

# Information for Low-Income Coloradoans in Response to COVID-19

*Prepared by Colorado Legal Services (3/17/20)\**

## Court Appearances

If you have a scheduled court date or a *Summons to Appear* in court you should contact your local court to find out if your date has been rescheduled. Each local court is following its own procedures and they are changing every day. Your court's phone number should be on the court documents in your possession but can also be found on the Colorado Judicial Branch's website at: <https://www.courts.state.co.us/>. Do not just assume your court date has been cancelled or else you may receive a failure to appear or default judgment in your case.

## Administrative Agencies: Social Security, Local County Department of Human Services, Department of Labor (Unemployment Benefits)

If you have a scheduled hearing with an administrative agency such as the Social Security Administration, food stamps, or unemployment benefits, you should contact them directly to find out if your hearing has been rescheduled. Their phone number will be on the notice they sent to you.

## Paying Bills and Rent

Many credit card companies and utility providers (electric, gas, water, etc.) are automatically granting residents a one month break from paying their bills to deal with this emergency; this started around March 16, 2020. If you have limited money, you should first pay for essentials such as food and shelter. If you rent from a landlord, you should pay your rent before all other bills *unless* your landlord has agreed to accept partial rent or delayed rent in this emergency. If your landlord agrees to another plan, get this agreement in writing and keep a copy.

If you receive a notice from your landlord for non-payment of rent, you should contact your local CLS office to make an application for legal advice. If your landlord shuts off your utilities or changes your locks, first contact law enforcement, then your local CLS office.

If you receive nonpayment notices from a creditor or utility company, call them to explain your current situation and see if you can work out a delay in payment.

## Personal Safety

For many residents, being told to remain at home is not a safe option due to abuse, neglect or violence in the home. If a medical professional has told you to self-quarantine due to COVID-19 and you do not feel safe at home, you should tell them this so they can help you explore other options.

Contact the confidential national Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 for resources and assistance in your area. You can also text "LOVEIS" to 22522 if it is not safe to talk, or visit their website at: <https://www.thehotline.org/>. A Colorado-specific resource is: [violencefreecolorado.org](http://violencefreecolorado.org)

Currently courts are remaining open to hear temporary civil protection orders (restraining orders) to limit contact and restrain dangerous individuals from your home. Court forms and contact information are available at <https://www.courts.state.co.us/>.

\*The situation in our state is rapidly changing and this information may change with it. Our staff will do our best to keep this document updated but you should refer directly to the resources provided for the most up to date information. This document does **not** constitute legal advice.