

SEPTEMBER 2023



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
**CONSUMER &
BUSINESS AFFAIRS**

TENANT PROTECTIONS POLICY TOOLKIT




PRESENTED BY

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF
CONSUMER AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS
HOUSING AND TENANT PROTECTIONS BUREAU

800.593.8222
rent@dcba.lacounty.gov
RENT.LACOUNTY.GOV

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

- 
- 2** *A NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR*
Rafael Carbajal
 - 3** *HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT*
 - 3** *REGIONAL COLLABORATION ON TENANT PROTECTIONS*
 - 4** *THE EVOLUTION OF TENANT PROTECTIONS IN
LOS ANGELES COUNTY*
 - 8** *WHY NOW? THE VALUE OF IMPLEMENTING STRONG
TENANT PROTECTIONS*
 - 11** *BEST PRACTICES ON IMPLEMENTING TENANT
PROTECTIONS*
 - 13** *TYPES OF TENANT PROTECTIONS AND THEIR
APPLICABLE BENEFITS*
 - 14** *ORDINANCE EXAMPLES*
 - 19** *STRATEGIES TO ADVANCE TENANT PROTECTIONS*
 - 20** *BEST PRACTICES ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT*
 - 22** *HOW TO ACCOMPLISH MORE AS A SMALL
MUNICIPALITY*
 - 23** *USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO PROMOTE TENANT
PROTECTIONS*
 - 24** *ADDITIONAL RESOURCES*
 - 26** *CONTACT US*



A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The County of Los Angeles is experiencing an unprecedented housing crisis. According to the most recent "2022 Los Angeles County Annual Affordable Housing Outcomes Report" (June 2022) issued by the California Housing Partnership, the County faces a shortfall of 499,420 affordable homes to meet demand among renter households at or below 50 percent of Area Median Income.

In addition, the official 2022 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, conducted by the Los Angeles Homeless Authority, revealed that there are currently 69,144 people experiencing homelessness on any given night in Los Angeles County – a 4.1% increase from the previous count in 2020.

Unfortunately, there is no easy fix to the crisis. Building affordable housing in California is a long and complex process, and with economic uncertainty looming, the outlook for new construction is unclear. Meanwhile, the County's lowest-income households currently pay more than 50 percent of their household income on rent and utilities, and communities still reel from the lingering negative economic, health, and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was only recently declared as a non-emergency by the governor this past February. In fact, the lifting of the COVID-19 emergency orders brought new challenges as renter protections that existed under COVID-19 state of emergency rules came to an end on March 31, 2023.

The Housing and Tenant Protections Bureau of the Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs is focused on ensuring that both tenants and property owners understand their housing rights and responsibilities. Housing and Tenant Protections also seeks to be a source of information, best practices, and regulatory models for the 88 cities in the County of Los Angeles on tenant protections. We hope that the enclosed Tenant Protections Policy Toolkit serves as an effective tool for discussion with policymakers and city officials on how to design and implement tenant protections in the post-COVID-19 era.

Thank you for your interest, and we look forward to collaborating with you!

Sincerely,

Rafael Carbajal, Director

Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

The **Tenant Protections Policy Toolkit** is organized into three primary sections:

- Overview of the evolution of Los Angeles County Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Ordinances
- Value statements and the importance of tenant protections
- Tenant protection policy examples and implementation recommendations

We understand that every municipality approaches the subject of tenant protections with their own unique needs, concerns, and community considerations. This toolkit is meant to assist in the development of policies and actions to offer tenant protections to our most vulnerable citizens. We hope that this document will help stimulate dialogue internally and with external stakeholders regarding strategies and resource allocations to develop policies and programs that meet your individual needs. While, of course, we appreciate an entire read of the toolkit, please feel free to utilize those sections that are most useful to you.

REGIONAL COLLABORATIONS ON TENANT PROTECTIONS

DCBA proudly advocates for a regional approach to tenant protections that is characterized by a comprehensive framework that harmonizes and aligns the tenant protection policies across all jurisdictions. This regional approach would acknowledge the diverse needs and unique circumstances of each community while fostering a spirit of collaboration and cooperation. This alignment would ensure that tenants are afforded consistent rights and protections regardless of their location within the county, promoting housing stability, affordability, and equitable access to housing resources.

Furthermore, this collaborative effort encourages the sharing of best practices and resources among cities, enabling the pooling of expertise, data, and strategies to address common challenges and achieve meaningful outcomes for all tenants throughout the region. Through our **Tenant Protections Policy Summit** and the distribution of this Tenant Protections Policy Toolkit, we hope to open discussion with city officials, tenant organizations, and community stakeholders to establish a shared vision on key principles such as rent stabilization, just-cause eviction protections, and fair housing practices.

