

# A DEBT FREE RECOVERY TO KEEP LA HOUSED

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused millions of households to fall behind on rent through no fault of their own. This rent debt crisis has disproportionately hit low-income communities of color hardest. If we don't eliminate the debt and address the long-term economic fallout from this crisis, the racial wealth gap will widen and existing racial and economic inequalities will root down deeper. Current emergency rental assistance programs are not enough to address the growing mountain of debt or prevent massive displacement.

We need comprehensive policy solutions to ensure a just recovery for tenants. The pandemic isn't over until all communities have fully recovered. **We demand a #DebtFreeRecovery to #KeepLAHoused.**

**KEEP LA HOUSED**

## ADDRESS THE GAPS IN RENTAL ASSISTANCE

- **Collect and share data** on access to current rental assistance programs by income, race, gender, age, disability, and neighborhood, and monitor data for disparities in access.
- **Identify and implement best practices** based on tenant experiences and equity goals, including offering language accessibility, investing in robust outreach, prioritizing the most at risk renters & reducing documentation barriers.
- **Ensure tenant input and participation** in program evaluation.

## ELIMINATE COVID-19 HOUSING DEBT

- Use governmental powers to **seize and forgive all remaining rent debt.**
- Use federal aid dollars and local funds to **pay just compensation to landlords** for the debt seized. Small landlords and nonprofit affordable housing providers should be prioritized.
- Provide tenants with assistance to **address other pandemic-related debt**, such as credit card debt, and forgive utility debt.

## END EVICTIONS & COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES OF RENT DEBT

- Provide **support for tenants who were displaced** due to prohibited landlord activity, such as a right-of-return and relocation benefits.
- **Monitor and document landlord abuses**, including refusing rental assistance and other violations.
- **Address loopholes in current eviction protections** by ensuring no tenant who is protected is evicted or penalized.
- **Extend current eviction protections** until all rent debt is resolved and state of emergency has ended, including extending prohibitions on no-fault evictions.
- **Fully fund a codified right to counsel** and support related measures.
- **Create a permanent Tenant Council** to monitor and protect tenant rights.
- **Increase regulation of tenant buyouts.**
- **Prohibit discrimination, retaliation and harassment** based on COVID rent debt and evictions.
- **Strengthen code enforcement** to ensure habitable housing conditions.
- **Protect against long-term consumer credit impacts.**