

Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities
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Emailed to:

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Dear Secretary of State

Supporting renters during coronavirus (COVID-19)

We are alarmed to hear of plans in place to enable landlords to resume evictions of tenants from the end of June.

In Hackney we will continue to be supporting those tenants affected by coronavirus across the more than 20,000 homes that we manage, working closely with them to ensure they receive all the financial help they are entitled to, and giving them time and help while the full impact of the outbreak remains unclear. We have reiterated our commitment that no one will be evicted solely as a result of being unable to pay their rent as a result of the pandemic.

However, more than one in three people in Hackney live in a privately rented home. We welcomed the three month moratorium on evictions announced by the Government in March but this must now be extended, reflecting the uncertainty we all continue to face as regards the impact of coronavirus and the very serious effect it has had on many people's incomes. We have also previously called on the Government to do more to protect renters by banning using non-payment of rent due to coronavirus as a basis for eviction, and repeat that call now.

Yesterday, we saw the Chancellor signalling that mortgage relief would be extended and we know the furlough scheme will be extended until October. We have seen a near 70% increase in Universal Credit claims, with even the increase in the LHA rate only enough to cover 30% percentage of local rents (although of little help to



households subject to the benefit cap). Private renters are the least protected form of household, there must be a better package of Government support and at the very least an equity with the support offered to those that own their own homes. We need a long term plan to make the private rented sector more secure and ensure that any debts incurred during this period can be covered by a national scheme or paid off over time without putting tenancies and credit records at risk.

Finally, we have continued to work hard to support households that find themselves homeless during the pandemic, and currently have over 150 rough sleepers in emergency accommodation who we are seeking to find settled homes for. With over 3,000 Hackney households already living in temporary accommodation and a further 13,000 on the housing waiting list, insufficient protection for private renters and the resumption of evictions risks creating a surge in demand for emergency provision, with services already stretched to near breaking point.

We call on the Government to work with us in continuing to ensure everyone has a home they can stay safe in at this time.

Yours sincerely



Philip Glanville
Mayor of Hackney



Cllr Rebecca Rennison
**Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member
for Finance, Housing Needs and
Supply**



Cllr Clayeon McKenzie
Cabinet Member for Housing Services



Cllr Sem Moema
**Mayoral Advisor for Private Renting
and Housing Affordability**

CC: Steve Reed MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Clive Betts MP, Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee Chair
Meg Hillier MP, Member of Parliament for Hackney South and Shoreditch
Diane Abbott MP, Member of Parliament for Hackney North and Stoke Newington
Tom Copley, Deputy Mayor of London