

Understanding Federal Emergency Rental Assistance Funds

January 28, 2021



IDAHO
Center for
Fiscal Policy

Idaho Renters Continue to Experience Pandemic-Related Hardship

Real-time analysis from the U.S. Census Bureau's Pulse Survey suggests widespread income and employment loss related to the pandemic continue to make it difficult for Idaho renters to stay in their homes. According to data collected in December 2020, one in ten Idaho adults in a renter household have fallen behind on rent and an estimated 34,000 Idaho households are at risk of eviction.¹ Other reports estimate that Idaho renters are currently far behind on \$73 million to \$103 million in rent,² and that Idaho renters will need \$45.5 million in assistance to remain stably housed through the end of FY21.³

Estimated Emergency Rental Assistance Needs in Idaho for FY21

	Low Estimate	High Estimate
Back Rent/Rent Shortfall: As of January 2021	\$73 million	\$103 million
Forward Rent: January 2021 - June 2021	\$45.5 million	\$45.5 million
Total Rental Assistance Needed for FY21	\$118.5 million	\$148.5 million

Sources: National Council of State Housing Agencies, National Low Income Housing Coalition, and Stout.

The data also suggest that many Idaho renters still paying their rent are doing so in unsustainable ways, such as borrowing money from friends and family, spending down savings, and using credit cards. This can negatively impact the long-term financial stability of a family.

Emergency Rental Assistance Benefits Renters, Landlords, and the Economy

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) enacted a federal eviction moratorium protecting most renters from eviction for nonpayment of rent through March 31st, 2021,⁴ with plans to extend the moratorium through September 2021. Emergency rental assistance will ensure landlords and property managers can remain financially whole and avoid foreclosures or bankruptcy during the pandemic. Without adequate emergency rental assistance, Idaho may experience a wave of evictions when the federal moratorium is lifted, producing a barrier to the economic stability of Idaho's renters and the recovery of Idaho's economy.

Inaction and Underfunding is Expensive in the Long-Term

Evictions are costly for tenants, landlords, and taxpayers. A report released by the National Low Income Housing Coalition and the University of Arizona estimated costs associated with eviction related homelessness. Their analysis included costs for emergency shelter, emergency medical care, inpatient medical care, foster care, and juvenile delinquency.

Estimates suggest that eviction related homelessness in Idaho could cost Idaho taxpayers between \$172 million - \$412 million without adequate rental assistance and eviction protection.⁵

Idaho Center for Fiscal Policy
1607 W. Jefferson Street
Boise, ID 83702
Phone: (208) 388-1014



info@idahocfp.org
www.idahocfp.org
facebook.com/IdahoCFP
Twitter: @IdahoCFP

Stable Housing Promotes Public Health in a Pandemic

Housing and healthcare are strongly linked, and it is essential to the health of our communities that no Idahoan loses their home as a result of job or income loss from the COVID-19 recession. Recent studies suggest that eviction may increase the spread of COVID-19 as displaced families double-up, lose access to healthcare, or experience a decreased ability to participate in activities that limit transmission – such as social distancing, self-isolation, and hygiene practices. One study estimated that Idaho experienced 9,730 excess coronavirus cases and 157 excess deaths from May-September 2020 due to evictions.⁶

-
1. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “Tracking the COVID-19 Recession’s Effects on Food, Housing, and Employment Hardships.” January 21, 2020. Accessed at: <https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/tracking-the-covid-19-recessions-effects-on-food-housing-and>
 2. Stout and National Council of State Housing Agencies, “Analysis of Current and Expected Rental Shortfall and Potential Evictions in the U.S.” September 25, 2020. Accessed at: https://www.ncsha.org/wp-content/uploads/Analysis-of-Current-and-Expected-Rental-Shortfall-and-Potential-Evictions-in-the-US_Stout_FINAL.pdf
 3. Analysis by National Low Income Housing Coalition. May 8, 2020. Accessed at: <https://nlihc.org/rental-assistance>
 4. Center on Disease Control and Prevention Guidance. January 20, 2021. Accessed at: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s0121-eviction-moratorium.html>
 5. National Low Income Housing Coalition and the University of Arizona, “Costs of COVID-19 Evictions.” November 19, 2020. Accessed at: <https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/costs-of-covid19-evictions.pdf>
 6. Benfer, Emily et al., “Expiring Eviction Moratoriums and COVID-19 Incidence and Mortality.” November 30, 2020. Accessed at: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3739576

