



## Evictions and the COVID-19 Pandemic

Many people are facing job loss, reduced hours, and other hardships during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Below are some questions and answers on how the pandemic, as well as state and federal responses, will impact housing for Orange County renters.

### Q: Can I be evicted or have my water/electricity shut off?

**A: Not right now.** On March 16, North Carolina courts placed a statewide moratorium on eviction and foreclosure hearings, which will be in effect through June 1. The Sheriff may still serve eviction notices, but the legal hearing cannot proceed during the moratorium.

For federally subsidized properties, there is a moratorium on eviction filings for nonpayment and charging late fees under the federal CARES Act, which will be in effect through July 24. Note that evictions for reasons other than nonpayment of rent may still proceed. Properties in Orange County that fall into this category include:

#### Carrboro/Chapel Hill

105 Lindsey Street  
Adelaide Walters Apartments  
CAC of Orange County  
Carolina Spring  
Club Nova Apartments  
Covenant Place  
Dobbins Hill and Dobbins Hill II  
First Baptist and Manley Estates  
Greenfield Place and Greenfield Commons  
Purefoy Road Group Home  
The Landings at Winmore  
All Public Housing properties  
All group homes and apartments owned by the Arc

#### Hillsborough

CHC of Orange County  
Coachwood Apartments I and II  
Eno Haven  
Gateway Village  
Hampton Pointe Apartments  
Whitted Forest

#### Mebane

Cedar Hill Apartments  
Elmwood Apartments

Furthermore, the Governor issued Executive Order No. 124 prohibiting utility shut-offs, late fees, and reconnection fees until May 30.

### Q: Does that mean I can stop paying my rent?

**A: No.** You are still obligated to continue paying rent as outlined in your lease. You do not want to face eviction once the eviction moratorium lifts. If you are struggling to pay rent, call the phone number below to contact someone who will help connect you with resources:

Call the Housing Helpline: 919-245-2655

OR

Email [HousingHelp@orangecountync.gov](mailto:HousingHelp@orangecountync.gov)

Mon – Fri, 2 – 4 PM and

Sun – Thurs overnights (midnight – 6 AM)



## **Q: What should I do if my landlord is trying to “informally” evict me?**

**A: Document everything and call law enforcement.** Informal evictions are illegal. Even if a landlord has a valid reason to evict a tenant, they must follow the legal eviction process. Examples of informal evictions include:

- Ordering or threatening a tenant to leave
- Changing the locks or locking a tenant out of their unit
- Removing a tenant’s belongings from the unit
- Shutting off utilities (such as heat, water, gas, electricity, or phone service)
- Interfering with use of property amenities (such as parking)
- Ignoring repair requests
- Suddenly raising the rent

If your landlord is doing any of the above, consider the following actions:

**Document everything.** Keep a log of how your landlord has been trying to force you to leave. Include notes about actions you have taken to protect your rights. One recommended action is to send your landlord a formal letter identifying the objectionable behavior and asking that it stop. Update the log as more incidents occur.

**Call law enforcement.** Notify local law enforcement if your landlord is illegally trying to remove you from your home. Police and sheriffs know that law requires landlords to use the court process for evictions.

If you want legal assistance, Legal Aid North Carolina provides free services to low-income people on civil matters, including landlord-tenant concerns such as self-help evictions, as well as habitability issues (landlords failing to keep a property safe and in good repair) and evictions from mobile home lots. See below for local Legal Aid office contact information.

### **Raleigh Office**

224 S Dawson St, Raleigh, NC 27601

### **Pittsboro Office**

117 E Salisbury St, Pittsboro, NC 27312

Apply for legal help online: <http://www.legalaidnc.org/get-help/apply-online>

Apply for legal help by phone toll-free: 1-866-219-LANC (5262)

## **Q: What should I do if I feel my landlord is discriminating against me?**

**A: Contact the Orange County Department of Human Rights and Relations.** If your landlord is treating you differently, tries to evict you, makes discriminatory statements, intimidates or harasses you or acts in a way that makes you feel discriminated against based on your race, color, sex, nation origin, religion, age, disability, familial or veterans’ status contact the Human Rights and Relations Department to discuss the issue with someone who can help:

**Phone: 919-245-2487 OR Email: [Human\\_Relations@orangecountync.gov](mailto:Human_Relations@orangecountync.gov)**