THE EVOLUTION OF TENANT PROTECTIONS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

4

KEY MOMENTS

The history of Los Angeles County is lengthy and complex, with various measures and regulations implemented over the years to tackle rising rents and provide stability for tenants. In the 1970s, cities within the County, such as Santa Monica and West Hollywood, responded to the growing rent costs and displacement by establishing their own rent stabilization, also known as rent control, ordinances. These early measures paved the way for more widespread rent stabilization efforts throughout the county.

In 1979, the City of Los Angeles passed its own Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO). The RSO initially covered rental units built prior to October 1, 1978, and established limits on rent-increase restrictions, eviction protection, and established a system for resolving disputes between landlords and tenants.

The Ellis Act

Enacted in 1985, **The Ellis Act** is a California state law that provides a legal framework for landlords to exit the rental housing market by evicting all tenants from a property. Under this law, a landlord must serve written notice to all tenants stating their intention to withdraw the property from the rental market. This notice must comply with specific legal requirements and timelines. Once the notice is served, tenants are generally given a specific period, generally at least 120 days, to vacate the premises.

The Ellis Act is a **"no-fault"** eviction law, meaning tenants can be evicted without any wrongdoing or fault on their part. Unlike other eviction laws that require specific reasons for eviction, the Ellis Act allows for eviction based solely on the landlord's decision to exit the rental market. After evicting the tenants, the property owner cannot re-rent or reoccupy the units for a certain period of time, typically at least five years. This prevents landlords from evicting tenants with the intention of quickly returning the units to the rental market. Despite its well-meaning intention, the Ellis Act has been misused by corporate developers and investors who can afford to "exit" the rental market, leave the property vacant for the mandatory period of time, and then return their property to the rental market with significantly higher rents, effectively displacing long-term tenants paying more affordable rents and decreasing the volume of available housing stock. This underscores the benefits of establishing tenant protections, ensuring working families have relief and a greater likelihood of a stable housing transitions should the property they reside at experience an Ellis Act eviction.

While the Ellis Act is a statewide law, local jurisdictions may have additional regulations or restrictions related to its implementation.

The Costa-Hawkins Housing Act

In 1995, the California state legislature enacted the **Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act**. This law imposed certain restrictions on rent-control ordinances statewide. Costa-Hawkins exempted single-family homes, condos, and newer construction (built after February 1, 1995) from rent-control regulations, limiting the scope of local rent-control measures.

The Homeless Initiative

In 2015, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors established the Affordable Housing Coordinating Committee and the Affordable Housing Budget Unit and declared a state of emergency on homelessness in LA County. As part of their efforts, the Board launched the **Homeless Initiative**, an inclusive and comprehensive planning process that brought together diverse stakeholders, including 25 County departments, 30 cities and other public agencies, and over 100 community partners.

The Homeless Initiative facilitated 18 policy summits on nine topics from October 1 to December 3, 2015, and resulted in the development of 47 coordinated and integrated strategies. These strategies were divided into six areas: Homelessness Prevention, Subsidized Housing, Increasing Income, Case Management and Services, creation of a Coordinated System, and Increasing Affordable/Homeless Housing.

The Tenant Protections Working Group & Rent Stabilization Ordinance

Recognizing the need to preserve existing tenancies, in 2017 the Board of Supervisors directed the Chief Executive Officer to convene a Tenant Protections Working Group (TPWG) to explore methods to protect tenants from displacement and afford them stability in their homes. In May 2018, the Working Group submitted a report to the Board with recommendations for potential tenant-protection measures, including a rent stabilization program.

In a July 2018 motion, the Board noted a report from the California Housing Partnership Corporation which found that more than 800,000 Los Angeles County renter households would qualify for affordable housing, were it available. However, fewer than 300,000 affordable units were available across the entire County. Moreover, the 2018 Homeless Count revealed a startling 22% jump in people 62 years and older experiencing homelessness, underscoring the urgency for greater affordability of existing housing stock and increased protections for renters.

On September 11, 2018, the Board directed the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) and DCBA, in consultation with the CEO and County Counsel, to develop an interim ordinance to temporarily limit rent increases to no more than 3% annually and to prohibit evictions without “just-cause” while the Board considered the TPWG recommendations.

