

Welcome clarity for renters as stop on covid-19 evictions announced

The Tenants' Union of NSW welcomes this morning's announcement from the NSW Government confirming that protection for renters is on its way. We understand the package includes a temporary stop on evictions, a requirement for landlords to engage in meaningful negotiations and greater advocacy support for tenants.

"This is an important announcement which gives people greater certainty about their living situation and their ability to stay home during the Covid-19 period," said Leo Patterson Ross, Chief Executive Officer of the Tenants' Union. "Implementing a process to focus negotiations before eviction can occur will avoid some of the issues people have been facing and give us all breathing space."

"The detail of this proposal will be crucial however. The risk of not providing a comprehensive moratorium and rent relief package is that it can open up loopholes. We look forward to examining the detail and will continue to engage with the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation and NSW Government including drawing attention to the actual experience of people who rent their homes in NSW."

"Now more than ever it is crucial that people who rent their homes are able to receive high-quality timely advice. Tenant advocacy services are vital."

The Tenants' Union of NSW acts as a resourcing service to 19 local Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Services across the state which are funded from interest earned from tenants' money and held in government accounts like the Rental Bond Board. Demand for these services is dominated by Covid-19 affected tenants but other issues continue for many people. Key stats:

- The tenants.org.au website hosts contact details for all services. The traffic to these pages of the website have increased from on average 250 people to 1800 daily.
- Direct calls to the Tenants' Union have doubled over February to March and continues to grow 10 -20% each week.
- Our COVID-19 and renting page (<https://www.tenants.org.au/blog/renting-and-covid-19-information>) was viewed by more than 225,000 users in a week in March and continues to be visited by 90,000 people per week.

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