



# NEWS

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April 6, 2020

**For Immediate Release**

## **Board of Supervisors to Consider Moratorium on Small Business Evictions in Unincorporated San Mateo County**

**Redwood City** – The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday will consider an urgency ordinance banning evicting small business commercial tenants directly impacted by the COVID-19 for non-payment of rent.

If approved at the Tuesday, April 7, 2020 Board meeting, the ordinance will take effect immediately and apply only to businesses under \$2.5 million annually in gross receipts in the unincorporated areas of San Mateo County. Cities may enact their own moratoriums on commercial evictions.

“Small businesses, just like all of us in this county and this world, did not ask for this pandemic and the health and financial uncertainties it brings,” said Fourth District Supervisor Warren Slocum, president of the Board of Supervisors and co-sponsor of the ordinance. “As leaders of this county, we must do everything we can to help our community and that includes protecting our businesses for their own sake as well as the community that relies on them.”

Under the emergency regulation, a small business tenant could not be evicted for non-payment of rent due to such COVID-19 related impacts as a reduction in operating hours, available workforce or consumer demand; reduced business income due to illness; increases in the tenant’s health care expenses or employee health care expenses for which the tenant is responsible; increased costs of supplies or other overhead expenses; or temporary closure of the tenant’s business.

The County Manager’s Office is developing the required form landlords must provide commercial tenants notifying them of their rights under the ordinance before moving forward with an eviction, as well as Frequently Asked Questions. Both will be posted online when completed.

Small businesses would be liable for back rent up to 180 days following the termination of the declared local emergency in San Mateo County. The ordinance will remain in effect through May 31, 2020, unless extended by the Board.

Two weeks ago, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved an emergency regulation that banned the eviction of residential renters countywide who cannot pay rent due to COVID-19.

“The County’s residential and small business moratoria speak to the County’s underlying mission — to protect the most vulnerable when they most need it,” said First District Supervisor Dave Pine, the ordinance’s other co-sponsor. “Keeping people in their homes, and doing all we can to ensure that local small businesses survive, are critical steps in helping County residents who are facing severe economic hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Slocum said his district feels the impacts keenly.

“The businesses and families of North Fair Oaks work hard every day for themselves, their families and their communities. They have pride in what they accomplish, even when it is a struggle. Right now, they like the rest of us trying to make sense of this virus are struggling even more. Providing relief from the fear of being evicted because they cannot pay rent — through no fault of their own — is one concrete step my colleagues and I are proud to take.”

The Board of Supervisors ratified at its March 10, 2020 meeting the county health officer’s declaration of a local health emergency and the county manager’s proclamation of a local emergency. At Tuesday’s meeting, the Board is expected to adopt a resolution extending both.

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Members of the public will not be permitted to attend the meeting in accordance with the health officer’s order to shelter in place. Board members and staff will attend via Zoom conferencing and community members may view a video broadcast at <https://sanmateocounty.legistar.com/>. Written comments may be sent to [boardfeedback@smcgov.org](mailto:boardfeedback@smcgov.org)

The full agenda packet is available at <https://sanmateocounty.legistar.com/>

A complete copy of the emergency regulation banning residential tenant evictions and the required landlord-tenant notice form is available at <https://housing.smcgov.org/covid-19-smc-eviction-regulations> Copies are available in English, Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Portuguese, Russian, and Tagalog.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the residential tenant moratorium are available at <https://housing.smcgov.org/frequently-asked-questions>

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