DCBA and LACDA formed a work group to develop an **Interim Rent Stabilization Ordinance** which was adopted by the Board on November 20, 2018. The interim ordinance went into effect on December 20, 2018, and was set to expire on June 18, 2019. On April 9, 2019, the Board approved an extension of the Interim Rent Stabilization Ordinance through December 31, 2019, giving them more time to review TPWG recommendations and consider the results of implementing the Interim Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

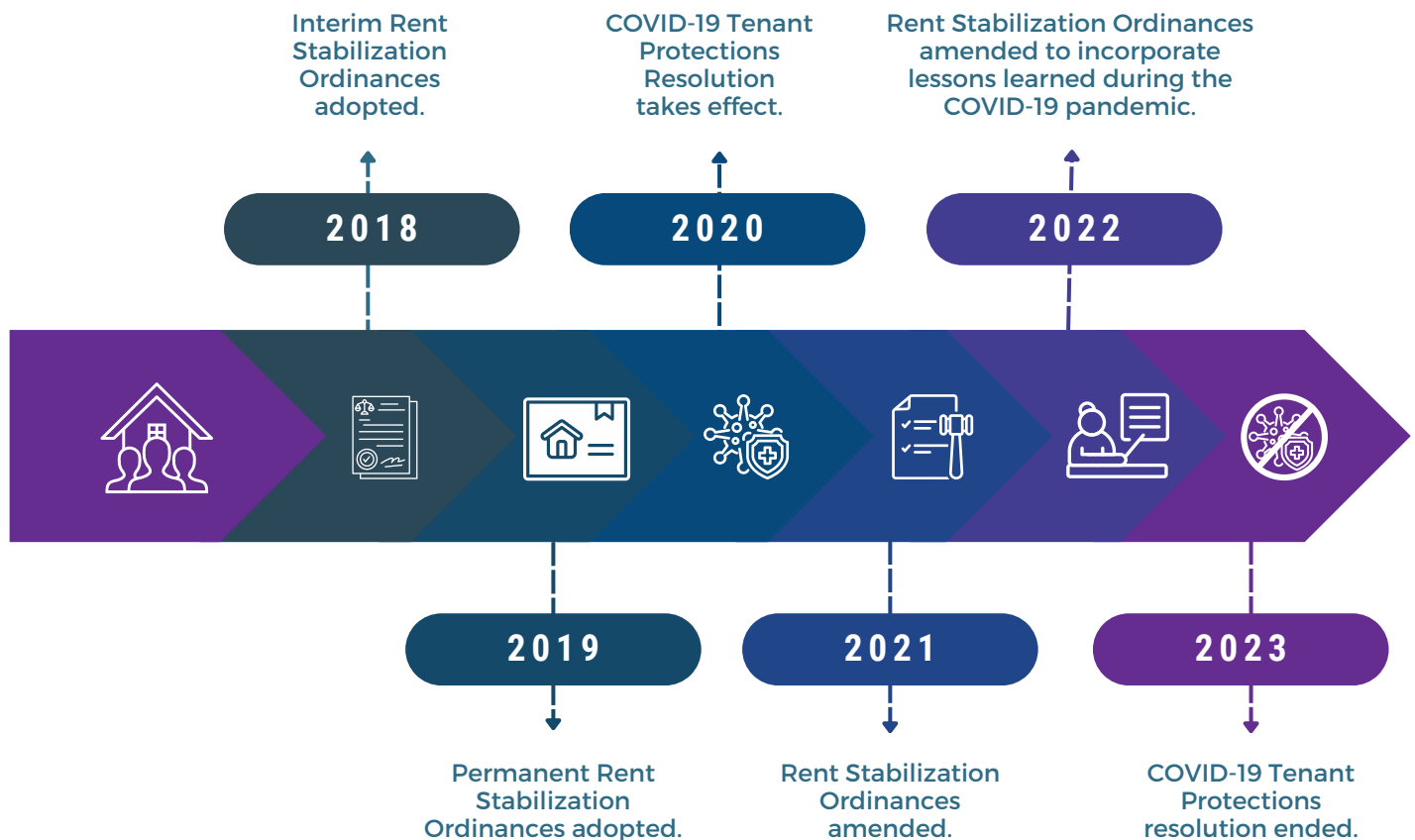
In November 2019, the Board adopted permanent rent stabilization ordinances (**Rent Stabilization & Tenant Protections Ordinance & Mobilehome Rent Stabilization & Mobilehome Owner Protections Ordinance**) which became effective on April 1, 2020.

