

AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FORM

Department: Rent Program

Department Head: Nicolas Traylor

Phone: 620-6564

Meeting Date: October 21, 2020

Final Decision Date Deadline: October 21, 2020

STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE: The Monthly Activity Report is designed to provide members of the Rent Board and Richmond community with a summary of the Rent Program's activities for the month. Staff members find it timely to begin producing such reports on a monthly basis.

INDICATE APPROPRIATE BODY

- | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> City Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Redevelopment Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> Surplus Property Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> Joint Powers Financing Authority |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance Standing Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety Public Services Standing Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Reuse Authority | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Rent Board</u> | |

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|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation/Proclamation/Commendation (3-Minute Time Limit) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> Regulation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>CONSENT CALENDAR</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contract/Agreement | <input type="checkbox"/> Rent Board As Whole | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grant Application/Acceptance | <input type="checkbox"/> Claims Filed Against City of Richmond | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution | <input type="checkbox"/> Video/PowerPoint Presentation (contact KCRT @ 620.6759) | |

RECOMMENDED ACTION: RECEIVE the September 2020 Rent Program Monthly Report - Rent Program (Paige Roosa 620-6537).

AGENDA ITEM NO:

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Director Traylor and Members of the Rent Board

FROM: Paige Roosa, Deputy Director

DATE: October 21, 2020

SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 2020 MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT

Introduction

The Monthly Activity Report is designed to provide members of the Rent Board and Richmond community with a summary of the Rent Program's activities for the month. It is anticipated that the format, content, and detail of this report will evolve over time. Feedback concerning this report may be submitted via email to rent@ci.richmond.ca.us or by calling (510) 234-RENT (7368).

September Agency Highlights

The month of September was an unconventional month for the Rent Program team and the nation in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. All Rent Program staff members continue to carry out the bulk of job functions remotely, which presents us with both challenges and opportunities. The content below highlights our activities for the month.

Billing and Registration Unit staff members collected over \$930,000 in Rental Housing Fee revenue.

Staff members in the Billing & Registration Unit worked tirelessly in the month of September to respond to questions from and assist Landlords with payment of the Rental Housing Fee. As a result of their efforts, the Program was able to collect over \$930,000 during the month. This revenue represents approximately one-third of the total revenue necessary to support the Program's Fiscal Year 2020-21 budget. In recognition of the financial challenges faced by many Landlords during the COVID-19 pandemic, staff members worked with nine Landlords to create payment plans tailored to their unique circumstances. We anticipate that such efforts will continue to be necessary as the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to be felt in Richmond and the nation.

Staff members continued to work with community partners to further the Rent Assistance Program for Displacement and Homelessness Prevention, an initiative of the larger Richmond Rapid Response Fund.

The Richmond Rapid Response Fund (R3F) is a wraparound initiative that will meet the immediate and ongoing needs of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. A core focus of the R3F is providing resources to address housing and homelessness. The Rent Assistance Program for Displacement and Homelessness Prevention will provide



grants to Richmond households who have been financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the month of September, Executive Director Nicolas Traylor and I met with leaders from the City and partner agencies, including the Richmond Community Foundation, Richmond Community Housing Development Corporation, Richmond Neighborhood Housing Services, and the Richmond SparkPoint office to continue development of the Rent Assistance Program, which we hope to launch by the end of the year. To spread the word about the R3F across the Richmond community, we also participated in a social media campaign led by the core R3F team to raise awareness about and solicit donations to the Richmond Rapid Response Fund (R3F).

To learn more about the R3F, or to make a donation, please visit www.richmondresponsefund.org.

Public Information Unit staff members hosted a community workshop webinar to inform Tenants about the Rent Adjustment Petition process.

The September Community Workshop, titled “How to File a Rent Decrease Petition” was hosted via Zoom Webinar to comply with State and local mandates prohibiting social gatherings. Rent Program Staff Attorney Palomar Sanchez conducted this month’s workshop and discussed



pertinent topics such as the City’s moratorium on certain types of evictions, petitions due to excess rent overcharges, petitions due to a reduction in space, services, and habitability, as well as how to file a petition and an overview of the petition process. A total of 11 participants joined the webinar. Following the presentation, attendees were provided an opportunity to ask questions of staff using the Zoom Webinar “Q&A” feature. We look forward to continuing to host workshops utilizing videoconferencing technology for future Community Workshops. Presentation materials, including a recording of the presentation, are accessible at <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3541/Workshops>.

Public Information Unit staff members shared a series of social media posts to educate the community about Just Cause for Eviction and Evictions in Richmond.

Public Information Unit staff members continued their efforts to educate the community through the use of Facebook and Instagram platforms throughout the month of September. To that end, staff developed an eight-part series that included simple and condensed information to help the community understand Just Cause Evictions under the Richmond Rent Ordinance. The series covered specific topics such as “At Fault” Evictions under the Richmond Rent Ordinance, including Failure to Pay Rent, and “No Fault” Evictions Under the Richmond Rent Ordinance, such as Owner Move-Ins, as well as Frequently Asked Questions and Tips for both Tenants and Landlords. The posts informed community members about their rights and responsibilities under the Rent Ordinance. By the end of the month, we had gained **10 additional followers on Instagram and 2 additional followers on Facebook**. We continue to promote posts and “tag” other local organizations in Richmond to expand our outreach efforts and engage followers.

