



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Immediate call to halt all Tenant Evictions, Utility Disconnections, and provide Emergency Rental Support

WINNIPEG, MB: Anti-poverty advocates are calling on the Province of Manitoba to ensure no tenant is evicted from their home or experiences utility disconnections effective immediately. Manitoba should join other jurisdictions across Canada and around the world who have taken leadership in this area.

Evicting people into homelessness during this pandemic goes against the calls of our provincial state of emergency related to social distancing and protecting public health. The Residential Tenancies Branch must suspend all hearings, including mediated agreements, that may result in evictions.

The public health crisis of COVID-19 only exacerbates the disproportionate challenges for low-income renters in our province. Shutting off heat and water for people who are already vulnerable is inhumane. The City of Winnipeg needs to follow the lead of Manitoba Hydro and state clearly that Water and Waste will suspend water cut-offs.

Many households are now facing a loss of income due to sudden unemployment, making rent and utility payments improbable for the foreseeable future. An immediate emergency rent relief program must be implemented to assist these households.

Support for renters and low-income people has been noticeably absent from announcements from all levels of government so far. When asked about these tenant related issues today, Premier Pallister indicated that more measures are on the way next week for individual Manitobans. We expect the actions outlined above to be included in next week's announcement.

The Right to Housing Coalition is a group of individuals and organizations concerned about the shortage of affordable (including social) housing. The Coalition recommends housing policies and programs to three levels of government that would result in decent housing for all.

Make Poverty History Manitoba is a coalition of groups and individuals working to end poverty in Manitoba.

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