The Impact of COVID-19 On Tenant Protections

The COVID-19 pandemic and its economic aftershocks have had far-reaching effects and amplified deep-rooted links between housing instability and other social, economic, and health-related issues. In response to the pandemic, federal, state, and local governments developed a series of policies and programs to help families stay in their home, limit the spread of the virus, and prevent pandemic-related displacement. In Los Angeles County, these measures included:

- **COVID-19 Tenant Protections Resolution:** The county implemented the Los Angeles County COVID-19 Tenant Protections Resolution (formerly the Los Angeles County Eviction Moratorium) that temporarily prohibited evictions for non-payment of rent and no-fault evictions during the pandemic. This measure aimed to prevent disruptive displacement during an unprecedented health emergency.
- **Rent Increase Freeze:** Los Angeles County also implemented a temporary rent freeze, which prevented landlords from raising rents on Fully Covered rental units covered by the Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO). This freeze aimed to provide relief to tenants facing financial challenges and ensure stable housing costs during the pandemic.
- **Rental Assistance Programs:** The county launched rental assistance programs to support tenants struggling to pay rent due to COVID-19-related financial hardships. These programs aimed to help eligible renters cover their housing costs and avoid eviction.
- **Extended Repayment Period:** Los Angeles County extended the repayment period for rent owed during the pandemic. Tenants were given additional time to repay any accumulated rent debt without facing eviction.
- **Updates to Ordinances:** Following lessons learned during the pandemic, the county amended its rent stabilization ordinances to provide additional safeguards for renters such as temporarily limiting rent increases to 3% through the end of calendar year 2023 and establishing a minimum threshold amount of rental debt that must be accumulated before a landlord is able to evict a tenant for nonpayment of rent.

LA COUNTY TENANT PROTECTIONS TIMELINE



WHY NOW? THE VALUE OF IMPLEMENTING STRONG TENANT PROTECTIONS

8

Developing and implementing effective long-term solutions that address the rising cost of living, negative social and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and lack of affordable housing will take a significant amount of time and innovation. Meanwhile, our County's most vulnerable residents, including low-income families, senior citizens, those with disabilities, immigrants, and historically marginalized communities, among others, continue to struggle to remain stably housed as a result of these persistent issues. Until a broader solution is implemented, government officials have a shared responsibility to identify opportunities to mitigate the risks of eviction, prevent residents from falling into homelessness, and implement measures that support the best possible life outcomes for families and individuals.

Establishing or strengthening permanent tenant protections and aligning those protections with those that exist in other jurisdictions in the County is more important than ever. Here are some key points to consider:



Stability and Consistency

Making protections permanent provides stability and consistency to individuals or groups who benefit from those protections. Temporary or provisional measures can create uncertainty and make it difficult for people to plan their lives or make long-term decisions. By making protections permanent, we ensure a more secure and predictable environment for tenants and property owners alike.



Human Rights

Many protections have been put in place to safeguard human rights and ensure fair access and just outcomes for all people and communities. Examples of this include protections against discrimination based on factors such as race, gender, religion, disability, and sexual orientation. Making these protections permanent reflects a commitment to upholding fundamental human rights and ensuring equitable treatment and opportunities for all people.



Legal Clarity and Certainty

Permanent protections establish a clear legal framework that helps guide both individuals and institutions. It reduces ambiguity and provides a foundation for enforcing rights and obligations. Permanent measures are usually well-defined and backed by legal mechanisms, making it easier for people to understand their rights and assert them when necessary.



Social Progress

Permanent protections are often a reflection of societal progress and an acknowledgment of past injustices. They represent a commitment to rectify historical wrongs and foster an inclusive and just society. By making protections permanent, we continue to build upon the progress made and create a more equitable future for all.



Political Resilience

Making protections permanent helps guard against political volatility and changing ideological landscapes. While policies and administrations may change, permanent protections ensure that certain rights and safeguards remain intact, irrespective of shifts in political power. This resilience is vital in protecting vulnerable populations and preventing regression in hard-won gains.



Community Health Outcomes

Permanent tenant protections create greater housing stability for renters, particularly for lower-income households. This stability improves the health and life outcomes of individuals, families, and entire communities with benefits including lowered incidence of illness, greater control of chronic health conditions, increased school attendance and educational attainment among children, and less likelihood of justice system involvement. Making tenant protections permanent is an investment in the health and wellbeing of a society's citizenry.



Fiscal Stewardship

Studies show that jurisdictions with permanent tenant protections in place experience long-term cost savings and high returns on investment. When tenants are stably housed, they are less likely to require government services for basic needs, less likely to fall into the very expensive cycle of homelessness, and more likely to remain steadily employed and participating in the local economy. Implementing permanent tenant protections reflects proper stewardship of taxpayers' money.

