

“Without bold legislative action, eviction risk could explode -- once tenants run out of ways to pay.” -Ben Walker, Research Partner, MIT

The Census Household Pulse Survey suggests that **tens of thousands of Massachusetts renters are struggling to pay monthly housing costs** in the pandemic.

A. Recent estimates drawn from this data say that as many as 1 in 3 Massachusetts renters are unable to pay rent and are at risk of eviction -- over 300,000 renter households statewide.

B. Rent shortfall is estimated to approach as much as \$429 million -- well above the \$20 million in emergency housing funding issued by Gov. Baker.

C. Both figures come from [estimates produced by a global advisory firm called Stout](#).

Renters of Color and Black renters are especially affected.

Asked in July whether they could pay August rent, here's what renters said:

Statewide:

A. 42% of Black renters in Massachusetts (2 in 5) had little to no confidence in paying August rent.

B. 30% of Hispanic renters in Massachusetts (nearly 1 in 3) had little to no confidence in paying August rent.

C. 14% of White renters had little/no confidence.

Boston Metro Area:

A. 50% of Black renters (1 in 2) in the Boston metropolitan area said they had little to no confidence that they could pay August rent.

B. 39% of Hispanic renters (over 1 in 3) in the Boston metropolitan area said they had little to no confidence that they could pay August rent.

C. 15% of White renters had little/no confidence.



City Life/Vida Urbana is a grassroots organization that has been fighting in the Boston area for housing justice - as a core part of racial justice - since 1973.

U.S. Census Household Pulse Survey

- The Household Pulse Survey was designed to “quickly and efficiently deploy data collected on how people’s lives have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.”
- The Bureau has been collecting and releasing data on a weekly basis during the pandemic.
- Half of Black renters in metro Boston said they have little to no confidence they could pay August rent.
- State-wide, nearly half of Black renters and nearly one third of Hispanic renters had little to no confidence they could pay August rent.



284 Amory St., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
clvu.org
Housing Hotline: (617) 934-5006

“Massachusetts families are in an unprecedented struggle from job loss and need long-term protections from eviction and rent hikes.” -Helen Matthews, City Life/Vida Urbana

Federal stimulus packages did help Massachusetts residents cover monthly housing costs.

A. 42% of Massachusetts residents used federal stimulus to pay for monthly housing costs (rent and mortgage) as of mid-July, 2020.

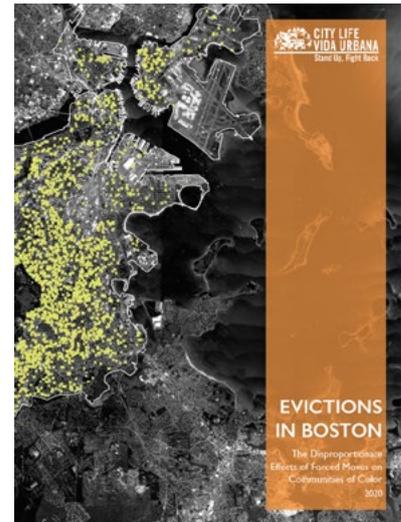
But expanded unemployment benefits expired last week, and data suggests that struggling tenants are turning to unstable, unsustainable methods to pay for the things they need in a pandemic, like housing.

A. Toward the end of July, 1 in 3 Massachusetts renters with little to no confidence in paying August rent relied on credit cards and loans, federal stimulus payments, and unemployment insurance to pay for expenses. 1 in 4 borrowed money from family and friends.

B. Only 34% of MA renters with little to no confidence in paying August rent relied on regular income sources, as compared to 88% of renters with high confidence in paying August rent.

Tenants and financially-unstable homeowners need long-term protections because they can't scramble to pay housing costs forever.

A. Massachusetts legislators are currently considering a bill called **An Act to Guarantee Housing Stability During the COVID-19 Emergency and Recovery** (H.4878 / S. 2831). This bill would prevent COVID-related evictions and foreclosures, prevent unaffordable rent hikes that displace families, and



Download our new report in collaboration with researchers from MIT, “Evictions in Boston: The Disproportionate Effects of Forced Moves on Communities of Color”, at bostonevictions.org.



284 Amory St., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
clvu.org
Housing Hotline: (617) 934-5006

Research compiled by Benjamin Walker, graduate researcher at Massachusetts Institute of Technology Department of Urban Studies and Planning

All photos: Marilyn Humphries, humphriesphotography.com