



When Your Income Drops

Keep a Roof Overhead

When you rank your bills in order of priority, chances are shelter and utilities are at the top of the list.

Contact the lender. Explain your situation and try to work out an alternative payment schedule. Before calling, prepare a projection of income and expenses, and a plan for continuing to meet at least part of the payments. If you are having trouble paying your mortgage loan, consider talking to [a counselor approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#). Housing counselors can provide advice on buying a home, renting, defaults, foreclosures, and credit issues. These counselors are available at little or no cost to you.

Contact your utility providers. If you are having trouble meeting payments, contact your utility provider. The utility company will work with you on a payment schedule. You may be asked to sign a “pay agreement” laying out the manner in which you will meet your obligations. If you are having trouble paying your utility bills, contact your township trustee, your county’s office of the Division of Family and Children, or connect with a [resource navigator at Indiana 211](#), to assist with utility bills.

Think of alternatives. Consider alternative ways to cover mortgage payments. Could you rent a spare room or share the house and the mortgage payments with others? Assess your housing options realistically. If you rent your home or apartment, be familiar with the terms of your lease. More [mortgage repayment options](#) can be found on the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s website.

Be aware of fraud & scams. Unfortunately, scammers take advantage of desperate situations. If information sounds too good to be true, it is probably a scam. Be aware of fraudulent advertisements from companies willing to pay your mortgage, lower your interest rate, refinance a loan or save your home from foreclosure. Indiana Attorney General, Curtis Hill has provided a [list of tips to avoid phishing scams](#) during the coronavirus pandemic. Stay current on scam and fraud alerts by visiting the [Indiana Attorney General’s Website](#).

Know your rights. During this state of emergency, Governor Eric Holcomb has announced that no residential eviction proceedings or foreclosure actions may be initiated, and providers of essential utility services are prohibited from discontinuing service to customers. This does not relieve the individual of obligations to pay rent or mortgage payments. Read the full [temporary prohibition on eviction and foreclosures executive order](#) online.