Taking action now is crucial for several reasons:



Reaffirming Commitment

By acting promptly, we demonstrate a strong commitment to protecting human rights and promoting equity. It sends a message that these issues are of utmost importance and that we are actively working towards a fairer society.



Preventing Regression

Societal progress and the establishment of policies such as tenant protections can sometimes face opposition or attempts to roll back advancements. By making protections permanent now, we establish a stronger defense against potential attempts to erode or undermine those rights in the future.



Long-Term Planning

Making tenant protections permanent allows individuals, organizations, and communities to plan for the future with confidence. It provides a stable framework within which they can make decisions and pursue their goals, leading to greater social, economic, and personal development.



Strengthening Institutions

Permanent protections enable institutions, such as courts and regulatory bodies, to develop expertise and establish precedents. This helps to ensure effective implementation and enforcement of protections.

BEST PRACTICES ON IMPLEMENTING TENANT PROTECTIONS

11

Designing and implementing tenant protections can be a complex, multistep process that includes legal considerations, policy development, stakeholder engagement, and administrative implementation. Below is an outline of what a typical process may look like:



Research and Assess Local Needs

City officials should conduct research to understand the local housing market, rental trends, eviction rates, and the specific needs and challenges faced by tenants in their jurisdiction. This information will help shape the development of appropriate tenant protection policies.



Policy Development

Based on the research findings, city officials can draft tenant protection policies or propose amendments to existing legislation. This may include provisions related to rent control, eviction prevention, just-cause eviction protections, habitability standards, and tenant rights enforcement mechanisms. The policies should align with local laws, state regulations, and constitutional requirements.



Engage Stakeholders

City officials should engage with a wide range of stakeholders to gather input and build support for the proposed tenant protection policies. This includes tenants' rights organizations, landlords and property owners' associations, legal experts, housing advocates, community groups, tenants and other affected individuals. Public hearings, town-hall meetings, and feedback sessions can be conducted to ensure diverse perspectives are considered.



Legal Review

Before finalizing the policies, city officials should conduct a legal review to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations. This may involve consulting with city attorneys or legal experts to address any potential legal challenges or conflicts.



Legislative Process

The proposed tenant protection policies should go through the appropriate legislative process. City officials can present the policies to the city council or relevant legislative body for review, debate, and approval. Amendments may be made based on feedback and recommendations received during this process.



Implementation Planning

Once the tenant protection policies are approved, city officials should develop an implementation plan. This includes determining the administrative structure, staffing needs, and resource allocation required to enforce and oversee the policies effectively. Clear timelines, monitoring mechanisms, and reporting procedures should be established.



Education and Outreach

City officials should develop educational materials and launch outreach campaigns to inform tenants, landlords, and the community about the new tenant protections. This may include creating informational brochures, hosting workshops, establishing helplines or websites, and collaborating with local organizations to disseminate information.



Enforcement and Compliance

City officials should establish a system to enforce the tenant protection policies. This may involve creating a dedicated enforcement unit, training staff, and establishing procedures for handling complaints, conducting investigations, and imposing penalties for violations.



Ongoing Evaluation and Process Improvement

Regular evaluation of the tenant protection policies is essential to assess their effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. City officials should monitor key indicators, such as eviction rates and tenant satisfaction, and adjust best practices based on outcomes data and feedback from stakeholders.

In addition, this work is often influenced by external stakeholders and factors that may impact the design and implementation of this work. Actions by other government agencies, elected officials, law enforcement, and community advocacy groups, among others, may impact the work. We encourage a collaborative approach to the work that is inclusive of a variety of perspectives.

TYPES OF TENANT PROTECTIONS AND THEIR APPLICABLE BENEFITS

13

There are a many different types of tenant protections with their own unique benefits that municipalities can and should consider when developing their own ordinances. Each protection complements all others and can be packaged together to create a comprehensive set of ordinances.

