

**FACT LIST:**

## **HOUSING RIGHTS DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS**

*This information is current as of 3-28-2020. Because things are changing so quickly, be sure you have the most up-to-date facts.*

### **Writs of Possession**

The Clerks of Court will not issue any more Writs of Possession before 4-17-2020. [Note: Writs issued before 4-24-2020 are still enforceable.]

This is good news for folks facing eviction by their landlord or having to move after a foreclosure sale. It gives people a “breather” so they can look for new housing more safely. It won’t change the actual court case – if a judgment was entered or the foreclosure sale was held – that will still stand. After 4-17-2020, a Writ of Possession can be issued by the Clerk and served by the Sheriff. Until then, rest assured you won’t be homeless. Be safe!

### **Additional protection for tenants in federally subsidized housing**

If you live in a rental unit where the building is secured by a federally backed mortgage loan or where the landlord participates in certain federal housing programs, the landlord cannot file an eviction or charge late fees for nonpayment of rent. That applies from 3-27-2020 until 7-25-2020. Not sure if this applies to you? Talk to a lawyer.

### **Illegal Evictions**

The only way a landlord can force you to move is to file an eviction case in the County Court. Your landlord cannot change the locks or remove your personal property from the premises. It violates Florida law for your landlord to shut off the electric, water, or other utilities. If the landlord is trying to do these prohibited acts, call law enforcement – that may be enough to stop the illegal behavior. If it does not, consider suing the landlord for violating the statute. Talk to a lawyer.

### **Paying Rent**

The obligation to pay rent to your landlord continues no matter the hardship. If you do not pay rent on time, the landlord can serve a nonpayment of rent notice that demands you pay the rent or vacate the property within three days. If you do neither, the landlord can file an eviction lawsuit in County Court. If you are served with eviction papers, get legal advice immediately.

This sheet is intended for general information purposes only. It is not a substitute for advice from a licensed attorney. If you want advice on your specific situation, talk with a Florida attorney.

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