

40.7%

*“Had such [**eviction and utility disconnection**] policies been in place across all counties (i.e. adopted as federal policy) from early March 2020 through the end of November 2020, our estimated counterfactuals show that policies that limit evictions could have **reduced COVID-19 infections by 14.2% and deaths by 40.7%.**”*

Jowers, Timmins, Bhavsar, Hu, and Marshall
NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH, 2021

Zachary mother calls on Legislature to take action following her eviction: 'Hardest time of my life'

BY PAUL COBLER | STAFF WRITER JAN 30, 2021 - 6:00 AM 3 min to read



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From left, Arielle Butler puts shoes on her children, Ali Butler, 3, and Aiden Butler, 4, before they go outside to play at the home they are renting, Thursday, January 28, 2021, in Zachary, La. [Buy Now](#)

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COVID housing impacts on families and children

- Evictions have always wreaked havoc on the lives of families and children
- They are strongly associated with adverse childhood experiences, negative educational outcomes, increased hospitalizations, food insecurity, and lead poisoning
- During COVID-19, evictions have also been a matter of life and death. Research shows that a nationwide comprehensive eviction moratorium, could have reduced COVID-19 deaths by 40.7%. Evictions are so dangerous because they force households to double-up with extended family or friends in exactly the kind of overcrowded, indoor environments that have been shown to be the most efficient ways to spread the virus.
- Despite this, Louisiana reopened eviction courts in June of 2020 and we've been relying on a patchwork of piecemeal federal regulations since then that have allowed thousands of families to be put out of their homes after COVID-related job/income losses.
- Eviction records can also prolong homelessness and overcrowding because they show up on credit reports and can blacklist families from future jobs or housing for years into the future.
- One renter in Zachary, LA was recently profiled in The Advocate after her family was evicted. Arielle Butler got behind on rent after she lost work during the pandemic and federal unemployment expired last summer. Her and her two small children, her younger brother, and her parents were all forced from their home and had to move into a one-room hotel room. When they went to look for an apartment in Zachary--which she was committed to getting back to because her five year old son has autism and is really well supported by his teachers there--she was told that the owners would do a credit/eviction record check and if anything came back she would be denied. She's now become an advocate for the thousands of other families in the same position.
- The Louisiana Fair Housing Action Center and a coalition of renters, public health and children's advocates are working to pass new protections to ensure that families who rent--and their children--are not punished for years to come because of job losses they had no control over.
- LaFHAC, which is working with Ms. Butler, is looking for families who have faced eviction, or the social workers, teachers, and others who have supported families dealing with housing insecurity or eviction during the pandemic. The stories of individual families and those who support them make a huge impact and can help further this work. If you have a story to share or want to know more, please contact Maxwell Ciardullo, Director of Policy and Communication with LaFHAC at mciardullo@lafairhousing.org or 504.708.8172.