

## TEMPLATE LETTER:

### For landlords offering to help tenants during the COVID-19 crisis

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.

We understand that many Canadians are facing uncertain economic times as we all experience the impact of the COVID-19 crisis. To help, we would like to offer: **[a month rent-free // a deferral on all rent payments, with no penalties for X month(s) // a reduction of \$x in rent for the next X month(s) // other type of aid]**.

In addition, we want to alert you to potential aid that you could benefit from through various government programs.

For example:

- Defer tax payments until after August 31, 2020 (this applies for any income tax owed between March and September 2020). No penalties or interest will accumulate on the amounts owed during this period.
- Take advantage of the six-month interest-free reprieve on student loan payments;
- If you lost your job due to COVID-19 fall-out, apply for Employment Insurance benefits (or EI sickness benefits). The government recently waived the one-week waiting period, which means you can apply for EI benefits as soon as you lose your job;
- If you run a small business, contact the federal government to ask about access to money — known in the media as the \$10 billion credit facility — that is available for business facing financial stress as a result of COVID-19;
- Starting in April, if you don't qualify for EI apply for the new Emergency Care Benefit or the new Emergency Support Benefit. The Care Benefit gives financial support to workers and the self-employed who don't qualify for EI, up to \$900 biweekly, for up to 15 weeks, in income support. The Support Benefit offers income support to workers not eligible for EI and those about to face unemployment.

Keep in mind, as well, that you may automatically qualify for special top-ups, such as:

- The GST credit top-up payment for low-income individuals and families
- If you receive Canada Child Benefit payments, you will probably see a temporary boost in funds from the federal government.

You may also qualify for region-specific aid. For example, BC Rent Bank offers information on province-wide rent banks, nonprofits that provide people with short-term financial assistance to

help them keep their housing. For those paying utility bills, consider calling your providers and asking for payment deferrals for at least a month, if not longer.

As we mentioned, we also want to help. We hope that the offer of **[a month rent-free // a deferral on all rent payments, with no penalties for X month(s) // a reduction of \$x in rent for the next X month(s) // other type of aid]** will help you during these tough times.

As we go forward, we ask that you continue to keep the lines of communication open. Let us know if you continue to experience difficulty with your ability to pay your rent. At any time, please contact [Name] at [number or email] to discuss your options.

In these uncertain times, we want to work with you to ensure your housing is secure and we wish you and your family all the best.

Sincerely,  
[Your name]