Rent Stabilization:

- Ensures a fair return for property owners while preserving housing stability for existing tenants
- Decreases likelihood tenant will fall into homelessness due to exorbitant rent hikes
- Increases predictability and transparency of future rent increases for tenants and property owners alike

Just-Cause for Eviction:

- Creates a universal set of standards outlining the rights and responsibilities of tenants and property owners alike and ensures clarity of applicable rules for all parties
- Decreases the likelihood tenant will fall into homelessness due to an unanticipated and arbitrary eviction by the property owner

Economic Displacement Relocation Assistance:

- Decreases likelihood tenant will fall into homelessness due to a sudden and excessive rent increase
- Ensures tenant has financial means to secure market-rate housing and cover moving expenses

Tenant Anti-Harassment:

- Allows tenants quiet enjoyment of their rental unit as required by law
- Increases stability of tenants' housing environment
- Decreases likelihood tenant will fall into homelessness due to illegal pushout

Eviction Defense Services:

- Reduces the current disparity of legal representation between landlords and tenants and ensures access to a proper defense and fairer case outcomes
- Decreases likelihood tenant will fall into homelessness due to their lack of knowledge of existing tenant protections and the challenges of navigating the complex judicial process

Rental Housing Habitability/Code Enforcement Inspection Programs:

- Safeguards the quality of rental housing and ensures minimum standards for human habitation are met in adherence with building safety and health codes
- Supports positive health outcomes for tenants by ensuring a safe and healthy living environment for occupants. Benefits include school and work attendance rates, decreases in doctor visits, and increases in supportive parenting capacity
- Increases housing stability for tenants
- Incentivizes landlords to invest in the upkeep of their rental properties

ORDINANCE EXAMPLES

Following are some examples of ordinances passed by jurisdictions in Los Angeles County that may be useful in the development of your own municipal policies.

SAMPLE ORDINANCES

Title	<u>County of Los Angeles Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Ordinance (RSTPO)</u>
Objective	Limits rent increase for certain types of rental units. Under the ordinance, rent increases are capped at a certain percentage each year, with some exceptions for capital improvement and other costs.
Key Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limits RSTPO annual rent increases to the annual percentage change equal to the change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), with a maximum of 8% . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Luxury units may increase rent by an additional 2%, not to exceed 10%. • Exemptions: Units with a certificate of occupancy, or equivalent, issued after February 1, 1995, condos, single-family homes, public housing, or units subsidized by project-based housing choice vouchers (no hotels, hospitals, care facilities, or school dormitories). • Provides due process and appeals to both landlords and tenants to express their opinions on the allowable rent limit. <p>Relates to Just-Cause Eviction, Relocation Assistance, and Anti-Harassment Ordinances, Tenant Buyout Agreements (Cash for Keys), Pass Throughs, Annual Registration and Reporting, and Enforcement.</p>



Title	<u>City of Los Angeles Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance</u>
Objective	To prevent the arbitrary displacement of renters residing on properties not otherwise subject to the provisions of the LARSO and increase the housing stability of renters given the existing housing shortage and high cost of living in the area.
Key Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protects tenants from being evicted without a valid reason. Requires landlord to have a one or more of the following “just-cause” reasons for evicting a tenant (Source: RSO):<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Non-payment of rent (expanded/relieved during the COVID-19 pandemic).◦ Breach of material lease term.◦ Causing or permitting a nuisance.◦ Use of the residence for an unlawful purpose.◦ Tenant's failure to sign a new written, one-year lease with similar terms to an expiring written one-year lease, after the owner provides 90 days' notice.◦ Tenant's failure to vacate a rental unit as required by an approved relocation application when the property owner has complied with requirements as necessary.• Requires property owners to provide relocation assistance for tenants who receive no-fault evictions.• Prohibits tenants from being evicted if they have fallen behind in rent unless they owe an amount higher than the Fair Market Rent for their unit.

Title	<u>City of Los Angeles Relocation Assistance for Economic Displacement Ordinance</u>
Objective	Protect tenants from displacement due to excessive rent increases by requiring property owners to provide relocation assistance should the tenant be unable to pay the new rent and elects to move out of unit.
Key Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires property owners to provide economic displacement relocation assistance for renters that receive a rent increase of more than 10% within 12 months, can no longer afford the rental unit, and opt to move out instead.• Relocation amount calculations based on CPI, current fair-market rent amounts, and relocation costs.



Title	<u>City of Los Angeles Tenant Anti-Harassment Protection Ordinance</u>
Objective	Protects tenants from harassment by landlords or property managers; provides penalties for landlords who engage in harassment or retaliation against tenants who exercise their rights under the law.
Key Elements	<p>Tenant Harassment shall be defined as a landlord's knowing and willful course of conduct directed at a specific tenant or tenants that cause detriment and harm, and that serves no lawful purpose (pgs. 3-4 includes a list of actions).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Penalties / Tenants' Private Rights of Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Tenants facing harassment from landlords can partake in civil proceedings. ◦ Up to \$10,000 per violation depending upon the severity of the violation, tenant relocation, and other appropriate relief, as adjudged by the court. ◦ Additional civil penalties up to \$5,000 if 65+ years old. ◦ Landlord Notice: A civil proceeding may be commenced only after the tenant provides written notice to the landlord of the alleged violation, and the landlord fails to remedy the repair or maintenance issue within a reasonable period of time.



