



Rent Control News

Landlord/Tenant Forum Tuesday, December 6, 2016 9am-11:30am

On Tuesday, December 6, the Rent Control Agency and the Consumer Protection Division of the Santa Monica City Attorney's Office will present a free forum on tenants' and landlords' rights and responsibilities.

Held at the Thelma Terry Center in Virginia Avenue Park from 9 – 11:30am, the forum is part of a continuing effort by the City to increase public awareness in Santa Monica of the impact of state and local laws on tenants and landlords.

Along with a general overview of the Rent Control Law, topics to be discussed include: home-sharing and short-term rentals; owner entries into units; construction in occupied buildings; tenant buyouts and buyout offers and Ellis Act evictions. The forum will also include a presentation from the Commission on the Status of Women on legal issues affecting women's safety and housing rights.

All tenants, property owners, property managers, and advocates are invited to attend. Visit www.smconsumer.org for online registration, or call the Consumer Protection Division at 310-458-8691 to register by phone.

A continental breakfast will be served. Some parking is available at the park. Carpooling and alternative transportation are recommended.

Preserving Our Diversity – A Pilot Program

According to a survey initiated this summer by the City's Housing Division, a significant portion of rent-controlled households in Santa Monica report being rent-burdened. These households spend more than 30 percent of their monthly income on rent.

In an effort to protect economic diversity in Santa Monica, the City Council allocated funds for a limited pilot program to assist the most severely rent-burdened households (i.e., those that are extremely low-income and spending more than 50

percent of income on rent). The Housing Commission considered parameters for the pilot program at a meeting in late October and will be making recommendations to the City Council for program implementation.

The City wants to better understand the community's housing needs and continues to encourage tenants to take the online survey at www.smrenterneeds.net. Analysis of the rent subsidy pilot program and continued input from tenants will help inform the City's affordable housing programs.

Rent Control Welcomes New Commissioners

In this fall's election, citizens of Santa Monica returned incumbent Commissioner Anastasia Foster to the Santa Monica Rent Control Board and elected newcomer Caroline Torosis. Ms. Torosis is a consumer protection attorney and experienced mediator of landlord/tenant disputes.

Both women are dedicated community members whose shared concern for stability and fairness in local housing issues brought them to the Board. Ms. Foster has been a tireless advocate for seniors and the disabled while Ms. Torosis' work ensures fair and reasonable protections for tenants and landlords alike.

The Rent Control Board and staff want to thank outgoing commissioner Christopher D. Walton who served as Chairperson of the Board for part of his tenure. Mr. Walton served the community with dedication and fairness from 2013 - 2016, and expressed his commitment to justice for all during his term.

ARE YOU PAYING TOO MUCH RENT? Filing an Excess Rent Complaint

A tenant who believes he or she is paying more than the maximum legal rent for his/her unit may petition the Board to recoup the extra money they have paid. Before submitting a petition, a tenant should talk with a Rent Control Information Analyst to determine how much, if any, of the rent they have paid would be considered excess rent.

Once a tenant establishes there is an excess rent claim, they may complete and submit to the Rent Control Agency a "Complaint for Non-Registration and/or Excess Rent Receipt and Retention." The form is available on the Agency's website (www.smgov.net/rentcontrol) or at the Rent Control office. Before filing the complaint, a tenant must gather evidence regarding the months for which they are claiming excess rent was paid. There is a three-year limit for most claims of excess rent. That means the Board may only consider a claim for excess rent paid during the thirty-six months prior to the time of the filing of the complaint. If a landlord has not properly registered a tenancy or the property, the tenant may also include a claim for non-registration.

When a complaint is filed, a mediation conference is scheduled in an attempt to resolve the complaint. If the mediation is not successful, the complaint is scheduled for an administrative hearing before a hearing examiner. If the hearing examiner determines that excess rent was collected, they will issue a decision authorizing the withholding of rent until the excess rent paid has been recouped.

Helping Santa Monica Seniors Keep Their Homes

Tenants may risk losing their housing due to hoarding or severe clutter that fills their living space if the clutter is found to create health and safety risks for themselves and/or their neighbors. Aging makes this risk more real and difficult to handle.

Recognizing the potential risk to seniors of losing their homes, in August 2015 the City put together a task force to seek solutions to this problem. The task force meets monthly to problem-solve and determine the best way to assist individuals who have been identified as "at risk." The task force includes representatives from Rent Control, the City's Human Services Division, the Police and Fire Departments, Building & Safety, Code Enforcement, the City Attorney's office, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, Wise & Healthy Aging, and St. Joseph's Center. During the initial phase of this pilot program, more than 27 residents have been assisted.

Call Rent Control for the flyer *Helpful Local Resources for Seniors*. We will mail or e-mail you a copy.

