



Mississippi Center for Justice

For Immediate Release

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MCJ Files Emergency Motion Requesting Eviction Moratorium

Friday, April 24, 2020, the Mississippi Center for Justice Housing Campaign filed an Emergency Motion ([read the motion here](#)) requesting the Mississippi Supreme Court institute a moratorium on evictions during the Coronavirus pandemic. This effort is made in an attempt to stop the expected and unprecedented rise in Mississippians becoming homeless through evictions after suffering job loss and lost income due to the pandemic. MCJ's motion was joined by Mississippi Legal Services Corporation and North MS Legal Services, as well as being supported by local community partners, Mississippi State Conference NAACP; Mississippi Rising Coalition; Mississippi Poor People's Campaign, East Biloxi Community Collaborative; Mississippi Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities; and Grace House.

To date, 41 states have some form of orders that in effect temporarily suspend evictions and 20 have orders explicitly imposed eviction moratoriums. Many of these orders are imminently approaching expiration while others have just recently been extended. MCJ's motion, if successful, would have the moratorium last through July 27, 2020, mirroring the CARES Act's federal eviction moratorium.

MCJ had previously requested the Governor of Mississippi extend his shelter in place order, which imposed a temporary eviction moratorium set to expire April 27, 2020. With the Governor not indicating previously any intention to do so, MCJ turned its efforts to the MS Supreme Court. The Governor did, however, announce in a press conference Friday afternoon that he was extending the moratorium until 8:00 a.m. May 11, 2020.

The motion specifically requested the MS Supreme Court enter an Emergency Administrative Order temporarily adopting a rule to the State's Uniform Rules of Procedure for Justice Court which would impose a moratorium on judicial proceedings of eviction against residential tenants. The motion alternatively requested that the MS Supreme Court issue an Extraordinary Writ directed to all Justice Court Judges imposing a moratorium. MCJ also requested a bar on late fees and penalties for failure to pay rent during the moratorium.