

TEMPLATE LETTER:

Landlords starting a conversation with their tenants about the impact of COVID-19

To [xxxx],

We value our relationship with you and wanted to reach out in these difficult and uncertain times.

The COVID-19 pandemic, and the measures being taken to reduce transmission of the virus, will mean adjustments and challenges for all of us. To help us help you, we ask that you be open and honest about how the pandemic is impacting you and your family.

Please let us know immediately if you have returned from foreign travel, or you're experiencing cold-like symptoms, such as cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing or mild to moderate fever. These may be symptoms of coronavirus-19. There will be no detrimental repercussions, we simply want to be proactive and alert the health authorities so that you and loved ones may get the help you require.

Going forward, please know we are exploring options for financial assistance that the federal government recently announced. While we cannot stop costs associated with ongoing needs, such as food, hydro, heat and water, we are investigating aid that may help us minimize our monthly rental property expenses — and this would give us the opportunity to pass this aid on to you.

Until then, we encourage you to investigate help that is being offered by federal and provincial governments. Just recently, the federal government announced a number of measures that may be of help, including an emergency care benefit for people who are self-employed, deferral of income tax owing until August 2020, and expanded criteria for employment insurance eligibility.

Finally, we ask that you openly communicate with us. If you are experiencing COVID-19-related financial challenges that will affect your ability to pay your rent on time, please contact [Name] at [number or email] to discuss available options. Perhaps you are facing job uncertainty, temporary loss of income or other financial hardship due to coronavirus public health measures and their impact on the local and national economy. In these uncertain times, we want to work with you to ensure your housing is secure, despite the challenges ahead.

We wish you and your family well and, in the words of the B.C medical health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry, "Be kind, be calm, be safe."

Sincerely,
[Your name]