

**Office of Residential Tenancies**  
**Directive and Advisory respecting COVID-19 as of May 26, 2020**

This directive replaces the Office of Residential Tenancies (ORT) Directive and Advisory respecting COVID-19 issued on March 17, 2020, March 20, 2020, March 26, 2020, April 9, 2020 and April 17, 2020.

The ORT is committed to taking the steps necessary to safeguard the health of everyone utilizing our services while ensuring access to justice, the rule of law, and continuing business operations as effectively and efficiently as possible. As such, in response to the most recent information available concerning the public health risks posed by novel coronavirus (COVID-19), the ORT has issued this directive and advisory regarding its operations.

The ORT will continue to monitor the situation related to COVID-19 and will update this directive and advisory from time to time.

**This directive takes effect immediately.**

**PAYMENT OF RENT: Rent remains payable when due.** Tenants receiving Social Assistance payments for rent must use it to pay their rent on time. Any tenants experiencing financial hardship during the current State of Emergency are encouraged to communicate their individual situation with their landlord and come to a mutually agreeable solution (in writing) in this challenging time. After the current State of Emergency is over, a landlord will have the ability to evict a tenant for any agreement not followed and any rent which is 15 days or more in arrears.

**Applications:** As of March 26, 2020, the ORT is **no longer accepting applications for evictions related to missed or late rent, or for other non-urgent claims.**

**All ORT offices are closed to the public:** This policy is in line with the directives now in place with the Court of Queen's Bench and the Provincial Court.

- Applications and evidence for URGENT claims (ONLY) can be submitted **by email:** [ORT@gov.sk.ca](mailto:ORT@gov.sk.ca) (in extenuating circumstances, by mail).
- Inquiries can be made by either email at [ORT@gov.sk.ca](mailto:ORT@gov.sk.ca) (anytime) or telephone at [1-888-215-2222](tel:1-888-215-2222) (9 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.).

**All non-urgent hearings are cancelled:** The ORT has cancelled all non-urgent hearings as of March 26, 2020. All open claims will be placed on hold and rescheduled at a future date. There is no time frame available for when the ORT will reschedule the current claims as it will depend on the COVID-19 emergency.

**Urgent hearings (ONLY) will proceed by telephone:** The ORT will ONLY be conducting eviction hearings for urgent situations where there is a potential risk to health or safety resulting from violence or damage to property. Hearings may also take place for situations where a tenant has been locked out by their landlord or where a landlord has been accused of not providing essential services such as power and water.

- Clients can call [306-787-2745](tel:306-787-2745) (Regina) or [306-933-6673](tel:306-933-6673) (Saskatoon), to appear by telephone for an urgent claim hearing.

**Security Deposits held in trust:** At this time, the ORT will NOT be paying out any security deposits which are being held in trust. Once parties have access to file an appeal at the Court of Queen's Bench the ORT will resume paying out security deposits.

**Income Assistance:** Landlord's with inquiries about tenants on Income Assistance can send their detailed information directly to the Ministry of Social Services at [incomeassist@gov.sk.ca](mailto:incomeassist@gov.sk.ca).

**Health and Safety:** The ORT is encouraging Saskatchewan landlords to disinfect surfaces in residential tenancy common areas on a daily basis to ensure a safe and habitable premises is being provided to their tenants. This may include doors, handrails, laundry rooms, elevators, and other common areas.

If clients have questions relating to the Court of Queen's Bench, Sheriff's Office, Ministry of Social Services, or similar, clients are to contact the relevant Court, office, or Ministry.