This is neither a request nor a threat. It is simply reality. We have lost our jobs and our income. We will not be paying rent on April 1st, because we cannot. We will not be paying rent on May 1st, because we cannot. We will not be paying rent until this crisis has passed and until the economy has recovered enough for us to work. We will not be moving out onto the streets to add stress to an already overburdened medical and care system. We will not re-pay the rent that goes unpaid during this period, because it will be impossible. Millions of other renters are doing the same. As our landlord, you have an opportunity to be part of the solution by lobbying your bankers and politicians for a rent and mortgage freeze and amnesty, or you can be part of the problem by evicting us, sitting on an empty **(house/apartment)** that doesn't accrue rent, and contributing to a public health crisis by increasing the number of homeless people in our community.

Because we can't pay, we won't pay. Think carefully before you respond to this--who will you find to move into this **(house/apartment)** if no one can work and no one has a job? We are all facing this crisis together, so let's truly face it together.