

Recommended Payment Priorities

Corona– Participant Planning Team

March 2020

As we all brace for the economic impact through the Corona crisis, we are all working through the same questions.... How will I pay all of my bills? Which bills are priority? What happens if I do not pay my bills?

Here are a few **RECOMMENDATIONS**. We, The Factory Ministries, do not have authority to dictate which bills should be paid or to predict the impact of not paying bills. However, based on our research of how the government, utility companies, municipal buildings, and other organizations are handling this crisis, here are a few thoughts for **YOU** to consider.

First, even though companies are offering patience through this time, your bills will **NOT** go away. If you do not pay a bill, it will continue to stack up. We say this, not to worry you, but to remind you that we will still have to work through our **debts** on the other side of this crisis. Do the **BEST** you can to make sure you do not dig a hole too deep to climb out of. And, as always, do not forget that we are here to talk through your plan, worries, and ideas! Even if you just need a bit of encouragement – we are **HERE** for you 😊

Payment priority based on which commodities offer the **LEAST** amount of support:

1. **RENT:** even though the courts may be closed (meaning no evictions), as soon as they reopen, if you are behind, **YOU** may be evicted. Do **EVERYTHING** in your power to avoid losing your home. As always, **PAY RENT FIRST**.
 - a. **Communication with your landlord is KEY:** Talk to your landlord about your financial situation. Explain to your landlord how much you can pay and when you will pay. Promise your landlord (**AND FOLLOW THROUGH**) that your stimulus payment check **WILL** go towards your rent.
 - b. **Mortgage:** If you have been laid off and you expect to be late on your mortgage, call your bank **RIGHT AWAY**. It has been said that most banks are willing to work with you through this time if you **COMMUNICATE**.
2. **Car Payments:** At this time, we are not aware of any state-wide mandates for car loan lenders. We have seen some indication that lenders are willing to work with you **IF** you notify them of your financial situation. Again, it is key to stay on top of these payments if at all possible. If not, communication with your lender is **CRITICAL**.
 - a. Helpful article: <https://cars.usnews.com/cars-trucks/what-to-do-if-you-cant-make-your-car-payment>



3. **Gas:** CONSERVE. CONSERVE. CONSERVE. Be wise in how you use your gas money, however, we put this as a higher priority because this is NOT a resource that you will find at your local non-profit or through the government. There is no “forgiveness plan” for gas.
4. **Food:** Be sure to connect with your local food bank! Beyond that, make sure to save some money for purchasing food that your family may need that goes beyond what you can find at your local food bank. Be wise. Conserve well. STAY FED.
5. **Utilities:** As of now, utility companies have said that they will not send out shut off notices. Through this time, try your best to stay caught up, but we know that utility companies have forgiveness and payment plan options in place to help pay your debt when this crisis is over.
6. **Car Insurance:** Pennsylvania has urged all insurance companies in the state to work with policyholders by providing payment plans and extended grace periods, and to waive late charges and penalties.
 - a. Helpful article: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/advisor/2020/03/20/coronavirus-sparks-extended-insurance-payment-grace-periods/#6e54f85b5f8d>
7. **Cell Phone + Cable:** If you have been laid off, call your cell phone + cable right away to let them know that you may struggle to keep up. We know that phone + cable companies have SAID that they will not end service due to non payment through this time IF you communicate. We hope to see phone and cable companies develop forgiveness and payment plans!
8. **Student Loans:** As of March 26th, Federal student loans will occur 0% interest and borrowers have the option to pause payments for six months through the CARES act. If you are able to continue making payments, please do! This is a great time to get ahead. If you have a private loan, please call right away if you foresee having issues paying your bill.