

INFORMATION FOR LOW INCOME RESIDENTS IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Prepared by Colorado Legal Services (3/17/20) Updated (8/20/20)**

COURT APPEARANCES

If you have a scheduled court date or a Summons to Appear you should call your local court to find out if your court date has been rescheduled. Each court is following its own rules and they are changing every day. Your local court's phone number should be listed in the court documents you have but can also be found on the Colorado Judicial Branch's website at <https://www.courts.state.co.us/>. Do not just assume your court date has been cancelled and not show up! You may get a failure to appear or default judgment if this happens.

If you have a hearing date with an administrative agency such as the Social Security Administration or food stamps or unemployment office you should call them directly to find out if your hearing has been rescheduled.

PAYING BILLS AND RENT

Landlords, credit card companies, and utility providers (electric, gas, water, etc.) have resumed the normal collection of bills and rent. If you are unable to pay your rent, talk to your landlord to see if he or she will accept partial payment or give you an extension to pay your rent. If your landlord allows this, try to get this agreement in writing. If your landlord gives you a written notice saying you are late with rent, you should contact your local CLS office to apply for legal advice. If your landlord shuts off your utilities or locks you out, you should call law enforcement first, then your local CLS office.

If you are struggling to pay your credit card bills during the pandemic, don't be afraid to reach out to your credit card company. Many credit card companies are willing to delay your payments or waive late fees if you reach out to them. For information on what specific credit card companies are doing to help customers at this time, visit <https://creditcards.usnews.com/articles/can-you-delay-a-credit-card-payment-because-of-the-coronavirus>.

Lastly, if you are unable to pay your utility bills, contact your utility provider and see if you can work something out. Many providers, like Xcel Energy, are willing to arrange a payment plan that works for you.

PERSONAL SAFETY

For many people, being told to stay home is not safe because of abuse, neglect or violence in the home. If a medical professional has told you to self-quarantine because of COVID-19 and you do not feel safe at home, you should tell them this so they can help you look into other options.

Contact the confidential national Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 for resources and assistance in your area. You can also text "LOVEIS" to 22522 if it is not safe to talk on the phone, or visit their website at: <https://www.thehotline.org/>.

Currently courts are remaining open to process civil protection orders (restraining orders) to limit contact and keep dangerous family members away from your home. Court forms and contact information are available at <https://www.courts.state.co.us/>.

*The situation in our state is rapidly changing and this information may change with it. CLS will do its best to keep this document up to date but you should refer directly to the resources provided here for the most up to date information. **This document does not constitute legal advice.**