

# Supporting tenants and landlords affected by ACT lockdown

---

## **Released 02/09/2021 - Joint media release**

The ACT Government is committing \$5.25 million in Emergency support measures to help residential and commercial renters and landlords impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.

### **Residential Tenancy Relief**

A new residential tenancy COVID-19 emergency response declaration has been enacted, which places a twelve-week moratorium on evictions for rent arrears for tenants who are in financial distress due to a loss of income or working hours as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown.

Residential landlords who offer rent relief will be eligible for a credit on their residential land tax of up to \$100 per week to share the cost of passing rent relief on to tenants who have lost income due to COVID-19. This rebate will operate in the same way as the land tax credit that was offered by the Government last year – which last year provided rental relief to almost 1,000 households impacted by COVID-19. Further information will be available online shortly.

There will also be new measures to prevent those who are required to quarantine or self-isolate in response to a public health direction, from being required to leave their rental property during their quarantine or self-isolation period. This is an important measure to help support our public health response.

### **Commercial Tenancy Relief**

The government is also reinstating measures which require commercial landlords to engage in good faith negotiations with local business tenants hardest hit by COVID-19 during the current ACT lockdown.

The new temporary commercial leases declaration will prevent commercial landlords from taking prescribed actions against tenants impacted by COVID-19 such as terminating their lease without first discussing lease arrangements. The declaration will apply from 12 August 2021 when the ACT was placed into lockdown.

Commercial landlords who offer rent relief may be eligible for a commercial rates credit of up to \$5,000. A credit is also available for owner-operators who meet the eligibility criteria. This is in addition to the COVID-19 Business Support Grants of up to \$20,000 available for businesses who

have had a significant reduction in turnover due to the current health restrictions. Information on business support grants is now available on the ACT Government's Business Hub at: [www.act.gov.au/business/business-support/covid-19-economic-support-for-business](https://www.act.gov.au/business/business-support/covid-19-economic-support-for-business) (<https://www.act.gov.au/business/business-support/covid-19-economic-support-for-business>).

The COVID-19 Local Business Commissioner has been re-instated to connect businesses with information about the declaration, financial assistance and mental health support. The ACT Government will also fund professional mediation services to facilitate good faith negotiations between landlords and tenants.

In addition to these initiatives, the ACT Government will waive rent payments for the month of September for any business and community sector tenants of government-owned properties that have been affected by the COVID-19 lockdown. Tenants who have experienced a 30 per cent reduction in turnover in August will be eligible for a full waiver of their September rent payments.

### **Quotes attributable to Chief Minister Andrew Barr**

It is important for government, landlords and tenants to work together again to respond to the impacts of the current lockdown.

Once again, access to free mediation will be available to help commercial landlords and tenants negotiate changes to rental agreements.

The economic impacts of this pandemic will be felt for years and we are providing significant financial support to keep our local small businesses going.

### **Quotes attributable to Attorney-General, Shane Rattenbury**

This residential tenancy measures will support these Canberrans by ensuring they do not become homeless during the moratorium period.

Renters should continue to meet their rent obligations if they are able to do so; the twelve-week moratorium on evictions for COVID-19 impacted tenants is not a rent holiday.

To support physical distancing, inspections will have to be carried out virtually and the timeframes for non-urgent repairs relaxed. The measures also prevent COVID-19 impacted tenants from being listed in a tenancy database or 'blacklist' if they fell into arrears during the moratorium period."

### **Quotes attributable to the Special Minister of State, Chris Steel**

We understand that all sorts of local businesses and organisations are feeling the impact of the ACT's lockdown, including those in the community and arts sectors.

The ACT Government is committed to being a model landlord and setting a high standard for how property owners can support their tenants through this difficult time.

We encourage commercial landlords to also provide rent relief where it's needed, with government support now available for those who do.

**- Statement ends -**

Section: [Andrew Barr, MLA](#)

[https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open\\_government/inform/act\\_government\\_media\\_releases/barr](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/inform/act_government_media_releases/barr) |

[Shane Rattenbury, MLA](#)

[https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open\\_government/inform/act\\_government\\_media\\_releases/ratte](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/inform/act_government_media_releases/rattenbury)

[nbury](#) | [Chris Steel, MLA](#)

[https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open\\_government/inform/act\\_government\\_media\\_releases/chris-steel-mla-media-releases](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/inform/act_government_media_releases/chris-steel-mla-media-releases) | [Media Releases](#)

## Media Contacts

Name	Phone	Mobile	Email
Kaarin Dynon	(02) 6205 2974	0422 772 215	<u><a href="mailto:kaarin.dynon@act.gov.au">kaarin.dynon@act.gov.au</a></u> <u><a href="mailto:kaarin.dynon@act.gov.au">(mailto:kaarin.dynon@act.gov.au)</a></u>
Lachlan Roberts		0481 035 764	<u><a href="mailto:Lachlan.Roberts@act.gov.au">Lachlan.Roberts@act.gov.au</a></u> <u><a href="mailto:Lachlan.Roberts@act.gov.au">(mailto:Lachlan.Roberts@act.gov.au)</a></u>
Anton Gallacher	(02) 6205 3795	0422 574 108	<u><a href="mailto:anton.gallacher@act.gov.au">anton.gallacher@act.gov.au</a></u> <u><a href="mailto:anton.gallacher@act.gov.au">(mailto:anton.gallacher@act.gov.au)</a></u>

[«ACT Government Media Releases](#)

[https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open\\_government/inform/act\\_government\\_media\\_releases](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/inform/act_government_media_releases) |

[«Minister Media Releases](#)

[https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open\\_government/inform/act\\_government\\_media\\_releases/latest\\_minister\\_media\\_releases](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/inform/act_government_media_releases/latest_minister_media_releases)

[Feedback \(https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/functions/feedback\)](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/functions/feedback)

[Contact us \(https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/functions/contact\)](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/functions/contact)

[Jobs \(http://www.jobs.act.gov.au/\)](http://www.jobs.act.gov.au/) [Emergency Services \(https://www.esa.act.gov.au/\)](https://www.esa.act.gov.au/)

 (<https://www.facebook.com/ACTGov>)

 (<http://www.youtube.com/user/actgovernment>)

 (<https://twitter.com/actgovernment>)

 (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/act-government>)

[Accessibility \(https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/functions/accessibility\)](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/functions/accessibility)

[Languages \(https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/functions/languages\)](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/functions/languages)

[Sitemap \(https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/functions/sitemap\)](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/functions/sitemap)

[Privacy \(https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/legal/privacy\)](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/legal/privacy)

[Disclaimer \(https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/legal/disclaimer\)](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/legal/disclaimer)

[Copyright \(https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/legal/copyright\)](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/legal/copyright)

(<https://www.canberra.com.au/>)

(<https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/>)

(<https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au>)



(<https://www.act.gov.au>)