



## Administrative Office of the Courts

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### **New Mexico eviction prevention efforts lauded at White House summit**

SANTA FE – Supreme Court Chief Justice C. Shannon Bacon today outlined successful efforts in New Mexico to prevent evictions and the state’s initiatives were lauded by a White House official as a model for reform.

Speaking virtually at a [White House summit on eviction prevention](#), the Chief Justice described how the Supreme Court in March 2020 ordered a moratorium on evictions for inability to pay rent and this year phased in a court-based Eviction Prevention and Diversion Program to assist tenants and landlords.

The state has awarded over \$148 million for rent, utilities, emergency housing and moving costs to help more than 44,000 households. The Department of Finance and Administration oversees the relief efforts funded by the federal American Rescue Plan to stabilize housing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Eviction filing rates have remained about 64% of historic averages statewide since a federal eviction moratorium ended in 2021 and eviction filings in Albuquerque have stayed at about 59% of historic averages, according to data from the White House and the [Eviction Lab](#) at Princeton University.

“We are really proud of this work,” said Chief Justice Bacon. “But it is just the start.”

New Mexico’s eviction prevention program was developed through the collaborative work of courts, state agencies, property owners, housing advocates, providers of legal services and local governments. Efforts are underway on “legislative reform to make space within the eviction scheme for programs like the Eviction Prevention and Diversion Program becoming the norm and making it mandatory,” the Chief Justice said.

The program’s “navigators” contact tenants and landlords after the filing of an eviction case. They help people apply for federally funded assistance from the state for rent, utilities and

housing relocation. Trained facilitators also are available to landlords and tenants who agree to try to negotiate a settlement. However, courts cannot legally order the parties to participate in the program or use a facilitator.

White House American Rescue Plan Coordinator Gene Sperling described New Mexico's collaborative approach to eviction prevention and use of navigators to help people facing the loss of housing as "models for reform." He said New Mexico's success was "really terrific" in light of predictions that evictions would skyrocket after the end of federal and state moratoriums.

The White House summit highlighted court-led eviction prevention efforts such as those in New Mexico, Michigan and New Orleans as well as state and local initiatives in Philadelphia, Cleveland, Oregon and Colorado.

New Mexico paused evictions longer than any other state, according to the Chief Justice. The eviction moratorium has been lifted in stages starting in February as the Eviction Prevention and Diversion Program was implemented across the state. The program began operating statewide in July.

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