



MAYOR JORGE O. ELORZA  
CITY OF PROVIDENCE

# Housing Supports and Eviction Defense Panel

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Hosted by the Office of Mayor Jorge Elorza

WELCOME!



# Event agenda

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1. Rhode Island Legal Services and Rhode Island Center For Justice: Eviction Process and Tenant Rights
2. Housing Network of Rhode Island: How Community Development Corps are supporting tenants during COVID-19
3. Crossroads Rhode Island: Accessing support through Housing Help RI
4. Questions and Answers





# EVICITION PROCESS AND TENANTS RIGHTS

Steven Flores, Managing Attorney, RILS Housing Law Center

Jennifer Wood, Executive Director, RI Center for Justice

Jordan Mickman, Staff Attorney, RI Center for Justice



# Evictions: When are they Legal?

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- Only a Judge can evict you.
- **Legal** evictions require your landlord to go to court.
- If your landlord tells you to move out, threatens you, or tries to move you out without going to court that is not legal.
- The Rhode Island Attorney General has advised police departments not to help landlords move people out unless there is a judge's order that requires you to move.



# Evictions: What is the Process?

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- The timing and process depends on whether you are evicted for ***not paying your rent*** or ***for any another reason***.
- Non-payment of rent cases move faster. But because of COVID-19, fewer cases are being scheduled, which means they are taking longer to get to a judgment.
- If you are up to date on your rent but the landlord wants you to move out for other reasons (wants to raise the rent, wants to move someone else in) that process take more time and you will get more advance notice.



# Evictions: Why Get Help?

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- Landlords almost *always* have a lawyer and tenants rarely do.
- If your landlord is threatening to move you out or if you get court papers about an eviction it is importance to get advice.
- A lawyer can tell you whether what the landlord is doing is legal and how to respond depending on the issue (back rent, bad conditions in the house, other issues)
- A lawyer can also negotiate on your behalf, and potentially raise defenses or claims that can reduce the amount you have to pay or make you able to stay.

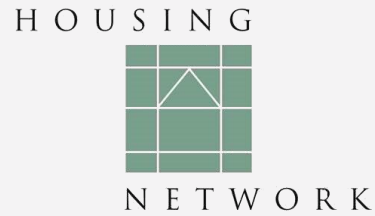


# Where Can I Get Help?

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- Rhode Island Legal Services can help residents of both **private and public/subsidized** housing. There are eligibility requirements. For private tenants, RILS helps those who fall below **200% of the federal poverty guidelines**. Rhode Island Legal Service's Providence office can be reached at **274-2652**.
- The R.I. Center for Justice can help residents in **private** housing who have income above the eligibility of Rhode Island Legal Services and some groups that Legal Services can't help. The Center for Justice can be reached at **491-1101**.





# RENTAL ASSISTANCE: HNRI AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPS

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Melina Lodge, Executive Director, Housing Network of Rhode Island





# What Can HNRI Help With?



1. HNRI has housing stabilization funds from four sources of funding that allow us to serve households from 0 -100% AMI ( up to \$87,000/ annually for a household of 4 persons)
2. Depending on an applicant's circumstances, funding allows us to help with past due rent/ mortgage, late fees, upcoming rent, past due utilities, security deposit and moving expenses
3. Breakdown of assistance provided:
  - \$41,752 in past due rent/mortgages
  - \$5,397 in past due utilities
  - \$3,050 in security deposits
  - \$1,000 in moving expenses
  - \$900 in upcoming rent



# Who Does HNRI Help?

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1. To date, HNRI has processed **97** applications for assistance and have awarded **31** households funding.
2. **7** of the awarded households have been from Providence.
3. Demographics of households served:
  - **21** have been female head of household
  - **23** households have identified themselves as non white and/or Hispanic
  - **42** adults and **71** children



# What are HNRI Member organizations doing to support residents and clients during the COVID-19 crisis?

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1. House of Hope (Warwick) received funds to help some of their residents with rental assistance payments, security deposits, hotel vouchers, and basic need items.
2. Smith Hill CDC (Providence) received \$20,000 in funding to assist Smith Hill residents with past due rent and mortgage payments.
3. PCF Development (Pawtucket/Central Falls) has introduced a rental relief program for their tenants, done outreach to connect residents with various rental assistance programs, partnered with Farm Fresh RI to deliver 100 Farmer to Family food boxes, delivered groceries, distributed gift cards for groceries and basic needs, partnered with the United Way and Centerville Bank to host a virtual “Housing Security and Stability” workshop and shared information about testing sites with its residents.
4. NeighborWorks BRV (Woonsocket/Northern RI) received funding to provide rental and utility assistance to in-need households and has offered past due tenants payment plans that work within their budget to allow them to catch up on rent and remain stably housed.

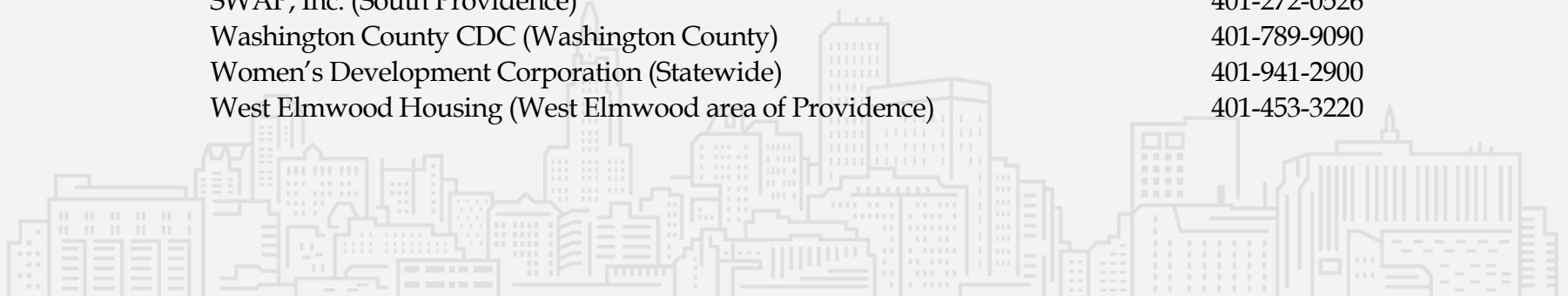


# How can I apply to HNRI for assistance?



1. Applications for the HomeSafe program or the PVD Housing Assistance program are available on our website ([www.housingnetworkri.org](http://www.housingnetworkri.org)) in English and Spanish. Click on the “Resources” tab. Instructions on how to submit the application are included within the application.
2. To get in touch with your local Community Development Corporation:

