GENERAL:

Who does this ordinance apply to?
The ordinance is aimed at protecting tenants who are at risk of eviction due to financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, in an effort to keep people housed and protect the health and wellbeing of the community. We encourage all tenants and landlords to work together to avoid evictions.

What is the goal of this ordinance?
1) To protect the health and well-being of the whole community during this state of emergency; 2) to stabilize the rental housing market by reducing displacement; and 3) to avoid increasing the homeless population.

Is this ordinance retroactive?
No. This ordinance will be applied to any eviction resulting from economic losses related to the novel coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic effective immediately starting on March 23rd, 2020.

How long is this ordinance in effect?
This ordinance shall expire on May 31st, 2020, but can be extended by a vote of the City Council.

TENANTS:

Will tenants still be responsible for any unpaid rents?
Yes, this ordinance does NOT relieve tenants of their rental obligations. Renters should contribute the amount that they can each month, and will still be responsible for paying any back rent owed to their landlords.

How and when should tenants notify their landlord if unable to pay their rent?
To be protected under this Ordinance, tenants must notify their landlord in writing (including email or text) as soon as they know they will be unable to pay their full rent. Tenants are required to pay all that portion of rent they are able to pay, and provide documentation to their landlord showing that their loss of income is due to any one or more of the following:

a) tenant was sick with COVID-19 or caring for a household or family member who is sick with COVID-19;
b) tenant experienced a lay-off, loss of hours, or other income reduction resulting from COVID-19 or the state of emergency;
c) tenant’s compliance with a recommendation from a government agency to stay home, self-quarantine, or avoid congregating with others during the state of emergency;
d) tenant’s need to miss work to care for a home-bound school-age child;
e) tenant’s need to miss work to care for a family member that is deemed high risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

LANDLORDS:

Can a landlord still evict a tenant for non-COVID related issues?
The goal of the ordinance is provide stability for renters who may be experiencing economic hardship as a result of the current crisis. Landlords are encouraged to delay all evictions, but may still terminate a lease in certain cases. Landlords are also encouraged to provide additional notice to tenants.

What resources are available to landlords who depend on rental income to pay their mortgages?
Landlords are encouraged to reach out to their lenders immediately following notification from their tenants. This ordinance encourages banks and financial institutions to halt foreclosures and related evictions resulting from missed mortgage payments. Additionally, congress is likely to address this issue in upcoming federal relief packages.
What resources are available to tenants whose income has been reduced or lost as a result of the COVID-19?

The California Department of Labor and Workforce Development [https://www.labor.ca.gov/coronavirus2019/](https://www.labor.ca.gov/coronavirus2019/) includes information on: paid family leave, disability insurance, unemployment insurance, paid sick leave, and worker’s compensation. See the attached summary chart detailing the different programs available and how to use them.

PG&E has initiated a moratorium on service disconnections for non-payment for both residential and commercial customers, effective immediately and until further notice.

City of Watsonville water, sewer and solid waste utilities will not charge late fees or proceed with utility shut offs. This Ordinance does not waive payment of utility bills.

The Housing Authority of Santa Cruz County [https://www.hacosantacruz.org/](https://www.hacosantacruz.org/) administers several programs for tenants and homeowners including a Security Deposit Program and a Property Tax Postponement Program.

Community Action Board (CAB) maintains a Rental Assistance Program with for income qualified tenants. This is an eviction prevention program and offers rental/mortgage assistance.

Families in Transition (FIT) [https://www.fitsantacruz.org/](https://www.fitsantacruz.org/) provides temporary rental assistance and case management to families who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA), 21 Carr Street, Watsonville (831) 724-2253 provides legal assistance to low-income families.

Watsonville Law Center [https://www.watsonvilletlawcenter.org/](https://www.watsonvilletlawcenter.org/) (831) 722-2845 Provides free legal services to low-income individuals and families.
Can a landlord still evict a tenant for non-COVID related issues?
The goal of the ordinance is provide stability for renters who may be experiencing economic hardship as result of the current crisis. Landlords are encouraged to delay all evictions, but may still terminate a lease in certain cases. Landlords are also encouraged to provide additional notice to tenants.

What resources are available to landlords who depend on rental income to pay their mortgages?
Landlords are encouraged to reach out to their lenders immediately following notification from their tenants. This ordinance encourages banks and financial institutions to halt foreclosures and related evictions resulting from missed mortgage payments. Additionally, congress is likely to address this issue in upcoming federal relief packages.