



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Mayor Melvin Carter

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March 15, 2020

Sheriff Bob Fletcher
Ramsey County Sheriff's Office
425 Grove Street
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Dear Sheriff Fletcher,

I write to urge you to use what discretion you have under the law to delay in executing evictions from pending writs in the City of Saint Paul by the Ramsey County's Sheriff's Office.

The Minnesota state judicial system has taken measures to respond to the spreading COVID-19. Minnesota Chief Justice Lorie S. Gildea issued an order, effective Monday, March 16, that courthouses will suspend all court proceedings scheduled in the state until March 30, aside from jury trials already underway and those cases deemed "high priority."

Unlawful Detainer Eviction Hearings are deemed "medium priority" under temporary procedures for district court case processing, meaning all court proceedings, except jury trials currently underway, or cases where a speedy trial has been demanded, will be suspended for 14 days. No new jury trials in these case types should be scheduled for the next 30 days.

The impacts of COVID-19 stand to cause sudden and sharp drops in income for many tenants in our community. Low-income workers are more likely to live paycheck to paycheck, less likely to have savings, and experience greater challenges weathering any disruption to their income. This puts them at risk of not being able to pay rent, and thus make them disproportionately subject to eviction.

In addition, Saint Paul Public Schools announced today that schools will be close, leaving many who are struggling without childcare and means to feed their families. Sudden influx of evictions, putting more families in shelters or on the street will only exacerbate the current COVID-19 pandemic situation we are all working so hard together to mitigate.

In light of the widening pandemic and current public health crisis I urge you to explore options for delaying evictions from pending writs by the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office in the City of Saint Paul.

I look forward to partnering with Ramsey County Sheriff's Office beyond the March 30 order to keep Saint Paul residents housed as the long-term impacts of COVID-19 become apparent in the coming days and weeks.

Sincerely,

Melvin Carter, Mayor
City of Saint Paul