Church Community Housing (Newport, surrounding communities)	401-846-5114
East Bay CDC (Bristol, surrounding communities)	401-253-2080
House of Hope CDC (Warwick, surrounding communities )	401-463-3324
NeighborWorks BRV (Woonsocket, northern RI)	401-762-0993
ONE NB (Greater Providence)	401-351-8719
OMNI Development (Providence)	401-461-4442
PCF Development (Pawtucket, Central Falls)	401-726-1173
Providence Revolving Fund (Providence)	401-272-2760
Smith Hill CDC (Smith Hill, Wanskuck area of Providence)	401-521-0159
South County Habitat for Humanity (Washington County)	401-213-6711
SWAP, Inc. (South Providence)	401-272-0526
Washington County CDC (Washington County)	401-789-9090
Women’s Development Corporation (Statewide)	401-941-2900
West Elmwood Housing (West Elmwood area of Providence)	401-453-3220



# How do I contact HNRI?

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Address: 1070 Main Street, Suite 304  
Pawtucket, RI 02860

Phone Number: 401-721-5680 Ext. 18

Website: [www.housingnetworkri.org](http://www.housingnetworkri.org)

Email: [info@housingnetworkri.org](mailto:info@housingnetworkri.org)



# RENTAL ASSISTANCE: HOUSING HELP RI

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Cicely Dove, Vice President of Family Services



# What is Housing Help RI?

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Housing Help RI allows qualified households to receive:

1. Up to \$5,000 for past due rent, relocation costs, and utility arrearages.
2. Up to one month's rent support going forward
3. Housing stabilization support
4. Referrals to RILS and CFJ for eviction defense legal supports



# Who can get help through Housing Help RI?

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You may qualify for Housing Help RI if you:

1. Have lost income due to COVID-19
2. Had pre-COVID household income below 80% Area Medium Income (AMI)
3. Have a current lease with a landlord
4. Are not currently receiving rental assistance
5. Are not currently living in subsidized housing
6. Have lived in Rhode Island at least one year





# What documentation will I need?

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1. Documentation reflecting loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic
2. Lease with a landlord
3. Eviction notice and/or proof of rental arrears
4. W-9 from the landlord



# What Other Housing Supports Are Available?

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If you have been evicted and are homeless, you may qualify for other housing supports such as:

1. Diversion assistance and/or Rapid Resolution
2. Emergency Shelter
3. Rental Assistance
4. Permanent Supportive Housing



# Crossroads Rental Assistance

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We provide the following support and services:

1. An average of 12 months of rental assistance
2. Housing-based case management
3. Education & Employment support

\*Separate from Housing Help RI\*



# How can I get help?

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For eviction prevention assistance, complete the online application at:

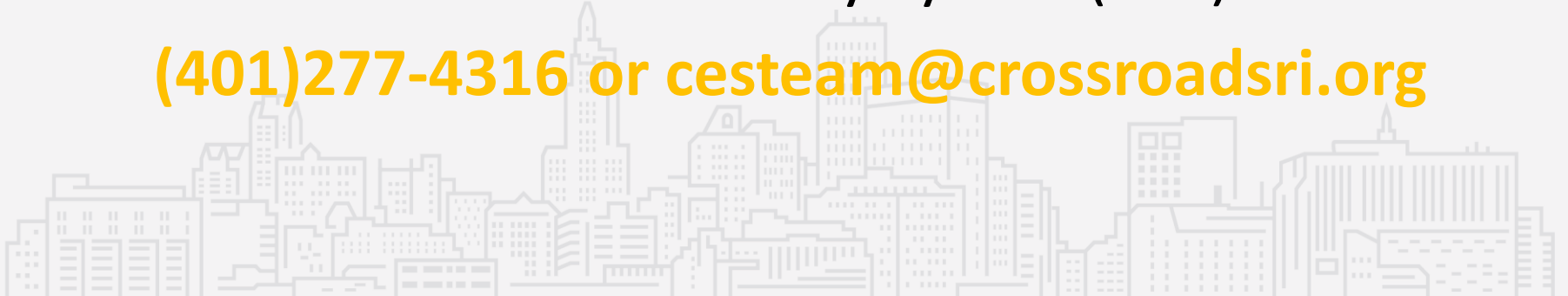
[www.housinghelpri.com](http://www.housinghelpri.com)

To follow up on the status of your application email:

[HousingHelpRI@crossroadsri.org](mailto:HousingHelpRI@crossroadsri.org)

If you are homeless and in need of shelter, contact the Coordinated Entry System(CES) at:

[\(401\)277-4316](tel:4012774316) or [cesteam@crossroadsri.org](mailto:cesteam@crossroadsri.org)



# Questions?

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1. Please type questions into chat box.
2. If you are joining on a phone, please use the hand raise feature to ask a question
3. Find more info at:  
<https://www.providenceri.gov/pema/covid-19-housing-resource-guide/>

Thank you for coming!

