

Beyond Today's Financial Headlines



Housing Insecurity in the Time of COVID-19

William R. Emmons and Lowell R. Ricketts Center for Household Financial Stability Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis September 23, 2020

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Overview

- Housing distress during the Great Recession: Is that what we should expect again?
 - Mortgage distress
 - Homeownership rates
 - Families doubling up in response to evictions and foreclosures
- Latest evidence on housing insecurity

2

MORTGAGE DISTRESS

In 2009, 10% of U.S. Mortgages in Serious Distress



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So Far, This Shock Looks Like 2007-08



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HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES

Older Boomers Set the Standard



Source: Census Bureau and our calculations

Younger Boomers Still 5 Pct. Pts. Below "Normal"



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Older Gen Xers ~6 Pct. Pts. Below "Normal"



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Younger Gen Xers: ~5-6 Pct. Pts. Below "Normal"



Older Millennials ~10 Pct. Pts. Below "Normal"



Younger Millennials 21% Below Younger Gen Xers — But That Was Near Housing-Bubble Peak



Homeownership Gaps Changed Little in 25 Years



Bursting Bubble Hit Black Homeownership Rate Hardest



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FAMILIES DOUBLING UP

Where Do People Who Lose Housing Go?



Family Size Increases After Recessions



Will Housing Distress Be As Severe This Time as During the Great Recession?

- The economic shock is at least as bad.
 - We don't have a bursting housing bubble, but the pandemic is global and much more regressive (hurts lower incomes more) than the housing collapse.
- The financial system probably won't implode this time.
- Monetary and fiscal policy responses have been more timely and vigorous, but public health policies have fallen short.
- Bottom line: Housing insecurity could be similar in magnitude to the Great Recession.

HOUSEHOLD PULSE SURVEY

Executive Summary: Current Situation

- Black, Hispanic, and Asian households; those lacking a bachelor's degree; and Gen Z, millennials and Gen X have higher housing distress than their peer groups.
- Housing distress is higher among renters than owners.
- Gen X is experiencing more distress than we would expect along several dimensions; income loss likely plays a role.
- Gen X was hit hard by the Great Recession; how much of current instability has links to the past?

Data on Housing Distress

- Second Phase of Census Bureau's <u>Household Pulse</u> <u>Survey</u>: runs every 2 weeks, most recent was Aug. 19-31.
- "Is this household currently caught up on [rent/mortgage] payments?"
- "How confident are you that your household will be able to pay your **next rent or mortgage payment** on time?"
- "How likely is it that your household will have to leave this home or apartment within the **next two months** because of [eviction/foreclosure]?"

HOMEOWNERS

Similar Rates of Distress Across District States



Around 10% of Black, Hispanic, and Asian Owners Are Behind On Mortgage



Those Lacking a Diploma Experiencing Sharply Higher Distress



Youngest Generations and Gen X Facing More Distress



RENTERS

Higher Distress in Illinois, Indiana but Can't Say for Sure



Roughly Double the Distress Among Renters; Similar Inequities



Among Renters, College Degree More Strongly Associated with Security



Gen X Renters Exhibit Highest Distress Despite Their Age



WHAT'S GOING ON WITH GEN X?

Around Half of Gen X Families Lost Income



Food Insecurity Rate Also Elevated for Gen X



Unusual Distress Among Gen X

- Based on the life cycle of financial outcomes, we would expect this group to exhibit relatively better outcomes.
- Among renters, Gen X had the highest rate of distress.
- Among owners, Gen X had a distress rate comparable to Millennials and Gen Z.
- The high rate of lost income is certainly part of the story.
- While speculative, this may also reflect scarring from the Great Recession.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Housing Insecurity Resources

- National Low-Income Housing Coalition, NLIHC's National Moratorium Webpage: <u>https://nlihc.org/national-eviction-moratorium</u>
- Consumer Financial Protection Bureau: <u>https://www.consumerfinance.gov/coronavirus/</u>
- USDA Rural Development, COVID-19 Federal Resource Guide: <u>https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/USDA_COVID-</u> <u>19_Fed_Rural_Resource_Guide.pdf</u>
- St. Louis City CARES Rental & Mortgage Assistance Program: <u>www.stlouis-mo.gov/human-services/care-act-rental-mortgage-</u> <u>assistance.cfm</u>

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