

The time for rent holidays is fast approaching

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The [Independent reported yesterday](#) that:

The government has been urged to freeze rent for people who can't work and are struggling to pay their bills during the coronavirus pandemic.

A [petition](#) calling for a “rent holiday” and to protect tenants from the threat of eviction has gathered more than 3,000 signatures, piling pressure on the housing secretary Robert Jenrick to act.

It would seem that work I have done on this blog has influenced this. As they note:

Richard Murphy, a chartered accountant and campaigner who runs Tax Research UK, believes any private renters who contract coronavirus should be able to live rent-free for up to three months.

He wrote in a recent blog post: “Far too many people have too few savings to survive major periods of economic inactivity without massive prejudice to their short-term and long-term wellbeing.”

“Should the epidemic spread then as a matter of statutory right any tenant should be provided with a minimum three-month rent-free period to ease the stress upon them whilst this crisis lasts.”

“I would suggest that the grant of that extension should be automatic to anyone who does not make a due payment of rent on the required date during the period of the epidemic. They should be automatically granted this extension by the landlord without having to make any further application or to complete any additional paperwork.”

I stand by that.

The paper notes that the government does not seem to agree. But that's all part of their strategy for making this as bad as possible.