

PRESS RELEASE

June 28, 2021

Ali Rabe
Executive Director, Jesse Tree
208-283-4010
ali@jessetreeidaho.org
1121 W Miller Street
Boise, ID 83702



Federal eviction moratorium extended for 30 days, but many Idaho families are still being summoned to eviction court.

The federal eviction moratorium has been extended until July 31; however, many of our most vulnerable neighbors are not being served with rental assistance or are not eligible to be protected from eviction. In September of 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a federal eviction moratorium, meant to put a temporary halt on eviction for qualifying renters. This moratorium was extended by the Trump administration through the end of January and then, by the Biden administration through the end of March 2021. The moratorium was again extended through the end of June with additional enforcement guidance, at which time Jesse Tree witnessed a dip in eviction court hearings in the state of Idaho. When the moratorium was again set to expire in June, the Biden administration extended it until July 31, 2021.

Despite the moratorium being in place since September and millions of dollars in federal rental assistance resources being made available through government agencies, local organizations have continued to see large numbers of people summoned to eviction court, sleeping in emergency shelters, or living in hotels or their car. The number of weekly court cases in Ada and Canyon Counties has remained steady throughout the moratorium (see overall annual eviction numbers in the chart below). Jesse Tree staff have been in eviction court weekly, and have only witnessed the moratorium be successfully enforced one time. Jesse Tree anticipates the most recent moratorium extension may help Idaho as some additional enforcement guidance is being provided. The Biden administration has pledged to convene a whole-of-government approach to strategize and get the word out about eviction prevention.

Jesse Tree is eager to see how this guidance will be implemented at the local level over the next 30 days, but worries that the eviction moratorium and \$200 million in federal rental assistance inherently contain too many barriers to access. There are resources out there for those not eligible for federal assistance: Jesse Tree is now able to assist at least 50-100 renting families per month with rent and security deposit assistance funded by government, individuals, corporations, and foundations. Jesse Tree also provides support and connection to community resources based on each family's unique needs. Jesse Tree and other nonprofits are also working to help administer Idaho's federal funding, but eligibility and documentation requirements can prevent some tenants from accessing it. Many programs across the country are experiencing issues with getting the federal funding out quickly enough.

Even though there is a moratorium and federal funding available, the negative effects of job loss and the growing housing crisis are still very real for many of our neighbors. Many are not eligible for federal assistance because their situations are not COVID-related. One example from a client we helped last week: a 71 year old disabled woman living alone on a fixed income had her rent increased and was unable to cover it. She received a notice to evict with a court summons, and did not know how to access court via zoom. Our interns talked her through the process and ran her through several trials of zoom. She successfully appeared in court online the

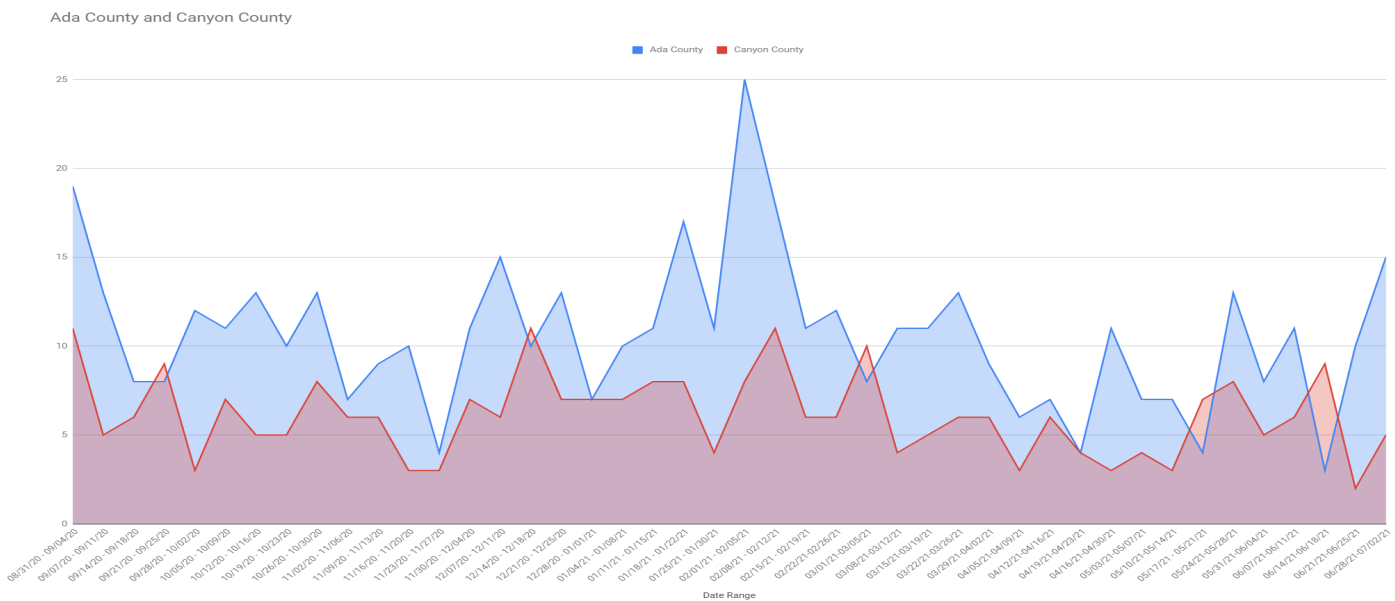
next day, and Jesse Tree helped negotiate an extra month in her current residence and paid her late rental payment fees and June rent.

The solution to keeping a family housed is not always as simple as rental assistance. In eviction court over the last several months, Jesse Tree has witnessed some general trends:

- Many eviction court cases are still occurring across Idaho, despite the moratorium, and a large majority are related to rental increases and nonpayment of rent.
- Many families are moving out of the Boise area to Payette and Elmore Counties due to unsustainable rent increases and a severe rental shortage.
- Families are being evicted from their mobile homes as the land is being sold for development. Many of those families are on a month-to-month lease and only receive 30 days' notice to move. The cost to move a mobile home is at least \$10,000 and many families cannot afford to move their home in time.
- More cases involve tenants moving out before court, as their rent has been increased significantly and they cannot find a job to increase their income.
- An increasing number of people are receiving 30 day notices from their landlords to non-renew the lease. This occurs because landlords are selling their properties, rehabbing their properties to lease out to higher-paying tenants, or because tenants have had past issues with nonpayment.

If you or someone you know is at risk of eviction or homelessness **please contact Jesse Tree at 208-383-9486 or www.jessetreeidaho.org/apply** to be connected with a case manager for assistance or to receive information about other resources available.

Ali Rabe is the Executive Director of Jesse Tree, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing eviction and homelessness.



Data and image on eviction court hearings from September 1, 2020 through July 2, 2021 in Ada County (blue) and Canyon County (red), provided by Jesse Tree.