

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM22.20	ACTION			Ward: All
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Support for Toronto Tenants During the COVID-19 Pandemic - by Councillor Josh Matlow, seconded by Councillor Shelley Carroll

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Josh Matlow, seconded by Councillor Shelley Carroll, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Government of Ontario to provide offset payments to Landlords to forgive rent for tenants that have qualified for federal income supports during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Summary

The Provincial Government needs to provide support for tenants who are unable to pay their rent due to lost income because of the COVID-19 crisis. Renters and Landlords in Ontario are in need of assistance to ensure that they are not in financial ruin when the crisis is over.

It is unacceptable that renters have been completely left out of provincial support plans in Ontario. Even with Federal Government income assistance, far too many tenants are being forced to choose between paying rent and buying groceries. The average rent for a new 1-bedroom is now \$2,250, more than the \$2,000 monthly Canada Emergency Response Benefit payment from the federal government. While eviction orders are frozen during the course of the pandemic, far too many renters have had their housing threatened during this pandemic as Landlords are still allowed to proceed with eviction notices (N4s).

The Province's formal advice for tenants to "speak to your landlord about whether rent can be postponed or if other payment arrangements can be agreed to" has not proven effective.

To make matters worse, the Province has moved forward with Bill 184 which, if passed, will make it easier for Landlords to evict tenants once the Landlord and Tenant Board resumes operation.

To support tenants and provide surety to Landlords, this Motion requests the Premier to provide a clear strategy that includes:

- Rent forgiveness for vulnerable tenants: Offset payments for Landlords to forgive rent for

tenants who now qualify for federal income supports. Deferrals could lead to mass evictions and financial ruin when the COVID-19 crisis is over.

- **Ban COVID-19 Evictions and Eviction notices:** No one should lose their housing due to job loss from the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, while eviction orders have been suspended, landlords are still allowed to file eviction notices and are "entitled to collect compensation from a tenant for each day an eviction order is not enforced," according to the Province. If allowed to continue, this measure will leave a threat of eviction over the heads of tenants; exacerbating a public health and financial crisis.
- **No Rent Increases:** Many Landlords are still issuing Guideline and even Above the Guideline Rent Increases (AGIs). There should be a pause on these increases during the course of the pandemic.

Many renters have done their part by staying home – the Province must now do their part to support tenants.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM22.20