

INFORMATION SHEET FOR NOTICE TO INCREASE RENT

The City of Tacoma is supplying this information sheet to assist tenants with understanding this notice. This information sheet is informative only and DOES NOT provide legal advice regarding your individual tenancy. **If you need to obtain legal advice regarding your individual tenancy, please contact the resources listed on the back of this page.**

What is a Notice to Increase Rent?

This notice informs a tenant that the landlord is increasing the amount of monthly rent that a tenant must pay to continue living in the rental unit.

How Much Time Does a Tenant Have Before Paying the Increased Rent?

Effective December 8th, the City of Tacoma will have two Rent Increase notice provisions in place. The Rental Housing Code (TMC 1.95) requires a landlord to provide a tenant at least a 120-day written notice before the rent increase takes effect. The Landlord Fairness Code Initiative (TMC 1.100) requires two separate notices before increasing rent. The first notice must be served between 210 and 180-days and a reminder notice between 120 and 90-days before any increase in rent becomes effective. This means that if a landlord complies with the Initiative provisions, by sending the first notice between 210 and 180-days in advance of the rent increase, a landlord will also have met the requirements of the City's Rental Housing Code (requiring at least a 120 days' notice).

What Other Information Must a Landlord Provide a Tenant About the Rent Increase?

The notice of rent increase must include the amount of new rent owing, the percentage the rent is increasing, and the date on which the increase becomes effective. The Initiative, outlined in TMC 1.100.050, also requires the notice to include a description of the rental relocation assistance program and how the relocation assistance payment will be calculated, if applicable.

What If the Landlord Does Not Comply with Rent Increase Notice Requirements?

If a landlord does not comply with the requirements for rent increase notices, the City of Tacoma can enforce on violations where the landlord does not serve at least a 120-day written notice of rent increase, as outlined in the Rental Housing Code, TMC 1.95. However, a tenant would have to take private civil action for violations of the notice requirements under the Landlord Fairness Code Initiative, TMC 1.100.

What If a Tenant Fails to Pay the Increase Rent Amount?

A tenant served with a valid notice of rent increase must pay the new amount unless the tenant has a valid legal reason not to pay the increased rent. If the notice is valid and the tenant does not have a legal defense to not pay the increase, the landlord may serve a notice to pay rent or vacate.

What If a Tenant Disagrees with the Amount of the Rent Increase?

A tenant may have a legal reason to not pay an increase in rent. **If a tenant disagrees with a rent increase, it is important to contact the resources listed at the end of this information sheet and speak with a housing attorney.**

RESOURCES

City of Tacoma—Landlord-Tenant Program

The Landlord-Tenant Program provides information and referrals to both landlords and tenants on their rights and responsibilities under the Washington State Residential Landlord-Tenant Act (RCW 59.18), the Tacoma Rental Housing Code (TMC 1.95) and Landlord Fairness Code Initiative (TMC 1.100). The Landlord-Tenant Program also enforces violations of the Rental Housing Code.

Landlord-Tenant Program

747 Market Street
Room 1044
Tacoma, WA 98402

Landlord-Tenant Intake Process:

Phone: 311 or 253- 591-5000
Online: [TacomaFIRST 311 - City of Tacoma](#)

Rental Housing Code-TMC 1.95

www.cityoftacoma.org/rentalhousingcode

Landlord Fairness Code Initiative- TMC 1.100

www.cityoftacoma.org/rentalhousingcode

City of Tacoma's Fair Housing Law- TMC 1.29

https://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city_departments/equity_and_human_rights/fair_housing

Legal Advice:

TACOMAPROBONO Community Lawyers

Tacomaprobono provides low-income individuals with free legal advice on civil legal aid issues. If you need legal advice about a landlord-tenant problem (rental agreements, moving, deposits, repairs, eviction, etc.) or any other type of housing issue, call Tacomaprobono's Housing Justice Project at (253) 572-5134, or e-mail hjp@tacomaprobono.org for an online application link.

Starting in 2021, if you are going through the eviction process in Washington, and you have a net income of 200% of the federal poverty line or below, you qualify for free legal representation in court. It's your right—protected by law. You do not have to face your landlord alone.

Call the Eviction Defense line at 1-855-657-8387 or apply online at [Eviction Help | Northwest Justice Project \(nwjustice.org\)](#). Interpreters available.

CLEAR

If you reside outside of King County, the CLEAR Hotline provides telephone consultations with free attorneys for low-income persons and seniors. You can reach the CLEAR Hotline at 1-888-201-1014 on weekdays between 9:15 am and 12:15 pm. Seniors (age 60 and over) can also call CLEAR*Sr at 1-888-387-7111. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, please call the CLEAR intake line at 1-888-201-1014 using your preferred TTY or video relay service.

WASHINGTONLAWHELP.ORG

WashingtonLawHelp is an online guide to free civil legal aid information for Washington. This website provides legal education materials and tools that provides basic information on numerous legal problems, and in some cases, detailed instructions and forms to help represent yourself in court.

Moderate Means Program

The Moderate Means Program offers referrals to attorneys who offer reduced-fee services in family, housing, consumer, and unemployment law for people who are low-income but do not qualify for the other services above. **Apply Online** or call 855-741-6930.

Rental Assistance/Funds:

Eviction Prevention Program

The Pierce County **Eviction Prevention** program supports eligible low-income households with their past due rent. For more information or to apply online visit <https://www.piercecountywa.gov/7142/Eviction-Prevention>.

211 Washington

211 connects callers, at no cost to critical health and human services in their community. By simply dialing the number 211, searching the website (<https://wa211.org>), or texting 211WAOD to 898211, people can connect to help when they need help regardless of who provides the services or where the service is located.