

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, July 28, 2020

## **City Council Votes to Extend Rent Payment Period for Tenants Struggling Due to COVID-19**

*New Deadline for Affected Residents and Small Businesses is Dec. 30, 2020*

SAN DIEGO – The City Council today voted 5-4 to extend – to Dec. 30, 2020 – the deadline for residents and small businesses to pay any rent that they have been unable to pay due to financial hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The previous deadline was Sept. 25. The ordinance passed today will need to come back to Council for a second vote at a future meeting.

**“I am grateful that a majority of my colleagues agrees that we need to give tenants harmed financially by COVID-19 more time to pay their rent,” said Council President Georgette Gómez, who proposed an extension. “We are deep into an economically devastating health crisis. Residents are out of work. Small businesses are closed or suffering from lack of customers. This extension will give them added peace of mind. Now the federal government must step forward and provide more financial assistance to benefit renters, small businesses, and landlords.”**

The City Council on March 25 passed a two-month ban on evictions of tenants who could not make rent or lease payments due to pandemic-related financial hardship. It has twice been extended and now is set to expire on Sept. 30, 2020. The Council has approved \$15.1 million in relief funding for struggling renters, as well as \$18.9 million in relief funding for small businesses.

COVID-19 cases have risen significantly throughout July due to the reopening of businesses and recreational venues. In response, the Governor has again ordered many businesses to close. San Diego County’s unemployment rate was roughly 14 percent in June; July’s number is expected to be higher.

The limited federal ban on evictions expired on July 25, and Congress has not yet agreed on legislation that would extend it; nor has Congress agreed on further relief for individuals and small businesses. Additionally, the \$600 per week in federal unemployment benefits will expire on July 31. It is expected this will cause a wave of eviction summonses, especially for lower-income residents.

State legislation that would provide protection from evictions and create a long-term rent-repayment process is under consideration but hasn’t yet been acted on. The Legislature resumed its 2020 session this week, after its summer recess was extended due to COVID-19 outbreak at the Capitol.

Under the City’s eviction moratorium, renters and small businesses affected by COVID-19 cannot be evicted if they notify their landlord in writing, on or before the day the rent is due, that they are unable to pay. They have one week after notification to provide proof that their financial hardship is related to the pandemic. Landlords and tenants are encouraged to work out a payment plan on their own. Tenants and landlords can learn more about San Diego’s eviction moratorium [here](#).

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Council President Gómez represents the Ninth Council District of the City of San Diego, which includes the communities of Alvarado Estates, City Heights, College Area, College View Estates, El Cerrito, Kensington, Mountain View, Mt. Hope, Rolando, Southcrest, and Talmadge. She chairs the City of San Diego Rules Committee and sits on the Metropolitan Transit System Board of Directors and on the SANDAG Board of Directors and Executive Board.