Contact information for community agencies that can be of assistance in a variety of situations

Rent Control

Santa Monica Rent Control Agency
(310) 458-8751 (and ask to speak with an
Information Analyst)
www.smgov.net/rentcontrol

Vacation Rental issues

Code Enforcement Division
(310) 458-4984
[www.smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Permits/
Short-Term-Rental-Home-Share-Ordinance/](http://www.smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Permits/Short-Term-Rental-Home-Share-Ordinance/)

Legal Issues (eviction, domestic violence, family law)

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles
(310) 899-6200
www.lafla.org

Consumer Protection

City Attorney, Consumer Protection Unit
(310) 458-8336
www.smgov.net/departments/cao

Senior Services (financial, health, transportation)

WISE & Healthy Aging
(310) 394-9871

NON-Emergency Crimes

Police Department (Non-emergencies)
(310) 458-8491
www.santamonicapd.org

2017 Rent Control Seminars

The Rent Control Agency offers several seminars throughout the year. Planned seminars for 2017 are tentatively scheduled for the dates indicated below. Check our website at www.smgov.net/rentcontrol or our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/santamonica-rentcontrol for calendar updates.

Seminars are held at:

Santa Monica Main Public Library
601 Santa Monica Blvd.
Multipurpose Room, 2nd Floor

Please register for any seminar you would like to attend. Call (310) 458-8751 or send an email to rentcontrol@smgov.net.

Owning Rental Property in Santa Monica

Owners and managers will learn the basics of the Santa Monica Rent Control Law and how to avoid common pitfalls. Topics include limitations on rents, required amenities and maintenance, eviction limitations, and services available at the Rent Control office.

Tuesday, March 7th 9:30 am – noon

Tenant Introduction to Rent Control

Tenants will learn what services are available through the Rent Control office, as well as information on how rent and amenities are defined, eviction protections under the law, and remedies available for problems related to rents and maintenance.

Tuesday, May 9th 6:30pm – 9 pm

Calculating the Annual Rent Increase

Designed for owners, this workshop offers a quick overview of how to calculate and notice the 2017 general adjustment and surcharges. Attendees can sign up for one-on-one assistance for help calculating and completing rent increase notices for one specific property.

Tuesday, July 11th 6:30pm – 9 pm

Rental Property Maintenance

Presented with the City's Code Enforcement Division staff, this seminar addresses what types of maintenance and repair are required, how and where to file complaints, temporary relocation of tenants during repairs, and issues related to habitability. Tenants, owners, managers and other interested individuals are welcome.

Tuesday, October 10th 9:30 am – noon

New Housing Opportunity List for 2017

Community Corporation of Santa Monica (CCSM) is a non-profit organization that provides affordable housing to tenants with limited incomes. CCSM selects many of its tenants from a list of qualified candidates that is created each year. Anyone on the 2016 list who wishes to continue to be considered for CCSM's housing must reapply to be on the 2017 list. Take the following steps to get on the 2017 list:

1. **Pick up an appointment card from CCSM** at the Community Room at **502 Colorado Ave.** on any of the following dates:

November 28th - 30th, 8 am to 5 pm
December 1st and 2nd, 8 am to 5 pm
December 5th - 8th, 8 am to 7 pm
December 12th - 15th, 8 am to 5 pm

2. **Attend a mandatory one-hour seminar indicated on your appointment card** where CCSM representatives will help applicants complete a required questionnaire. These seminars are offered from December 19, 2016 - January 19, 2017. Potential tenants will not be allowed to attend the seminar without an appointment card. Please call CCSM at (310) 394-8487 for more information or email: marketinglist@communitycorp.org.

CCSM will notify qualified applicants when vacancies become available that match a household's size and income level. For more information about CCSM, visit www.communitycorp.org



Printed on recycled paper with soy ink 

TENANTS

The amount shown in the circle at left is the Maximum Allowable Rent (MAR) for your unit, per Rent Control records. The legal rent for your unit is the MAR plus allowable surcharges, which typically add \$7.29 to \$60 (more for condos) to your rent. If you moved in recently, Rent Control records may still list the MAR for the previous tenancy. If the message is "Tenant Call," or if you have questions about your MAR, allowable surcharges, or any Rent Control topic, please call an Information Analyst at (310) 458-8751.

OWNERS

Each July, owners receive a report listing the MAR that is listed in Rent Control's records for every rental unit on their properties. If you are an owner, the circle at left should not include a MAR. If a MAR is listed, please call Rent Control at (310) 458-8751.



Rent Control Board

1685 Main Street, Room 202
Santa Monica, CA 90401

Presorted
First Class Mail
U.S. Postage Paid
Santa Monica, CA
Permit No. 128



Rent Control is closed every other Friday.
Please call before coming to be sure it's a Friday we're open.

INFO



Public Counter: 1685 Main St., Room 202
M-Th / Alternate F: 8:00-4:30



Telephone: (310) 458-8751
M-Th: 7:30-5:30 / Alt F: 8:00-5:00



Website: www.smgov.net/rentcontrol



Email: rentcontrol@smgov.net



www.facebook.com/santamonica Rent Control

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Para obtener una traducción de este boletín en español, vea el aviso con las instrucciones correspondientes en el interior de este boletín.