

Rental Eviction and the COVID-19 Pandemic

AVERTING A LOOMING CRISIS

Report Briefing and Discussion Webinar

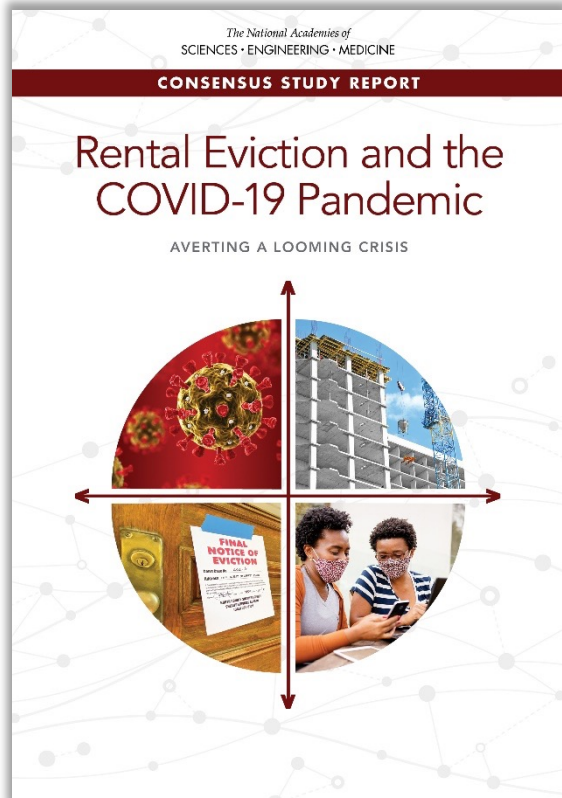
Wednesday, June 30, 2021

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Rental Eviction and the COVID-19 Pandemic: Averting a Looming Crisis

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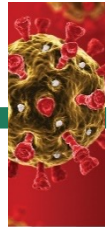
Study Chair
Karen Dynan, Harvard University

Response and Resilient Recovery Strategic Science Initiative

Complex issues and **uncertainties** surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts call for innovative approaches to the development of a strategic response

The scope of some problems is so great that no one office or even agency sees them as within its portfolio. As a result, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine established the Response and Resilient Recovery Strategic Science Initiative (R3SSI)

R3SSI selected rental evictions and housing instability as a **large, timely, and critically important problem** that would benefit from a strategic set of interventions



Chair

KAREN DYNAN, Harvard University

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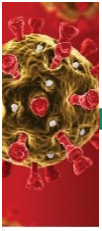
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The pandemic financially strained many renters



Pandemic-related job losses were concentrated among **low-wage workers**, some of whom were already **struggling to pay rent**, exacerbating **racial inequities** and **income gaps**

Millions of renters are currently in arrears, putting them at risk of losing their homes and putting some owners at risk of having to sell their properties

While economic growth is picking up, **the labor market is still very weak**

Government moratoriums aimed at helping to contain the virus have held back the number of rental evictions thus far, but **the federal moratorium expires on July 31**

Isn't help on the way?

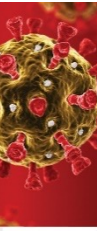
The Biden-Harris Administration recently announced steps to promote housing stability and the last two fiscal packages allocated **a considerable amount of relief** for renters (~\$50B)

But that money goes to the states **to channel in various ways** to renters and property owners

Government efforts to help struggling homeowners during the Great Recession **illustrated it can be very difficult to** deploy housing funds quickly and efficiently

Near-term risk—**wave of evictions**, with significant social and health costs

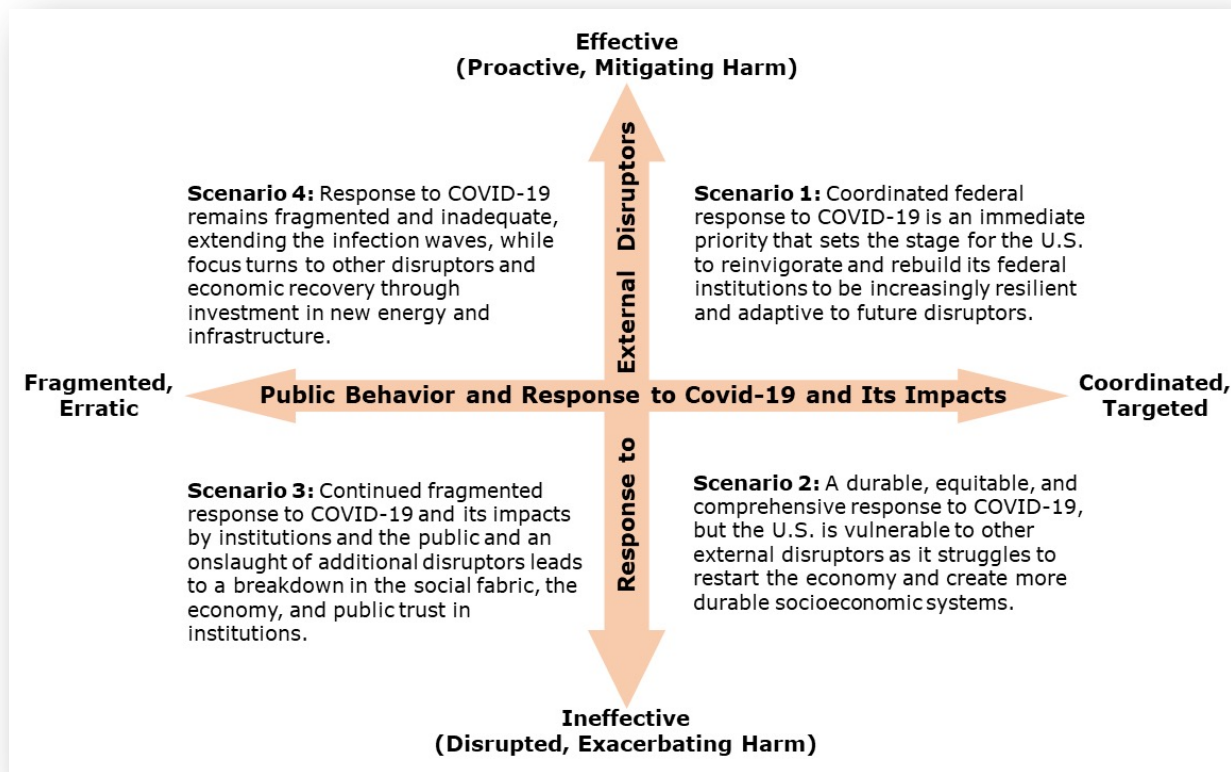
Longer-term risk—pre-pandemic **shortage of affordable housing exacerbated**; the system is left as or more vulnerable to future crises



