

**\*\*\*SPAM\*\*\* For Immediate Release**

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**From the Office of Sen. Joyce Waddell, NC Senate**  
Mecklenburg County

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, July 12, 2021

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## Greetings:

*Our week-long break has come to an end and we will get back to the business of producing a balanced budget. Generally, the budget process should be completed before the beginning of the fiscal year which begins on July 1st of every year. Unfortunately, this year like years before, the budget has not been agreed upon.*

*Sincerely,*  
**Joyce Waddell**

## Eviction Ban

Just days before it was set to expire, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention extended the nationwide eviction moratorium until July 31, the fourth and final time it will be extended. The CDC said this month-long extension is to allow time for governments to allocate aid from rental assistance programs, funded by federal COVID-19 stimulus payments. Up to 177,000 households in North Carolina are behind on rent, with an average household debt of \$2,800, according

to analysis of June's U.S. Census Household Pulse Survey from National Equity Atlas, which studies social equity among states and regions. North Carolina's statewide eviction moratorium is over.

Along party lines and with Republicans against extension, the N.C. Council of State ended the statewide order, but the CDC order still protects eligible tenants in North Carolina. Landlord representatives and housing advocates stated that the difference between state and federal policies could cause confusion among landlords and tenants.

The Governor first issued the statewide moratorium in October, and it was in line with the CDC's already existing nationwide moratorium. The federal order, just like North Carolina's order, protects people from evictions only in cases of nonpayment where the tenant has lost income due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was unable to pay rent. Evictions for criminal activity on the rental property are still allowed under the CDC order. To be eligible under the CDC order, tenants must declare themselves eligible by attesting in writing that they could not pay rent due to income loss because of the pandemic. In addition to income loss, tenants must also attest that they received a stimulus check, were not required to report income to the Internal Revenue Service in 2020, or earn less than \$99,000 a year as an individual or less than \$198,000 as a joint filer.

There is one key eligibility difference between the CDC eviction moratorium and the now expired statewide order. Under the CDC order, it is the responsibility of the tenant to declare eligibility and to submit that in writing to their landlord. The Governor's order required landlords to provide a blank declaration form before moving to evict their tenant.

From March to June of last year and since September North Carolina has been under an eviction moratorium for tenants impacted by COVID-19. For almost all that time, rental aid from the government to compensate for landlords' lost income has not been available. Using federal money from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, or CARES, North Carolina created a rental assistance program, the Housing Opportunities and Prevention of Eviction, or HOPE. After starting in October with over \$100 million, the program ran out of money in a month and stopped accepting applications.

North Carolina didn't receive any rental aid from the federal government until December. Another batch of assistance came in March, but it took a few months for North Carolina, and most of the country, to get the programs ready to take applications. The HOPE

program didn't reopen until mid-May.

## COVID Numbers

Top officials are renewing their calls for unvaccinated people to get their shots after North Carolina reached a six-week high for new COVID-19 cases. The N.C. Department of Health and Human Services reported Thursday 630 new cases statewide — the highest daily total since 747 on May 28. There also were 15 additional COVID-19 related deaths statewide listed.

Though the state's key COVID-19 metrics are far below where they were at the height of the pandemic in January and February, cases have increased by 12% during July, while hospitalizations are up 8% since July 3. DHHS lists COVID-19 cases and deaths on the day they are confirmed by medical providers and public health officials, so people may have been infected or may have died days or weeks before their cases were counted. "Don't wait to vaccinate. Serious illness, hospitalization, death and the long-term effects experienced by many who have had COVID-19 are preventable with vaccines," the state's health secretary, said in a statement.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has classified the Delta variant as a "variant of concern" because it spreads faster than other COVID-19 variants, and there is a possible increased risk of hospitalization. The CDC said North Carolina is one of 24 states with a noticeable recent increase in cases that also includes most of the Southeast. Local and state public-health officials have been expressing concerns about the delta variant for several weeks, particularly considering projections that it could be the predominant local and statewide COVID-19 version by the end of July.

## Social Studies

North Carolina's new social studies standards may be revised yet again, even as teachers are expected to use the new diversity-infused standards this fall. The State Board of Education voted 6-5 on Thursday to approve "unpacking documents" that list suggested topics and assignments in middle school and high school social studies classes. The optional guidance documents suggest topics like the LGBTQ movement and assignments such as studying how Cesar Chavez unionized farmworkers. The vote went along partisan lines, with the Democratic majority voting yes and the Republican board

members voting no.

“I personally have confidence that our districts and teachers will use the standards and the supporting documents to provide a classroom experience that gives our students a deep understanding of our history, inspiration to continue to work on perfecting our union and an ability to deal with the richness of experience and viewpoints that are found in every classroom in North Carolina,” said a board member who chairs the committee that oversaw the new standards.

The new guidance documents and K-12 social studies standards will go into effect for the 2021-22 school year. But the state board chairman said they will consider in August a proposal from Republican State Superintendent that could lead to the standards being revised again. The board member said they want the State Superintendent’s proposal “to include experiences of Americans across all our similarities and differences as well as our pledge to equity in the whole child.”

Senator Waddell was in attendance at the Charlotte transit center with the Governor and several other elected officials at a vaccine center giving shots to many who might have challenges going to other designated centers.

*I had hoped our state would lead other states in the effort to eradicate this virus. Unfortunately, it appears that because of the variant, our numbers are heading in the wrong direction. With the efforts by some to remove masks from schools, this may become a problem. Please continue to wash your hands, get vaccinated, and if in a large crowd, wear your mask.*

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