

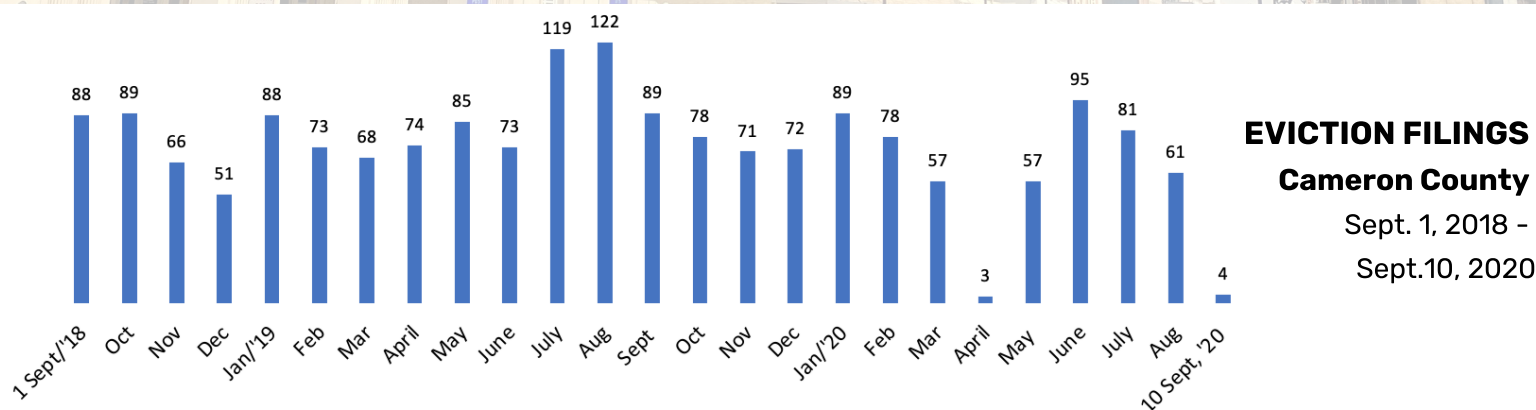
EVICTON: CAMERON COUNTY

FACT SHEET



October 26, 2020

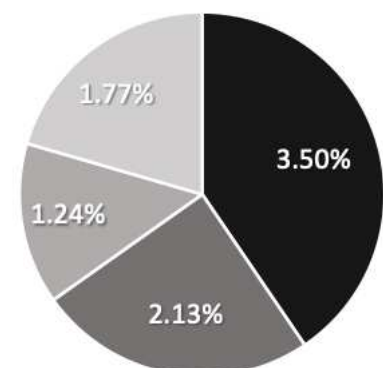
Eviction filing data collected by cdcb through open records requests to Cameron County Justice of the Peace Courts.



1,831 EVICTIONS
FILED SINCE
SEPT 2018

2+ AN AVERAGE OF
EVICTIONS FILED
PER DAY FOR THE
LAST TWO YEARS

301 EVICTIONS FILED
SINCE MORATORIUM
(3/27/2020)



■ Cameron ■ Willacy ■ Starr ■ Hidalgo

90+ LIKELY
SUCCESSFUL
EVICTIONS SINCE
MORATORIUM**

AVERAGE
HOUSEHOLD SIZE: **3.5**
Compared to 2.5
national average*

NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF EVICTION

- Previous eviction has been shown to significantly increase risk of unemployment (Desmond & Gershenson, 2016).
- Persons threatened by eviction are more likely to experience depression, high blood pressure, and alcohol dependence (Vasquez-Vera et al, 2017).
- Eviction and residential instability are closely linked to childhood trauma, as well as poor educational achievement (Sandstrom & Huerta, 2013; Gruman et al, 2013).
- A city's financial health is closely tied to the financial health of its residents, of which evictions play a large part (Urban Institute, 2017).

RGV FILING RATE*
EVICTIONS FILED PER 100
HOUSEHOLDS
Compared to 2.17%
national average

*on average according 2015 US Census data.

**based on 96 eviction cases ruled 'default judgments' in Cameron County since 3/27/20. If a tenant does not appear at their eviction trial, the landlord wins the eviction case by default judgment. True evictions likely exceed this number.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY

An eviction crisis exists in the Rio Grande Valley

cdcb has witnessed the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on low-income communities of color throughout the United States.

Despite the national moratorium on evictions issued in March, court records collected by cdcb indicate that the rate of eviction filings in Cameron County has remained high. In 2019, 473 evictions were filed from late March through August. During the same five months this year, despite an entire month of halted filings in April, over 300 eviction petitions were filed in Cameron County alone.

The threat of eviction alone has documented effects on the financial and physical health of individuals, families and cities, and in a persistent poverty area like the RGV, the economic stress caused by the pandemic hits especially hard.

The RGV's Eviction Crisis is Escalating

Over the last few months, cdcb has seen a marked increase in applications for Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA). As households struggle with increased unemployment and underemployment, it is clear that an increasing number of Cameron County residents are experiencing a housing crisis as they are unable to sustain their current rental payments.

Local, state, and federal governments are well poised to implement policies that directly mitigate the harm imposed by housing instability and eviction. In light of the tremendous financial stress experienced by households in the RGV during the coronavirus crisis, cdcb suggests the following:

Federal Level

- Extend the CDC Moratorium through July 2021.
- Expand limits to evictions without just cause.
- Increase federal appropriations for Tenant Based Rental Assistance
- Support passage of legislation that would provide new and retroactive Economic Impact Statements to all taxpayers and dependent children regardless of their immigration status, specifically for mixed immigration status households where one taxpayer maintains a SSN and the other an ITIN (S. 4071 and S. 4381)
- Support passage of the Monthly Economic Support Act (S.3784) that provides a cash rebates for individuals and children from March 2020 until 3 months after the Department of Health and Human Services determines that the public health emergency that has occurred on account of COVID19 has ended.

State Level

- Enact a statewide Eviction Moratorium through July 2021 in the absence of an extension of the national moratorium with the following prohibitions included:
- No eviction filings or removals permitted if the tenant has a documented COVID-19 hardship
- No increases in rent allowed while the COVID-19 public health pandemic is designated as a public health emergency by the Centers for Disease Control.
- Appropriate \$10 million from the Texas Economic Stabilization Fund for Tenant Based Rental Assistance and create an Individual Investor Relief fund to provide \$10 million to small individual investors to support the loss of rental income from tenants who have loss income due to COVID19.
- Set a defined cap on all late fees accrued by tenants during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Enforce timely statewide eviction filing and proceedings court records protocol.

Local Level

- Implement Tenant Protection Order in Cameron, Hidalgo, Willacy, and Starr Counties that will prohibit eviction proceedings and notices to vacate provide tenants with a 60-day grace period to make late rent payments due to a COVID-19 hardship through March 30, 2021.