Summary of ActivitiesI. Department Unit Activities

PUBLIC INFORMATION UNIT	<i>Current Month Occurrences</i>	<i>Prior Year Occurrences (September 2019)</i>	<i>% Change from Prior Year (September 2019)</i>
Persons Assisted By Front Office Unit (without referral to an Analyst)	172	95	81.1%
Total Consultations Provided by a Rent Program Services Analyst	562	342	64.3%
Calls Received (Phone Counseling Sessions)	224		
Emails Received	135		
Walk-Ins (includes appointments)	0		
Total Consultations Provided in a Language other than English	135	42	221.4%
Consultations Provided in Spanish	135		
Consultations Provided in Cantonese	0		
Consultations Provided in Another Language (Mandarin)	0		
Legal Service Referral Forms Completed	15	6	150.0%
Courtesy Compliance Letters Mailed	8	10	-20.0%
Community Workshop Webinar Attendees (09/26/2020) How to File a Rent Decrease Petition	11	14	-21.4%
Total Hard Copy Notices Processed	48	69	-30.4%
Hard Copy Rent Increase Notices Processed	22		
Hard Copy Termination of Tenancy Notices Processed	26		

BILLING AND REGISTRATION UNIT	<i>Current Month Occurrences</i>	<i>Prior Year Occurrences (September 2019)</i>	<i>% Change from Prior Year (September 2019)</i>
Total Consultations with a Billing and Registration Unit Staff Member	149	108	37.9%
Phone Call Consultations	76		
Email Consultations	73		
Walk-In Consultations	0		
Enrollment/Tenancy Registration Packets Mailed	4	203	-98.0%
Enrollment Forms Processed	9	107	-91.6%

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BILLING AND REGISTRATION UNIT (continued)	<i>Current Month Occurrences</i>	<i>Prior Year Occurrences (September 2019)</i>	<i>% Change from Prior Year (September 2019)</i>
Invoices Generated	672	5,146	-86.9%
Payments/Checks Processed	1,084	608	78.3%
Payment Plans Issued	9	0	N/A
Property Information Updated	55	89	-38.2%
Declarations of Exemption Processed	7	45	-84.4%
Applications for Administrative Determination of Applicability Received	20	N/A	N/A
Administrative Determinations of Applicability Issued	4	N/A	N/A
Payments Returned	3	2	50.0%
Total Monthly Revenue Collected (09/01/2020 - 09/30/2020)	\$932,668	\$763,258	22.2%
Total Revenue Collected in FY 2020-21 (through 09/30/2020)	\$1,858,511	\$855,727	117.2%

LEGAL UNIT	<i>Current Month Occurrences</i>	<i>Prior Year Occurrences (September 2019)</i>	<i>% Change from Prior Year (September 2019)</i>
Public Records Act Requests Received	0	2	-100.0%
Owner Move-In Termination Notices Reviewed	0	2	-100.0%

HEARINGS UNIT	<i>Current Month Occurrence s</i>	<i>Prior Year Occurrences (September 2019)</i>	<i>% Change from Prior Year (September 2019)</i>
Total Consultations with Hearings Unit Coordinator	81	72	12.5%
Calls/Placed Received (Regarding Hearings and Petitions)	22		
Emails Sent/Received (Regarding Hearings and Petitions)	59		
Walk-Ins Received (Regarding Hearings and Petitions)	0		
Total Landlord Petitions Received	1	2	-50.0%
Request for Administrative Determination of Exempt Status Received	1		
Total Tenant Petitions Received	2	5	-60.0%

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HEARINGS UNIT (continued)	<i>Current Month Occurrences</i>	<i>Prior Year Occurrences (September 2019)</i>	<i>% Change from Prior Year (September 2019)</i>
Tenant Petitions Based on Excess Rent or Failure to Return Security Deposit Received	2		
Total "Other" Petitions Received	1	0	100.0%
Subpoenas Received	1		
Total Number of Pending Petition Cases (<i>"Pending Petition Cases" are defined as those awaiting an objection response, a decision is pending, a decision has been issued with an appeal deadline approaching, or where an upcoming hearing has been scheduled</i>)	16	12	33.3%
Pending Tenant Petitions (As of October 7, 2020)	12		
Pending Landlord Petitions (As of October 7, 2020)	4		
Total Number of Cases Closed	1	9	-88.9%
Cases Settled	1		
Appeals Received	1	1	0.0%

II. Online Notices Filed with the Rent Program

<i>Type of Form</i>	<i>Monthly Submissions/ Notices Filed</i>	<i>Prior Year Total (September 2019)</i>	<i>% Change from Prior Year (September 2019)</i>
Change in Terms of Tenancy Notices Filed	25	6	75%
Rent Increase Notices Filed	59	249	-76.3%
Termination Notices Filed ¹	8	201	-96%
<i>Applicable Just Cause for Eviction – Nonpayment of Rent</i>	5	196	-97.4%
<i>Applicable Just Cause for Eviction – Breach of Lease</i>	1	2	-50%
<i>Applicable Just Cause for Eviction- Nuisance/ Failure to Give Access</i>	2	1	100%
<i>Applicable Just Cause for Eviction – Owner Move In</i>	0	2	N/A
Total Online Form Submissions	92	456	-79.8%

¹ Note: Termination Notices filed with the Rent Program does not indicate the number of Unlawful Detainer (eviction) lawsuits filed in court. In some cases, the Tenant may cure the issue for the notice (e.g. Tenant pays the rent that is due) and the eviction process is not initiated.

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