

Houston coronavirus updates: What you need to know for September 4

By Rebecca Hennes * September 4, 2020

Leaders with [The Metropolitan Organization](#) of Houston, a coalition of churches and organizations that work to help low-income, local communities, are calling on Justices of the Peace to halt evictions and for renters to take action to prevent losing their homes.



Beginning Friday, [a new evictions moratorium issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) takes place. The rare order prohibits landlords from evicting any tenants through the end of the year but does not relieve renters of having to pay their rent and other fees in the future.

TMO leaders said during a Friday press conference while the CDC's sweeping moratorium is a step in the right direction, it's not enough.

"The CDC order creates a welcome pause in evictions in this area but is only a half-measure because all rents and late fees will continue to pile up and be due when the moratorium expires on December 31" Rev. Jaqueline Hailey, a leader with TMO, said in a news release.

Renters must take action and fill out an [Eviction Protection Declaration](#) included in the order and present it to their landlord to avoid homelessness. The organization is also calling on Justices of the Peace to not finalize any evictions for non-payment of rent and for members of Congress to pass a new stimulus bill.

"COVID-19 is not going anywhere, and it is time for Congress to return to negotiations to pass the next stimulus bill, including \$100 Billion in rental assistance," TMO Leader Rev. Scott Cooper said in the release.

The number of COVID-19 deaths continues to climb in Texas and Houston, while the state's positive test rate is appearing to drop.

The latest numbers show the statewide total of COVID-19 cases is now at 646,407 cases, while deaths are at 13,276, according to a Houston Chronicle analysis of state data.

The state's positive test rate decreased from 9.64 percent to 8.98 percent and the rolling average of viral tests increased from 43,460 to 45,825.

In the Houston region, cases increased by 1,035 to 156,963 in total while deaths increased by 44 to 3,005 in total. Harris County reported 734 new cases and is now at 108,819 cases total.

