

PRESS RELEASE

From: Columbia County Fair Housing Officer
For Immediate Release
November 16, 2020

The purpose of this message is to remind tenants and homeowners, during this Corona Virus Pandemic, of the Federal Act and State Executive Order, which currently exist prohibiting the eviction of individuals and protecting those whose lives have been impacted by (COVID-19). The many who are unemployed and experiencing financial hardship, the result of which is their inability to pay their rent or meet their monthly mortgage obligation.

The current bans on filing new eviction proceedings are due to expire at the end of this year. If these moratoriums are not extended residents could be faced with notices of eviction. The first of which may be a 5 day notice for past due rent, followed by a 14 day notice to pay rent or quit the property, or possibly a 30, 60, or 90 day notice depending on the length of their current residency. Anyone receiving these types of notices is encouraged to seek legal advice; bearing in mind that these dates do not necessarily mean you must vacate by the date specified therein. Ultimately only the court, at a hearing, can set the date when you must be out.

Tenants should keep in mind that when these bans end, you are still responsible for the unpaid rent or past due mortgage payments, therefore this office encourages that those experiencing financial hardship, attempt to pay something even if only a partial payment; 30% of one's current gross income is not unreasonable. They should also contact their landlord or mortgagee to arrange a payment schedule to eventually cure the arrears.

If you feel that your rights have been or are being violated during these moratoriums, call the HELP LINE at the New York State Attorney General's Office at 1-800-771-7755 and ask for the Consumer Fraud and Protection Division. For more information, you can call William Fisher, Columbia County Fair Housing Officer at 518-828-0342.