

# **ATTACHMENT B**

CEQA Notice of Exemption

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

**TO:** Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Supervisor Gregg Hart, 2<sup>nd</sup> District Supervisor and Board Chair, and Supervisor Das Williams, 1<sup>st</sup> District Supervisor

The project or activity identified below is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the State and County Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

**APN:** n/a      **Case No.:** n/a

**Location:** Santa Barbara County, all Districts

**Project Title:** Urgency Ordinance to Temporarily Prohibit Evictions

**Project Applicant:** n/a

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Santa Barbara County

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Santa Barbara County

**Exempt Status:** (Check one)

Ministerial

Statutory Exemption

Categorical Exemption

Emergency Project

Not A Project

**Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section:** CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(c) exempts emergency projects that consist of specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) exempts activities that are covered by the common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects, which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5) provides that "Projects" subject to CEQA do not include organization or administrative activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

### Reasons to support exemption findings:

This Urgency Ordinance would prohibit and suspend evictions arising from loss of income or substantial medical expenses related to COVID-19, Coronavirus pandemic, until May 31, 2020 or until the Santa Barbara County local health emergency proclamation is terminated, whichever is earlier. This Urgency Ordinance does not relieve a tenant's obligations to pay rent or restrict a landlord's ability to recover rent due in the future.

On March 4, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency in California due to the threat of Coronavirus Disease 19 ("COVID-19"). As numbers of positive cases increased in other California counties, Santa Barbara County Public Health Officer declared a public health emergency in Santa Barbara County due to COVID-19 on March 12, 2020. On March 19, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-33-20 directing, with certain exceptions, that all individuals living in California stay at home or at their place of residence. According to directives from federal, state and local health officials, events have been cancelled, schools have been closed, and residents have been advised to avoid public gatherings, and work at home to prevent the spread of this disease. The loss of income

from these responses to COVID-19 and/or increased out-of-pocket medical expenses related to the virus may affect a tenant's ability to pay rent when due, leaving tenants vulnerable to eviction and homelessness. On March 16, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-28-20, which stated that homelessness can exacerbate vulnerability to COVID-19 and that California must take measures to preserve and increase housing security and thereby protect public health. The Urgency Ordinance is necessary to mitigate the COVID-19 emergency by protecting housing security and the public health.

Furthermore, the Urgency Ordinance will have the effect of preserving the current housing security of Santa Barbara County tenants who would otherwise be negatively impacted by the COVID-19 emergency. The Urgency Ordinance will not result in significant effects on or direct or indirect changes in the environment.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Chris Henson                      Phone #: 805-568-2191

Date: March 24, 2020

Acceptance Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Filed by County Clerk: \_\_\_\_\_.