



ROCKY MOUNTAIN
Communities
Building Brighter Futures at Home

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PRESS RELEASE:

***Nonprofit Housing Providers in East Colfax Unite to
Announce Moratorium on Evictions in Response to COVID-19***

EAST COLFAX, CO: On Monday, March 23rd, 2020, Hope Communities and Rocky Mountain Communities (RMC), two of the largest nonprofit affordable housing providers in East Colfax, came together to provide immediate support to the residents of East Colfax nonprofit apartment complexes by declaring a moratorium on evictions to stabilize the housing of hundreds of East Colfax families.

Sharon Knight, CEO of Hope Communities, stated “As nonprofit housing providers from the East Colfax neighborhood, we have been steadfast in our commitment to keep our residents stably housed. That commitment continues now and we have set additional measures in place to minimize risk for our community in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. We know our clients are some of the most vulnerable in the city and feel a great responsibility to help them through this difficult time.”

The [East Colfax Nonprofit Renter Relief Platform](#) launched today by the collective of nonprofit providers in East Colfax states that they will not initiate evictions or legal notices for nonpayment, they will not charge late fees, and they will not seek increased rent for people unable to pay because they have been affected by COVID-19, ie. who are sick, are quarantined, have jobs that were ended or significantly reduced as a result of mandate or lack of business, or don't have childcare and are unable to work with kids home from school. The commitment is in place for at least two months, renewed monthly by housing providers until the height of the pandemic has passed, or circumstances prevent them from continuing. In addition to housing stability, these organizations will be offering direct support to residents in need throughout the pandemic.



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This decision came out of a collaborative partnership between the East Colfax Neighborhood Association, the East Colfax Community Collective, and East Colfax nonprofit housing providers who came together last week to discuss the potential actions the East Colfax community could take to protect residents at risk of displacement.

“For the last year and a half, ECNA has been working to prevent displacement in our neighborhood,” said Megan Tortorelli of the Board of Directors of the East Colfax neighborhood Association. “When it became clear a couple of weeks ago that COVID-19 was going to cause large-scale financial hardship, our first thought was how can our RNO help to protect the 65% of East Colfax residents who were already at risk of displacement knowing that these neighbors would likely be the hardest hit by job losses and school closures. It was definitely a grim moment when we realized this pandemic could cause more displacement in East Colfax in a few months than we would have seen in several years.”

Rocky Mountain Communities CEO, Dontae Latson added, “this collaborative effort was an imperative step towards practicing the strength of collective impact by working together to ensure that residents are able to maintain stable housing during a time in which employers are considering business decisions that will likely result in limited work hours and reductions in force. We recognize that this is a new reality for millions of people, especially those in the services industry and this is why we have decided to create a local moratorium to provide immediate support to our residents.”

“The action taken today by East Colfax nonprofit housing providers is the prime example of the leadership we need to see in this moment of crisis in our community,” stated Brendan Greene, Co-founder of the East Colfax Community Collective. “Relief efforts for COVID-19 across the board must account for historic inequities and target resources to those who are most in need. We call on others to follow the leadership of Hope Communities and Rocky Mountain Communities and call on the funders to direct critical resources to these efforts and be the backstop to the nonprofit housing providers who are the backbone of our community.”

Tom Meyer has been a resident of Hidden Brook Apartments for 26 years and is retired and living on a fixed income. “This announcement makes me happy for my neighbors because I know they are struggling. Many of my neighbors are refugees and have low income and might not have the same access to public benefits that I do. By taking this action, these nonprofits are showing us that they support us and are showing compassion for the needs of the people they serve.”
