



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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PRESS RELEASE

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BOARD APPROVES ADDITIONAL EVICTION PROTECTIONS

The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday unanimously approved additional eviction protections for residents in the unincorporated areas who still face pandemic-related housing issues.

With a state program set to expire March 31 that directs landlords and tenants into a COVID-19 Rent Relief program prior to filing any court action, the Board authorized up to \$500,000 for housing-related community resources, potentially including legal assistance and mediation, flexible financial assistance, tenant rights education and counseling, or housing-related problem solving and case management services.

Tenants are encouraged to apply for the COVID-19 Rent Relieve program at HousingIsKey.com as soon as possible. In addition, the Self-Help Center of Santa Cruz County Superior Court remains a valuable resource for tenants and landlords facing potential legal issues. Additional protections are afforded under the 2019 Tenant Protection Act (AB 1482), which requires “just cause” evictions and limits annual rent increases.

Local evictions remain extraordinarily low, with just 23 cases filed during the first two months of 2022. Landlords with past due rent owed are also encouraged to apply for COVID-19 Rent Relief funding through the Housing Is Key program rather than pursue potentially costly litigation and a lengthy collection process.

The deadline to apply for the Housing Is Key program is March 31.

Thus far, nearly \$16 million has been paid to local landlords for rent owed due to pandemic-related job or income losses, with an average award exceeding \$10,000.