

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 20 July 2020

## Don't defer the crisis - warns new [Renters And Housing Union](#) as renters face mass evictions.



*In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, real estate agents have been found coercing recently unemployed renters into deferring rental payments instead of negotiating rent reductions, contravening government advice.*

RAHU has received hundreds of “Financial Hardship” forms that property agents are sending renters. RAHU believes these forms demand excessive personal information, and is concerned by agents' false claims to renters that these are “compulsory” to complete in order to negotiate rent reductions. Further, agents are falsely representing deferrals as rent reductions, often sneaking clauses to defer payments into the fine-print of new agreements.

An influx of recently unemployed renters are being stung with thousands of dollars of debt that they will simply be unable to pay in September. The member-run RAHU Victoria is pushing back against this mistreatment, as a collective voice for renters rights.

### **QUOTES ATTRIBUTABLE TO: Eirene - RAHU Organiser**

“This is wildly dishonest behaviour by real estate agents, and we won't stand for it. Negotiations need to be made in good faith, not through smoke and mirrors. RAHU is committed to clearing the air by pushing back on this mistreatment, and levelling the playing field for renters rights”.

“Deferring debt is not the solution. We need rent cancelled or reduced if we are to curb the oncoming wave of mass evictions come September. RAHU is committed to fight for our right of secure and affordable housing for all”.

“We will not accept agents' attempts to evict those of us who are unable to pay, despite the eviction moratorium. It is high time we used our own voice for our rights. A union run and organised by renters is what is needed to fight back, and that is what we are doing”.

### **Contact:**

Zachary 0411 783 469

Paddy 0407 712 579

[organise@rahu.org.au](mailto:organise@rahu.org.au)

Twitter: [@RAHUnion](#) FB: [@rentersandhousingunion](#)

*[Renters and Housing Union Victoria](#) is a newly formed rank-and-file union for renters and people in precarious housing. We organise collectively to fight for the right to safe and secure housing through self-advocacy, education, and frontline eviction defence.*