



Porchlight, Inc.
306 N Brooks St
Madison, WI 53715
(608) 257-2534

MEMORANDUM

Date: April 24, 2020
To: Residents of Porchlight Housing
From: Karla Thennes, Executive Director
Re: COVID-19 Policies & FAQ

We are now six weeks into the COVID-19 pandemic, and many Porchlight residents are concerned about how their housing may be impacted. Below are answers to some frequently asked questions.

Do I owe rent during the pandemic?

Yes. While there are initiatives to provide relief during this time, all tenants still owe rent each month. As many of you have heard, Governor Evers issued an Executive Order that put a moratorium on evictions through May 26, 2020. This means that your lease cannot be terminated for nonpayment of rent before the end of May. However, you are still responsible for rent owed during that time.

**Note that the eviction moratorium does not apply to imminent threats to the physical safety of others.*

Am I eligible for the federal stimulus?

Probably. Most people who earn or receive under \$75,000 per year are eligible to receive \$1,200 in one-time stimulus from the federal government, and most will receive it *automatically*. This includes people receiving VA benefits and Social Security retirement or disability payments. If you have received a tax refund via direct deposit, or receive VA or SSA benefits, you should receive your stimulus funds in those same accounts. Others will receive checks in the mail. If you are wondering about your stimulus payment, you can check online at <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/economic-impact-payments>, or ask your case manager to help you look into it further.

Are there other resources to help me if I lost income due to COVID-19?

If you were employed and have been laid off or had your hours reduced due to COVID-19, you may be eligible for Unemployment Insurance to recover a portion of your wages. Unfortunately, in Wisconsin and across the country, we are experiencing unemployment at levels never before seen. This has resulted in extremely long wait times and inability to get through to a representative. You can still choose to speak to someone over the phone by calling (608) 266-3131, or you can apply online at <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/ui/>.

Porchlight also recently applied for and received some limited grant funding to assist residents who were unable to pay their full rent in April or will be unable to pay their full rent in May due to loss of income related to COVID-19. Eligible residents would need to provide documentation to demonstrate that their inability to pay the full rent amount was a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. If you think you might qualify, please contact your case manager.

**If you are behind on rent for any reason, please contact your case manager to develop a payment plan.*



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Can I have visitors while I am staying at home?

No. During the statewide Safer at Home Order, all private gatherings of any number of people that are not part of a single household are prohibited, except for essential business. This means that only you are allowed in your unit, unless you are living in a Porchlight family unit, in which case only the household living in the unit may be there. While this order is in place, guests or visitors are considered trespassing, and can be removed and cited by police. *This is a public safety measure that is crucial.*

We know this is hard. Many Porchlight staff members also live alone, and understand how lonely it can be to isolate in your home without physical access to your friends or family. Please reach out to your case manager or other Porchlight staff if you need to talk or are looking for ways to stay busy while keeping yourself and others out of harm's way.

How bad is COVID-19 in Dane County?

As of **4/23/20**, Dane County had **390** confirmed cases of COVID-19, and **21** deaths. Because we do not yet have widespread testing, we can assume that the number of positive COVID-19 cases is considerably higher than the reported number.

Will things get back to normal soon?

Not really. The current Safer at Home Order has been extended through May 26, 2020. Even after that, conservative estimates indicate that the virus will continue to spread throughout the summer.

Wisconsin and Dane County have worked hard to “flatten the curve”, which is an effort to slow the spread of the virus in order to ensure that there is enough capacity in our hospitals to treat the severe cases. The upcoming months will continue to be challenging for everyone, but the measures taken so far have been effective, and we must double down on those efforts in order to keep each other safe.

What can I do to protect myself?

Clean your hands often. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, making sure to scrub the fronts and backs of your hands, in between your fingers, under your fingernails, and paying special attention to your thumbs. You should wash your hands after being in a public place, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If you cannot wash your hands, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Also, avoid touching your face.

Avoid close contact with others. Practice physical distancing by staying at least six (6) feet away from other people, and stay at home whenever possible.

Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth mask when around others. Volunteers are making cloth masks for residents. Contact your case manager about getting a mask to wear anytime you leave your home.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces. Residents should be sure to keep their individual rooms clean, and disinfect surfaces often. Contact your case manager if you need cleaning products.