

March 24, 2020

**MANITOBA TO POSTPONE EVICTION HEARINGS
AND FREEZE RENT INCREASES**

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**Balanced Approach Protects Manitobans
While Ensuring Landlord and Tenant Health and Safety: Premier**

As part of the province's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and state of emergency, the Manitoba government will postpone eviction hearings and freeze rent increases, Premier Brian Pallister and Finance Minister Scott Fielding announced today.

"Taking these steps will help reduce financial uncertainty and worry for Manitobans who face challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic," said Pallister. "Manitobans who have been laid off, are working less or are in self isolation shouldn't also have to worry about making rent payments and keeping a roof over their heads."

The province will suspend any rent increases scheduled to take effect on April 1 or later.

The Residential Tenancies Branch (RTB) and Residential Tenancies Commission (RTC) will postpone all hearings for non-urgent matters to halt evictions.

Effective today, all scheduled RTB and RTC hearings will be delayed to protect Manitobans from evictions during the pandemic, with certain exceptions to deal with urgent issues that involve the health and safety of tenants.

The RTB and the RTC will only issue eviction orders to address issues affecting health and safety including unlawful activities.

Measures to suspend non-urgent eviction hearings are in place until May 31 and will be monitored to determine if additional adjustments are required.

“This approach balances the need to support renters experiencing economic hardship or who are self-isolating in their unit due to COVID-19 with those safety concerns,” said Fielding. “The Residential Tenancies Branch remains available to resolve urgent situations involving health and safety for landlords and tenants, which could include a landlord illegally shutting off utilities or locking tenants out of their rental unit, or a landlord dealing with a situation where a tenant is conducting illegal activities from their rental unit.”

The RTB offices in Winnipeg and Brandon remain open but all clients must make an appointment first. The Thompson office is temporarily closed. Landlords and tenants are encouraged to contact the RTB for information by telephone at 204-945-2476 or toll-free at 1-800-782-8403 and by email at rtb@gov.mb.ca. If you are a landlord or tenant and require in-person services, contact the RTB to schedule an appointment.

The RTC remains open, with appropriate social distancing measures in place. The province continues to rely on the recommendations of the chief provincial public health officer and encourages all Manitobans to engage in good social distancing protocols, including practising following the 3P’s – protect yourself, protect your loved ones and protect your community. For more information visit www.manitoba.ca/covid19.

- 30 -

For more information:

- Public information, contact Manitoba Government Inquiry: 1-866-626-4862 or 204-945-3744.
- Media requests for general information, contact Communications Services Manitoba: 204-945-3765.
- Media requests for ministerial comment, contact Communications and Stakeholder Relations: 204-945-4916.