

29 March 2020

THE TIME FOR URGENT ACTION IS NOW SAYS REIQ

Prime Minister Scott Morrison has announced a six-month moratorium on residential and commercial evictions as a result of financial distress if tenants are unable to meet their financial obligations. However, no further details were yet again provided.

“What we need is urgent action with clear directives right now for both commercial and residential tenants because there are far too many unanswered questions both businesses and people are still anxiously awaiting clarity on,” says Antonia Mercorella, CEO of The REIQ. “The Real Estate Institute of Queensland (REIQ) supports protective measures on evictions provided it is limited to cases where the full amount of rent is not able to be paid due to a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19). With 35% of Queensland’s population living in rental accommodation, the vast majority are managed by real estate professionals so it’s important the role they will play in achieving the outcomes of the Prime Minister’s moratorium are also recognised.

“With the real prospect of unemployment rates rising to a record 15%, the pandemic has people more than in a state of panic. The inability to maintain stable and secure shelter is just one of the many social issues people are facing due to the crisis,” continues Ms. Mercorella. “For property owners, it’s no easier. It’s not just a matter of pressing pause on mortgage repayments to set and forget for six months. Many mum and dad investors can barely cover the various costs associated with owning an investment property even with rent coming in so may not have any other choice but to sell their properties. It puts many at risk of bankruptcy. Consideration also needs to be given to those self-funded retirees whose only source of income is derived from an investment property.”

“The REIQ welcomes measures that support the safety and stability of shelter for all Queenslanders and we will work with the Department of Housing and Public Works to determine the parameters of the protective measures in the interests of tenants, property owners and real estate professionals,” further says Ms. Mercorella. “As the industry peak body, we will also work with the Palaszczuk Government to ensure any interim measures introduced have the appropriate mechanisms in place so as to prevent any exploitation”

“Real estate professionals manage close to 600,000 Queensland households through property management services. This is why it’s so critical that the role of real estate professionals are endorsed an essential service so we are able to achieve what the Prime Minister is asking for – for property owners and tenants ‘to sit down and come up with arrangements that enable them to get through this crisis,’” adds Ms. Mercorella. “This is where the role of real estate professionals are needed more than ever as most tenants don’t negotiate directly with property owners.”

-ENDS-

Media enquiries:

Olivier Björksäter-Bleylock

T: 0417 623 723 E: media@reiq.com.au