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COVID-19 Update: Mayor Wheeler announces new City actions including eviction moratorium in partnership with Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury

Press release

Eviction moratorium and creation of an Economic Impact Action Committee headline latest actions

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 Blue banner that reads Mayor Ted Wheeler, City of Portland, press release.

Today, Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler and Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury announced executive orders declaring a local eviction moratorium for the duration of our COVID-19 State of Emergency. Tomorrow, Wednesday, March 18, Portland City Council will take up an Emergency Ordinance adopting the County's moratorium within city limits. The joint County-City adoption of a single policy will ensure that community members and landlords are clear about their rights and responsibilities during this event. Under the moratorium—which applies to residential evictions—no one can be evicted for failure to pay rent who has suffered substantial loss of income due to COVID-19 by way of:

- Job loss
- Job closure
- Reduction in work hours
- Missing work due to a child's school closure
- Missing work due to the illness of yourself or a family member

The eviction moratorium is not a forgiveness of rent; rent owed to a landlord will continue to accrue. There will be a repayment grace period following the expiration of the emergency declaration.

"What this moratorium does is buy more time for renters who didn't have that before," Mayor Wheeler said. "This is just one step to keeping people stable in their homes during a time of crisis."

Mayor Wheeler is also calling on the Oregon State Legislature to act urgently to increase critical state rent assistance programs for the benefit of all Oregonians.

Other actions announced by Mayor Wheeler today include the launch of a task force dedicated solely to helping small and large employers, and their employees who are struggling because of COVID-19. To help vulnerable businesses, Prosper Portland is immediately making \$150,000 available in the form of grants – partnering with the Jade District Neighborhood Prosperity Network – to get assistance to businesses as quickly as possible. Those interested in learning more can call 503-823-4000 or email cityinfo@portlandoregon.gov. In addition, Prosper Portland is working with the City's own direct commercial tenants and borrowers to mitigate economic impact through a deferral of rent and loan payments for the next three months.

"We are also convening partners in the private sector to ask for their help on commercial eviction prevention and other financial relief," Mayor Wheeler said. "I want to thank all the community leaders who have proactively stepped up to let their tenants know that they can defer or forego payments as we face this challenge together. I also want to thank my colleagues at City Hall, Commissioners Hardesty, Eudaly, and Fritz for their leadership, support, and partnership on ways to help Portlanders during this difficult time."

Mayor Wheeler announced the following new measures, effective today, that the City is taking to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- City Council will hold virtual meetings. Members of the community are encouraged to submit written testimony in advance to the Council for consideration.
- Only employees designated as critical for the day-to-day operations will be able to access City of Portland buildings for the duration of our State of Emergency.
- Most City managed buildings will be closed to the public for public health reasons, and all employees who are able to telework are doing so right now.

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