The Coming Wave: COVID-19 Evictions
A Growing Crisis for Families In California

Renters who have experienced job or income losses are especially vulnerable. With little to no savings, they face the risk of eviction and homelessness.

1.6 million renter households are experiencing rent shortfall and potentially facing eviction

Mass eviction would devastate families and our community.

Job losses and evictions were already leading causes of homelessness.

26% of homeless residents in San Francisco reported job loss as a primary cause

Job loss was the most common cause of homelessness. 13% reported evictions as a primary cause.

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“My husband, children and I were laid off of work when the pandemic hit. We were not able to pay rent nor could we receive unemployment benefits due to our status. The management company harassed us and used intimidation tactics to force us to pay rent. Without statewide protection for tenants, we fear eviction once the state of emergency is lifted.”

— Cecilia
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Renters are a growing and vital segment of the community, yet they face rising economic and housing insecurity — especially at a time of record unemployment.

**Evictions were prevalent before the pandemic.**

166,337 average annual eviction filings

This understates total evictions, many of which occur outside of court.

**The majority of renters are burdened by stagnant wages and rising rents.**

55% already pay too much for housing*

Rent-burdened households have an average savings of just $10.

Black and Latinx renters, especially women, are more likely to be at risk of eviction and homelessness.

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<th>Share of renters that are both rent burdened and living below 200 percent of the poverty level**</th>
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<td>Male</td>
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<td>All</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<td>Latinx</td>
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<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
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<td>Native American</td>
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More than half of Latina renters are both rent burdened and economically insecure**

California can only thrive if its renters thrive. Protect renters with these key strategies:

1) **Prohibit evictions** for non-payment of rent during the COVID-19 period.
2) **Eliminate debt** for renters who were unable to pay rent during the COVID-period or convert to consumer debt.
3) **Provide mortgage forbearance** to low-income homeowners and small landlords at risk of foreclosure.
4) **Establish and fund an affordable housing preservation program** that facilitates community ownership of distressed private properties.
5) **Increase rental assistance**, tenant counseling, and legal services for low-income renters.
6) **Pass local just cause eviction protections** and rent control.
7) **Enact rent and eviction registries** to evaluate current policies and ensure equity.


**Housing NOW! California** is a coalition of over 60 organizations and led by tenants with the mission that everyone should have the opportunity to live in a safe, healthy, affordable home. Launched in the spring of 2017, Housing NOW! California is a broad and diverse movement building power to make housing affordable and to combat the displacement crisis that is disproportionately impacting working class communities of color.

**Sources and notes:** 2018 5-Year data from the American Community Survey Integrated Public Use Microdata Series; Stout and National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel; Tenants Together; San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing; Pew Research. Unless otherwise noted, “renters” refers to renter-occupied households. Data by race and gender are determined by the race and gender of the household head. Latinx includes people of Hispanic origin of any race and all other groups exclude people of Hispanic origin. *Rent burdened is defined as spending more than 30 percent of income on housing costs. **The federal poverty threshold in 2018 for a family of four with two children was about $25,000 per year (thus, 200% of the federal poverty threshold was about $50,000). See the methodology at: [http://www.nationalequityatlas.org/research/stateevictionrisk](http://www.nationalequityatlas.org/research/stateevictionrisk)