STRATEGIES TO ADVANCE TENANT PROTECTIONS

19

Advancing on Implementation

Below is a set of strategies, derived from the Liberty Hill Foundation's report titled **Priced Out, Pushed Out, Locked Out: How Permanent Tenant Protections Can Help Communities Prevent Homelessness and Displacement in LA County**, that you can deploy to advance tenant protections for your municipality.

- Adopt permanent tenant protection ordinances throughout LA County.
 - Rent stabilization, rent control, just cause eviction ordinances, etc.
- Finance the administration of these tenant protection policies with a fee paid by landlords. Consider partially subsidizing these costs with expenditures from your city's general fund.
- Explore all possible options for protecting tenants in single-family homes and other units ineligible for rent stabilization, including an economic displacement assistance policy, which would allow tenants to request relocation assistance instead of accepting a significant rent increase.
- Create "Know Your Rights" materials in the languages commonly spoken by tenants and require landlords to provide these materials at lease-up, when issuing a rent increase, and if issuing a notice of eviction. See Laws for your Area for example materials [here](#).
- Regulate and track tenant buyout agreements to ensure tenants are aware of their rights prior to leaving their rental unit and can negotiate fairly with their landlord.
- Enact complementary tenant protection policies that will strengthen the rent stabilization and just-cause eviction ordinances.
 - Fund a robust, proactive code enforcement program to address habitability issues.
 - Fund assistance programs for low-income landlords to make necessary repairs.
 - Guarantee a funded right to counsel for tenants, including pre-eviction services and rental assistance to tenants at risk of eviction.
 - Support tenant and landlord outreach and education programs.
 - Regulate condominium conversions and demolitions to close loopholes that allow the removal of rental housing from the market.
- Support state bills that promote tenant protections across the state, including the right to counsel, anti-rent gouging, Costa Hawkins and Ellis Act reform, just-cause eviction protections, and the right to organize tenant associations without fear of retaliation.

BEST PRACTICES ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

20

Community engagement plays a crucial role in ensuring that the needs and concerns of tenants are adequately addressed. Here are some suggested best practices for community engagement:



Outreach and Education

Conduct extensive outreach efforts to raise awareness about tenant rights and the proposed tenant protections. This can include community meetings, workshops, informational materials, and leveraging local media channels. Provide clear and accessible information to empower tenants and community members to participate in the process.



Collaborate with Tenant Organizations

Partner with tenant organizations and advocacy groups that have expertise in tenant rights. These organizations can help mobilize and educate the community, provide valuable insights, and amplify the voices of tenants. Work closely with them to develop effective strategies for engagement.



Public Input Sessions

Organize public input sessions where tenants and community members can express their concerns, share personal experiences, and provide input on proposed tenant protections. These sessions can be in the form of focus groups, public hearings, or town-hall meetings. Ensure that these sessions are inclusive, respectful, and accessible to all members of the community.



Conduct an Impact Analysis

Assess potential impacts of such tenant protections on tenants, landlord, and broader community. Develop a cost-benefit assessment of each implemented policy.



Surveys and Online Platforms

Use surveys and online platforms to gather feedback and opinions from a wider range of community members. Online surveys and platforms allow for broader participation from the community, especially from those who may be unable to attend in-person meetings. Ensure that these methods are user-friendly and accessible to all.



Translation and Interpretation Services

Make provisions for translation and interpretation services to accommodate diverse language needs within the community. This ensures that language barriers do not exclude any individuals or communities from participating in the engagement process.



Inclusive Decision Making

Establish inclusive decision-making processes that actively involve community members, including tenants, in shaping the tenant protections. Consider creating advisory committees or task forces composed of diverse stakeholders, including tenant representatives, community leaders, and housing experts. This helps ensure that decisions reflect the needs and perspectives of the community.



Ongoing Communication

Maintain ongoing communication with the community throughout the process. Provide updates on the progress, seek feedback, and address concerns raised by the community. Regularly engage through various channels such as social media, newsletters, and community forums.



Evaluation and Feedback

Evaluate the effectiveness of community engagement efforts and seek feedback from participants. Use this feedback to refine and improve engagement strategies. Transparency and accountability are crucial to maintain trust and build a strong community partnership.

