

# Massachusetts U.S. Attorney's Office Reminds Public of CDC Eviction Moratorium Order

As part of the federal response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the U.S. Attorney's Office is reminding landlords of their obligations and tenants of their rights under the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) Order temporarily halting residential evictions of tenants who meet certain income eligibility requirements and who are unable to pay their full rent due to substantial loss of household income, loss of compensable hours of work or wages, a lay-off, or extraordinary out-of-pocket medical expenses. The Order prohibits landlords from evicting such tenants for non-payment of rent from Sept. 4, 2020 to March 31, 2021.

In September 2020, the CDC issued a federal Order imposing a Temporary Halt in Residential Evictions to Prevent the Further Spread of COVID-19. The Order aims to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 by enabling people who get sick or who are at risk for severe illness from COVID-19 to protect themselves and others by staying in one place to quarantine.

Under the CDC Order, tenants who meet income eligibility requirements (generally, those earning less than \$99,000 per year, or \$198,000 if filing jointly) and who are unable to pay their full rent due to substantial loss of household income, loss of compensable hours of work or wages, a lay-off, or extraordinary out-of-pocket medical expenses can obtain protection from eviction by providing a sworn declaration regarding their situation to their landlord. Once this declaration is provided, a landlord is prohibited from evicting the tenant while the moratorium remains in effect, and is subject to substantial penalties, including fines of up to \$250,000 and up to a year in jail.

The Order is not intended to prevent landlords from starting eviction proceedings, but rather to stop the actual eviction of a covered person for non-payment of rent. Moreover, the Order does not affect the obligation of tenants to pay rent, nor does it bar the collection of fees, penalties, and interest.

For questions or reports of violations of the Order please email [USAMA.CivilRights@usdoj.gov](mailto:USAMA.CivilRights@usdoj.gov) or call 617- 275-8756 and leave a message. More information on the CDC Order is available [here](#).

Federal resources are available through the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to assist landlords with mortgage relief [here](#).

The Civil Rights Unit of the U.S. Attorney's Office was established in 2015 with the mission of enhancing federal civil rights enforcement. For more information on the Office's civil rights efforts, please visit [www.justice.gov/usao-ma/civil-rights](http://www.justice.gov/usao-ma/civil-rights).