



# CAN I BE EVICTED FROM A HOTEL during the COVID-19 crisis in Louisiana?

Updated 5/19/2020

## Is my hotel fee still due during the COVID-19 crisis?

Yes, your hotel fee is still due. Checking into a hotel with the intent to not pay is considered “defrauding an innkeeper,” an offense under La. Revised Statute § 21:21.

## Can hotel staff put me out if I can't pay my hotel fee?

No. Only “appropriate lawful authority” may remove you, meaning a police officer or sheriff’s deputy. La. Revised Statute § 21:76. Note: you can access all the laws referenced in this document through Google.

## Can the hotel put me out if I am living in a hotel long-term and pay weekly?

If you are renting a hotel room long term as your primary residence and paying by the week, a judge might say you should be treated as a tenant. If you are a tenant, the hotel should go through the court eviction process. Right now Governor Edwards has suspended evictions statewide through June 5th, so you cannot legally be evicted. If this argument is unsuccessful, see below.

## Can the hotel put me out if I have only been at the hotel a few nights?

Even if the eviction laws don’t apply to you, the hotel must complete several steps before they can call an officer to put you out. First, the hotel must have given you written notice of the agreed-upon departure date and checkout time when you registered. Second, the hotel must give you at least 1 hour’s written or verbal notice that you must leave. La. Revised Statute § 21:75.

Third, the law says that the officer cannot evict you from a hotel during a “serious medical emergency,” so even if the hotel gave you proper notice, **it is illegal to put you out during a public health emergency declared by the Governor. La. Revised Statute § 21:76.**

## What should I do if a hotel tries to evict me during the COVID-19 crisis?

Communicate with management about your situation and make a good faith effort to work out a payment arrangement. If a hotel employee threatens you with violence, you can call the police if you feel comfortable. Be sure there is an adult in your hotel room at all times so that the hotel cannot lock you out by deactivating your key card. You can also show the hotel manager or the police this document or the laws it references. You may also be able to access free legal aid:

**Call the SLLS COVID-19 Hotline: 1-844-244-7871, or:**

New Orleans area: **1-504-529-1000 x. 223**

North shore: **1-985-345-2130**

Houma area: **1-985-851-5687**

Baton Rouge area: **225-448-0080**

Leave a message if you don't get through and say it's an emergency!