STATE OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

GARLIN GILCHRIST II
LT. GOVERNOR

SECRETARY OF SENATE
2020 APR 20 AM10:35

EXECUTIVE ORDER

No. 2020-54

Temporary prohibition against entry to premises for the purpose of removing or excluding a tenant or mobile home owner from their home

Rescission of Executive Order 2020-19

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death. It is caused by a new strain of coronavirus not previously identified in humans and easily spread from person to person. There is currently no approved vaccine or antiviral treatment for this disease.

On March 10, 2020, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services identified the first two presumptive-positive cases of COVID-19 in Michigan. On that same day, I issued Executive Order 2020-4. This order declared a state of emergency across the state of Michigan under section 1 of article 5 of the Michigan Constitution of 1963, the Emergency Management Act, 1976 PA 390, as amended, MCL 30.401 et seq., and the Emergency Powers of the Governor Act of 1945, 1945 PA 302, as amended, MCL 10.31 et seq.

In the three weeks that followed, the virus spread across Michigan, bringing deaths in the hundreds, confirmed cases in the thousands, and deep disruption to this state's economy, homes, and educational, civic, social, and religious institutions. On April 1, 2020, in response to the widespread and severe health, economic, and social harms posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, I issued Executive Order 2020-33. This order expanded on Executive Order 2020-4 and declared both a state of emergency and a state of disaster across the State of Michigan under section 1 of article 5 of the Michigan Constitution of 1963, the Emergency Management Act, and the Emergency Powers of the Governor Act of 1945.

The Emergency Management Act vests the governor with broad powers and duties to "cop[e] with dangers to this state or the people of this state presented by a disaster or emergency," which the governor may implement through "executive orders, proclamations, and directives having the force and effect of law." MCL 30.403(1)-(2). Similarly, the Emergency Powers of the Governor Act of 1945 provides that, after declaring a state of emergency, "the governor may promulgate reasonable orders, rules, and regulations as he or she considers necessary to protect life and property or to bring the emergency situation within the affected area under control." MCL 10.31(1).

The current states of emergency and disaster would be exacerbated by the additional threats to the public health related to removing or excluding people from their residences during the COVID-19 pandemic. To reduce the spread of COVID-19, protect the public health, and provide essential protections to vulnerable Michiganders, it is reasonable and necessary to provide temporary relief from certain eviction-related requirements and to temporarily prohibit the removal or exclusion of a tenant or mobile home owner from their residential premises, except in extreme circumstances.

Executive Order 2020-19 provided such relief. This order clarifies that relief and extends its duration, as it remains reasonable and necessary to suppress the spread of COVID-19 and protect the public health and safety of this state and its residents. With this order, Executive Order 2020-19 is rescinded.

Acting under the Michigan Constitution of 1963 and Michigan law, I order the following:

1. Due to the protection that a residential home provides from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need to contain self-quarantined and self-isolated individuals within a residential home, no person shall remove or exclude from leased residential premises or residential premises held under a forfeited executory contract a tenant, a vendee of a forfeited executory contract, or a person holding under a tenant or vendee, except when the tenant, vendee, or person holding under them poses a substantial risk to another person or an imminent and severe risk to property. This order should be broadly construed to effectuate that purpose. This section is effective immediately and continues until May 15, 2020 at 11:59 pm.

2. Nothing in this order is intended to abrogate the judicial power, which is vested exclusively in this state's one court of justice by section 1 of article 6 of the Michigan Constitution of 1963. This order does not affect the inherent power of a judge to order equitable relief.

3. Nothing in this order shall be construed to abrogate the obligation to pay or right to receive payment due under a lease, nor to prohibit a landlord from making a demand for the payment of rent. Any demand for the payment of rent, however, must not include a demand for possession, or other threat of eviction, based on the nonpayment of rent. Effective immediately and continuing until May 15, 2020 at 11:59 pm, any service of a demand for payment may not be made by personal delivery.

4. Due to the protection that a residential home provides from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need to contain self-quarantined and self-isolated individuals within a residential home, no person may enter residential property in order to remove or exclude from the premises a tenant, a vendee of a forfeited executory contract, a person holding under a tenant or vendee, or the personal property of a tenant, vendee, or person holding under them, including pursuant to a writ authorizing restoration of a plaintiff to full, peaceful possession of premises under section 5744 of the RJA, MCL 600.5744, except when the tenant, vendee, or person holding under them poses a substantial risk to another person or an imminent and severe risk to property. This section is effective immediately and continues until May 15, 2020 at 11:59 pm.

5. Due to the protection that a residential home provides from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need to contain self-quarantined and self-isolated individuals within a residential home, a sheriff, under-sheriff or constable, deputy, or other officer must not serve process requiring forfeiture of leased residential premises or residential premises held under a forfeited executory contract. Any requirements to that effect imposed by the RJA are suspended. This section is effective immediately and continues until May 15, 2020 at 11:59 pm.

6. Due to the protection that a residential home provides from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need to contain self-quarantined and self-isolated individuals within a residential home, no person may deny a mobile home owner access to their mobile home, except when the mobile home owner's tenancy has been terminated because the mobile home owner poses a substantial risk to another person or an imminent and severe risk to property. This section is effective immediately and continues until May 15, 2020 at 11:59 pm.

7. Until thirty (30) days after the restrictions on eviction provided by sections 1 through 6 expire, any statutory limits on the court of this state to adjourn any proceedings, toll any redemption periods or limitations periods, or extend any deadlines are suspended.

8. As used in this order, all terms have the meaning provided by the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, as amended.

9. Executive Order 2020-19 is rescinded.

10. Consistent with MCL 10.33 and MCL 30.405(3), a willful violation of this order is a misdemeanor.

11. A copy of this order will be transmitted to the State Court Administrative Office.

Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of Michigan.

Date: April 17, 2020

Time: 4:06 pm

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

By the Governor:

SECRETARY OF STATE