**5 million missed rent or mortgage payments in December**

February 8, 2021, 1:27 pm By [Tim Glaze](https://www.housingwire.com/author/tglaze/)

Roughly 5 million households did not make their rent or mortgage payments in December, and 3.5 million renters and homeowners feel at risk of losing their home, according to new research from the **Mortgage Bankers Association.** There are some bright spots, however. The 5 million households who missed a payment in December was down from the 6 million households in September. And overall, the $14.2 billion in missed mortgage payments in the fourth quarter of 2020 was down from the $19.4 billion in the third quarter of 2020, according to the MBA.

Younger Americans are disproportionately feeling the pain, the data suggests. Forty-three percent of student debt borrowers missed their Q4 2020 payments, up from a Q3 2020 report of 40%.

The slowly improving numbers could be attributed to the rollout of a second stimulus bill in [December](https://www.housingwire.com/articles/housing-industry-reacts-to-second-stimulus-bill/) that included $25 billion in dedicated rental assistance, $600 in direct stimulus checks, $300 per week in enhanced unemployment benefits through March and an extension of the CDC eviction moratorium to January 31.

Relief from property owners has been key; a reported 12% of renters received permission from their landlord to delay or reduce their monthly payment in December, according to the MBA. In total, rental property owners reported a loss of $7.2 billion in revenue from missed rent payments in the fourth quarter of 2020 – down, however, from more than $9.1 billion in missed payments in the third quarter.

On the lending side, 5.3% of home owners missed one payment, 2.0% missed two payments, 1.5% missed three payments, and 4.9% missed four or more payments. In all, 18% of mortgage holders received permission from their lender to delay or reduce their monthly payment in December.

Total missed student loan payments were estimated to be as much as $31.6 billion for the fourth quarter. Interestingly, the number of student loan borrowers who received unemployment benefits decreased to approximately 7% in December after hitting 8% in September.

Thirty-six million individuals have missed at least one student loan payment since the beginning of the pandemic.