Scenario planning was used to chart a path forward

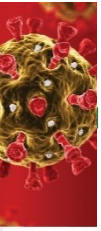
The high degree of uncertainty created by the pandemic required agile strategies and **full consideration of a wide range of possibilities**

The scenario planning approach helped **challenge deeply held assumptions**



Guiding Question

What actions can be taken by the government, private-sector entities, communities, and individuals to reduce rental housing instability and rental evictions exacerbated by COVID-19–related strains on household finances, and to mitigate the health, human dignity, social, and economic costs or impacts of those evictions that do occur?



Collaborative actions are needed

Housing policy takes a **wide range** of forms in the United States, with different programs funded and managed at **different levels of government**

Collaboration, coordination and cross-sector alignment among organizations at all levels are essential to meeting the needs of renters, service providers, and property owners

Local and state partners are best positioned to implement **community targeted strategies** with unique needs

Private-sector entities, nonprofits, and philanthropies can serve **social needs** that markets and governments cannot or do not serve adequately

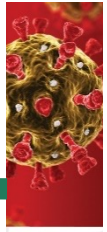


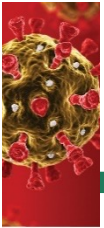
Goal 1: **Mitigate**—Bridge financial, social, and legal assistance

Strategy 1A: Harness existing social programs for broad, proactive, and targeted outreach to connect renters with financial and legal assistance

Strategy 1B: Provide assistance to renters in traditionally marginalized communities by scaling activities in community-based organizations

Strategy 1C: Expand and improve social safety net programs during the pandemic and beyond





Goal 2: **Inform**—Improve data collection and information use to support affected communities and inform policy makers



Strategy 2A: Improve data collection, reporting, and access to build actionable understanding of eviction



Strategy 2B: Develop a compendium of promising strategies for housing and public health authorities to mitigate evictions, housing instability, and their downstream health effects



Strategy 2C: Commission research to understand continuing housing instability problems and deploy efforts to address them

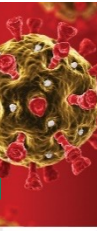
Goal 3: **Assist**—Make affordable housing fair and accessible

Strategy 3A: Increase the number of housing choice vouchers

Strategy 3B: Provide housing-search support for households eligible for housing vouchers

Strategy 3C: Reduce discrimination to protect tenants

Strategy 3D: Establish a program to provide credit counseling for tenants

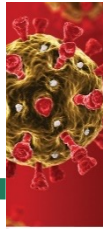


Goal 4: **Secure**—Preserve, provide, and expand safe affordable housing

Strategy 4A: Preserve the existing stock of affordable housing for renters, including both subsidized and unsubsidized units

Strategy 4B: Expand programs supporting the production of affordable housing

Strategy 4C: Reduce exclusionary zoning practices

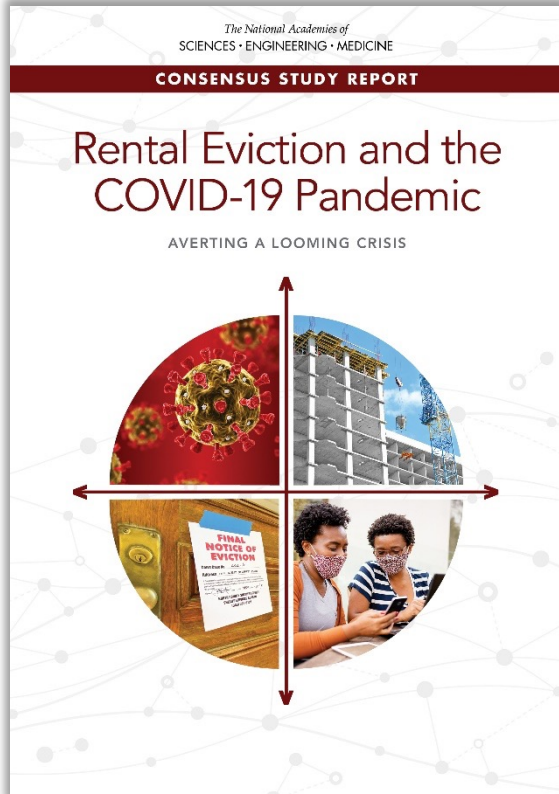


Acknowledgements

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- NASEM Staff

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Where to find information about the report

Visit www.nationalacademies.org/strategic-science-evictions

- PDF of the report for free download
- Interactive Summary
- Press Release
- Webinar recordings (*Coming soon*)
- Briefing slideshow

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QUESTIONS?

PANELISTS

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