

Resolution No.:	<u>20-64</u>
Introduced:	<u>February 28, 2023</u>
Adopted:	<u>March 7, 2023</u>

**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Lead Sponsor: Council President Evan Glass

Co-Sponsors: Councilmembers Fani-González, Stewart, Albornoz, Katz, Jawando, Sayles,
Council Vice-President Friedson, and Councilmembers Mink and Luedtke

SUBJECT: Calling on the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly to Allocate \$175 Million in Fiscal 2024 to Help an Estimated 17,000 Maryland Families Avoid Eviction

Background

1. Anyone can find themselves temporarily unable to pay their rent due to a medical emergency, car accident, funeral, or job loss. The past two pandemic years have shown that such economic setbacks do not have to become catastrophic events that result in eviction.
2. The Montgomery County Council unanimously approved a COVID-19 Rental Assistance appropriation of \$2 million to the Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget. With assistance from state and federal partners, the funds grew to over \$100 million dollars to prevent homelessness and evictions in Montgomery County.
3. Emergency rental assistance helped over 100,000 Maryland households avoid eviction during the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery period, including 12,087 households in Montgomery County.
4. Evictions in Fiscal Years (FY) 2020 and 2021 decreased substantially, with a 77% reduction from FY19 to FY21. This can largely be attributed to new and strengthened eviction prevention resources, such as the federal moratorium enacted during the pandemic, as a response to the increase in vulnerability to evictions.
5. The 2022 nationwide homeless count was flat from the previous 2 years. This has been attributed to widespread eviction moratoriums, billions in rental assistance, and an expansion of federal housing vouchers that fortified the safety net.

6. Some of these resources have expired or been reduced in strength, which has corresponded with an increase in evictions in FY22. Montgomery County and jurisdictions throughout Maryland are facing a funding cliff in March and April of 2023 that will end emergency rental assistance throughout the state.
7. As of early July 2022, the failure to pay rent cases being heard in the Montgomery County District Court were from October and November of 2021, immediately after the federal eviction moratorium was struck down by the Supreme Court. This backlog shows that the FY22 figures are just the beginning of what may become a massive wave of evictions in Montgomery County.
8. Eviction prevention furthers gender and racial equity: Of the households that avoided eviction with help from Maryland's current emergency and rental assistance program, 70% were women-led and 74% were Black-led. Trends in eviction demographics show that if this program ends, these families will likely be subject to eviction at much higher rates than other families.
9. Housing instability and the threat of homelessness lead to anxiety and mental health stresses for entire families. Fifty-two percent (52%) of households facing eviction in Maryland are families with children.
10. By creating an allocation of State funds for emergency rental assistance and a right to counsel in evictions and housing stability services, Maryland can create a more equitable, sustainable housing economy.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

- Montgomery County affirms its ongoing commitment to provide safe and affordable housing for all Montgomery County residents.
- Montgomery County calls upon the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly to allocate \$175 million in fiscal year 2024 to help an estimated 17,000 Maryland families avoid eviction.

This is a correct copy of Council action.



Judy Rupp
Clerk of the Council