HOW TO ACCOMPLISH MORE AS A SMALL MUNICIPALITY

22

When working with a small budget and limited resources in a small municipality, it's important to focus on strategic and targeted efforts to maximize your impact. Here are some ways to accomplish more with your resources:



Prioritize and Focus

Identify the most critical tenant protection issues in your municipality and prioritize your efforts accordingly. By focusing on key areas of concern, you can allocate your limited resources more effectively.



Collaboration and Partnerships

Forge partnerships with local organizations, nonprofits, and community groups that share a common interest in tenant protections. Collaborative efforts can leverage additional resources, expertise, and networks. Pooling resources and sharing responsibilities can help achieve more with limited budgets.



Grant Funding

Research and apply for grants that specifically support tenant protection initiatives. Many government agencies, foundations, and organizations offer grants for community development, housing, and tenant rights. Look for funding opportunities that align with your goals and explore creative solutions to fund your initiatives. Examples include federal rent relief funding and philanthropic support for tenant protections efforts.



Volunteer Engagement

Tap into the power of volunteers from within the community. Recruit and train volunteers to assist with outreach, education, event coordination, and administrative tasks. Volunteers can significantly expand your capacity and help accomplish more without requiring a substantial financial investment.



Creative Use of Technology

Tap into the power of volunteers from within the community. Recruit and train volunteers to assist with outreach, education, event coordination, and administrative tasks. Volunteers can significantly expand your capacity and help accomplish more without requiring a substantial financial investment.

USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO PROMOTE TENANT PROTECTIONS

23

In the era of digital connectivity – exacerbated by a global pandemic – social media has become a powerful tool for disseminating information to the public. During the COVID-19 pandemic, tenants received instant and regular updates on evolving tenant protections via DCBA's social media platforms. These updates helped tenants stay informed about new policies, rent relief programs, eviction moratorium guidelines, and other available resources. Post-pandemic, DCBA maintains an ongoing presence on various social media platforms to provide critical updates on pertinent current events. To ensure inclusion of tenants from diverse communities, infographics are often posted in multiple languages.

By leveraging the power of social media, you can proactively promote accurate information, vital resources, and support for tenants in your community.

Below are examples of tenant protection infographics regularly shared by DCBA on their Twitter and Instagram pages throughout the pandemic from 2020 to 2022.





Examples of DCBA Collateral/Reference Materials

- Report back: Stay Housed L.A. and Expansion of Eviction Defense Services
- Report back: Lessons Learned from COVID-19 Emergency Tenant Protections
- FAQ: COVID-19 Tenant Protections Resolution EXPIRED Post-Protections Fact Sheet



Nationwide Rent Ordinance Catalog

- www.rentordinances.com



Legal Aid Organizations for Tenants/Renters

- Asian Americans Advancing Justice: Southern California
- Bet Tzedek
- Housing Rights Center
- Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County
- Housing Equity and Advocacy Resource Team (HEART LA)
- Stay Housed LA



Property Owner Associations

- Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles
- California Apartment Association



Policy Documents

- Liberty Hill Foundation: How Permanent Tenant Protections Can Help Communities Prevent Homelessness and Resist Displacement in Los Angeles County
- The White House Blueprint for a Renters Bill of Rights
- NLIHC Long-Term National Policy Agenda: Ambitious Federal Solutions to Meet the Housing Needs of People with Low Incomes
- NLIHC HoUsed: Build Back Better Act/Legislation

LA County Jurisdictions with Permanent Residential Tenant Protections and/or Mobilehome Protections

City	Residential Tenant Protections	Mobilehome Tenant Protections
Azuza		✓
Baldwin Park	✓	
Bell Gardens	✓	
Beverly Hills	✓	
Carson		✓
Cudahy	✓	
Culver City	✓	
El Monte		✓
Gardena		✓
Glendale	✓	
Inglewood	✓	
La Verne		✓
Lancaster		✓
Los Angeles City	✓	✓
Malibu		✓
Maywood	✓	
Palmdale		✓
Pasadena	✓	
Pico Rivera		✓
Pomona	✓	✓
Santa Clarita		✓
Santa Monica	✓	
West Covina		✓
West Hollywood	✓	

CONTACT DCBA

If you are interested in learning more about how to adopt some of the best practices described in our toolkit for your jurisdiction, we are available to discuss strategy with you. Contact us by phone, email or online.



800.593.8222



rent@dcba.lacounty.gov



RENT.LACOUNTY.GOV



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
**CONSUMER &
BUSINESS AFFAIRS**