



## News Release

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 25, 2020

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### **Board Moves Toward Strengthening Aid to Landlords and Tenants**

#### Supervisor Cortese's Proposal Calls for Expanding Mediation Services

In order to better respond to landlord-tenant disputes, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted on Tuesday, August 25, to focus on expanding county mediation services for tenants who have fallen behind on rent during the pandemic and their landlords.

The Board approved Supervisor Dave Cortese's call for expanded services at a time when there is a growing need for mediation services emerging from recent eviction moratoriums and the back payment of rent to landlords. With the loss of jobs because of COVID-19, thousands of tenants cannot pay rent and are at the brink of evictions and homelessness. At the same time, landlords also have financial burdens and limited cash flow.

Administration will return to the Board at the September 22 with a report.

"During these challenging times, tensions may be running high for both tenants and landlord," said Supervisor Cortese. "Sometimes all it takes is getting the two sides to sit down and work out a solution."

The mediation is a voluntary, non-binding process aimed at ensuring that a mutual resolution for all parties can be reached.

There are an estimated 43,490 households in Santa Clara County that are most at risk of eviction because residents have lost work with no replacement income, according to a report by Working Partnerships USA and the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley. These households are disproportionately people of color, women-headed households, and families with young children.

The County Office of Mediation and Ombuds Services, which conducts mediation service, was established in 1977 to help in the mediation of conflicts for County residents. OMOS is currently open during COVID-19, offering services by phone, email and video conference.

For more information, contact the Office of Supervisor Dave Cortese at 408-299-5030.