

## **How to request a rental agreement modification due to COVID-19**

### **Is there a form to ask my landlord to let me change my rent?**

If you cannot pay your rent because you or your roommates have been furloughed or laid off, or for another reason related to the COVID-19 pandemic, you can use the [Rental Agreement Modification Due to COVID-19](#) form to ask your landlord to make a temporary change. The legal word for a change to a lease is a “modification.”

If you use this form, write down why you cannot pay your rent and how it is related to COVID-19. Be honest because you must swear or affirm that the reason you write down is true. If more than one person is on the lease for a rental unit, each person on the lease must initial and sign the form.

If you give your landlord a copy of this form, be sure to keep a copy for yourself. If your landlord agrees to what you are asking, be sure to get a copy with your landlord’s signature.

### **Who should sign this form?**

A lease can be changed if everyone who signs the original lease signs a modification. So if more than one person is on your lease, each person on the lease must initial and sign this form. If your landlord accepts this agreement, the landlord must also sign this form.

### **Do I still owe rent?**

This form does not mean you do not owe your rent. It just makes a new payment plan, or asks your landlord if you can pay later. You should talk to your landlord and try to work out a plan together as soon as you know you will have problems paying.

Your landlord is not required to accept this form or agree to the terms. However, the Alaska Court System has stopped hearing eviction cases because of COVID-19. Right now the court does not plan to hear eviction cases until after May 31, 2020. This date may change. The order postponing cases will be reviewed every two week, which likely will be April 17<sup>th</sup>, May 1<sup>st</sup>, and May 15<sup>th</sup>. You can check for new court orders on the [Alaska Court System’s COVID-19 Response Page](#).

### **If the court is not holding eviction hearings, does that mean I can’t be evicted?**

Just because the court is not hearing eviction cases now, does not mean your landlord cannot start the eviction process. It just means the court hearing won’t be until after the courts re-open again for eviction hearings. A landlord cannot use “self-help” and lock a tenant out of the property. Landlords must wait for the eviction hearing.

You can read more about housing issues at the [Alaska Court System Housing Webpage](#).