

Minister O'Brien confirms reintroduction of eviction moratorium

From [Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage](#)

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- Commercial rates waiver for Q1 also agreed by Cabinet
- Construction to remain open

The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage Darragh O'Brien TD has confirmed the reintroduction of the eviction moratorium from midnight as a result of the return of 5km restrictions on people's movements.

Minister O'Brien also confirmed that his Department is working on a package to cover commercial rates waivers for affected businesses for Q1 2021 and that construction remains an essential service under these new restrictions. Commenting the Minister said:

“The urgent legislation which we enacted back in October means that any time there is a 5km restriction imposed on people's movements, in line with public health restrictions, the moratorium on evictions automatically kicks-in.

“This legislation gives tenants clear legal protections by effectively stopping evictions for the period of duration of 5km travel restrictions and by adding a further ten-day grace period to allow people to find new accommodation in the very small number of cases in which this may be necessary.

“While there was some opposition to this targeted and balanced measure back in October it is clear that this legislation, along with the legislation protecting tenants in rent arrears due to Covid-19 and at risk of losing their tenancy which was first enacted back in August and will operate into April 2021, is working to protect those most affected by this pandemic.”

Minister O'Brien also confirmed that Local Authorities would be supported by Government to provide commercial rates waivers to businesses forced to close during these new level 5 restrictions. Commenting he said:

“These additional restrictions are very disappointing for business owners across the country having to shut their doors once more. Having worked closely with Tánaiste Varadkar and in consultation with the Taoiseach we agreed that a commercial rates waiver would offer struggling businesses some relief.

“It is expected that this further rates waiver will cost in the region of €160m and by providing this funding my Department is ensuring that Local Authorities can continue their vital work

without fear of financial hardship. To date my Department has paid out approximately €730 million euro in commercial rates waivers to Local Authorities.”

Finally Minister O’Brien confirmed that construction would remain an essential service under the new restrictions:

“The construction sector is not only a key driver of our economy, but it is also vital to addressing our most pressing social problem – our housing shortfall. I want to see house builds completed, new projects get off the ground and adaptation works take place. It is important that we make up for ground lost to COVID-19 earlier in the year and that we reach the maximum possible output while ensuring the safety of those working in the sector. Since the outbreak of the pandemic the construction industry has responded swiftly and I’d like to thank them again for their resilience.”