

## **URGENT INFORMATION FOR NEW JERSEY TENANTS** **DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

There is currently an eviction moratorium until November 1, 2020. That means that you cannot be evicted (locked out of your home) until after November 1, 2020, except in rare circumstances. This date may be shortened or extended by the Governor.

Rent is still due. If you can, you should continue to pay your rent in order to avoid eviction when the moratorium ends.

Even though there is an eviction moratorium, your landlord may still be able to file an eviction complaint against you in court. However, most landlord/tenant trials are currently on hold which means that most trials will not be scheduled until further notice.

Although most landlord/tenant trials are currently not taking place, some counties are scheduling virtual (online) settlement conferences between landlords and tenants to give landlords and tenants the opportunity to settle their cases. These settlements are VOLUNTARY which means that you DO NOT have to settle your case. If you do not want to settle your case, just tell the court staff that you do not want to settle and you can then leave the virtual conference. Your case will be set for trial when the courts start holding trials again. At that point, you may still have an opportunity to settle your case.

Unless the court finds that there is some kind of emergency, the eviction moratorium prevents lockouts until November 1, 2020 even if tenants have agreed to move out sooner and even when a non-emergency court order authorizes removal of a tenant. You should call the police if your landlord tries to lock you out or turns off your water or power to try to force you to leave.

You should seek legal advice if you have any questions regarding your rights as a tenant. If you cannot afford an attorney, you can contact a legal services organization such as Legal Services of New Jersey at (888) 576-5529, Volunteer Lawyers for Justice at (973) 943-4754, the Community Health Law Project (for individuals with disabilities) at (973) 275-1175, or the City of Newark's Office of Tenant Legal Services (if you are a Newark tenant) at (973) 877-9424.