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COVID-19 (Coronavirus): If you have a Mortgage on your Home

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- ❖ The information we give here is for people who are buying a home in the state of Washington. Some of it might help even if you are buying a home in a different state.
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Introduction

The pandemic might hurt your ability to pay your mortgage. You might have less work. You might be quarantined and unable to work. You might lose your job or work fewer hours.

Can anyone help me?

Call the [Washington Homeownership Resource Center www.homeownership-wa.org](http://www.homeownership-wa.org) at 877-894-4663. They can put you in touch with a housing counselor.

Contact your loan servicer (the company listed on your monthly statement). They can offer **forbearance** to help you. Tell them you are going to miss a payment. Ask about a forbearance plan. Ask about any other help for borrowers hurt by the pandemic. You will usually have to fill out a Request for Mortgage Assistance Application (RMA). Your servicer can tell you what you must do to apply.

How does a forbearance work?

It lowers your monthly mortgage payment, or suspends it (stops it temporarily), during the **forbearance period**.

What happens after the forbearance period ends?

You must repay the amount that was lowered or suspended. You can do this a few ways:

- You can **reinstate** the mortgage (make a one-time payment for the full amount due of missed payments)
- You can set up a **repayment plan**. This adds a specific amount to your payments each month until the entire amount is repaid (read [Repayment Plan - www.knowyouoptions.com/options-to-stay-in-your-home/overview/repayment-plan](http://www.knowyouoptions.com/options-to-stay-in-your-home/overview/repayment-plan))
- You can get a **modification** of (change to) your mortgage (read [Modification - www.knowyouoptions.com/options-to-stay-in-your-home/overview/modification-overview/modification](http://www.knowyouoptions.com/options-to-stay-in-your-home/overview/modification-overview/modification))

There is some official relief for borrowers missing mortgage payments related to the pandemic.

Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, the VA, Department of Agriculture (Rural Housing services) and HUD have all suspended (paused) home foreclosures until at least the end of 2020. This also applies to foreclosures currently in process.

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- ❖ This does **not** mean you do not have to make payments. If you can pay, you should pay!
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This relief applies to about 70% of mortgages. If you don't already know, contact your loan servicer to find out if it applies to your mortgage.

Most pandemic-related default issues will start with missed payments in April 2020.

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- ❖ **These programs will not automatically suspend a foreclosure on your home!** You still have to contact them to ask for help.
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My mortgage isn't backed by one of those agencies. Do I have options?

Maybe. Here are some banks and companies who might be able to help **if you contact them to ask for help**:

- **Ally** will defer (put off) your mortgage payment for up to 120 days without late fees or finance charges. Learn more at www.ally.com/coronavirus-response/?CP=EML400001705.
- **Bank of America** has a forbearance program. Visit homeloanhelp.bankofamerica.com/en/forbearance.html.
- **Citi** may offer hardship programs through their service provider, Cenlar FSB, if you have a mortgage with them. Visit www.cenlar.com/covid-19.
- **JPMorgan Chase** can help if you have a mortgage with them. Visit www.chase.com/digital/resources/coronavirus/payment-deferral.
- **Santander Bank** can pause mortgage and home equity line of credit foreclosures. Learn more at santanderconsumerusa.com/covid19.
- **TD Bank** can defer mortgage payments and waive (forgive) late fees. Learn more at www.td.com/us/en/personal-banking/COVID-19
- **Wells Fargo can waive** fees, defer payments, and pause foreclosure sales and evictions. Learn more at update.wf.com/coronavirus/home-lending/?_ga=2.164943487.171806384.1585775134-494630111.1585775134.

❖ Banks may change what help they offer before we can update this fact sheet. Always contact the bank to double-check!

What else can I do?

If you lost a job or otherwise lost income because of the pandemic, **keep proof** of these things so that you can qualify for relief programs. (**Examples** of proof include

letters, emails, texts from employers, or medical records showing the need to isolate and/or stay home.)

Watch out for scammers. If you get an offer for relief, get a second opinion before signing anything or paying money. Contact your loan servicer, a housing counselor, or lawyer. They can help you figure out if it is a genuine offer or a scam. (Read [Foreclosure Rescue Scams](#), available at WashingtonLawHelp.org.)

Use caution when thinking about getting a high-interest, short-term loan to make ends meet. If you can, wait until you know more about the long-term hardship you may face due to the pandemic.

Pay your mortgage first, before bills such as credit cards. Ask your other creditors how they might help you free up money so you can pay your mortgage on time. Utility companies may let you make lower payments during the pandemic. Credit card companies might have options that help. Read [Prioritizing Debt: Which Bills do I Pay First?](#)

Keep a written record of contact with your loan servicer (and other creditors). Put names of who you talk to, dates and times you talk to them, and what they tell you to do.

Where can I learn more?

Visit nationalfairhousing.org/covid-19.

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