



VIEW

POINT

FALL 2002

NEWS FOR OWNERS AND MANAGERS IN THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Simplifying Processes for Owners, Managers

We hope you won't miss that long, blue "Request for Revision to Lease" form that we used to require, because it's gone! Now all you have to do to request a rent increase—or change who pays for utilities—is send 60-days advance notices to your voucher-holding tenant and the Housing Commission. We will be happy to approve your increase, as long as the following criteria are met:

- Your rent is reasonable for your area.
- You're not charging more for your Section 8 tenants.
- Your market rate tenants, if you have any, are the first to receive an increase.

To help us serve you more quickly, please provide us with any requested information, such as rent rolls, as soon as possible. Also, be sure your notice includes the tenant's name and address and the date (as rent increases take place on the first of the month after the end of the 60 days written notice). Once your lease or utility-payment change is processed, please be sure that your new lease reflects that information and, as always, send us a copy, signed by both you and the tenant. Rent increase notices and leases may be mailed to us or faxed to 619/578-7371. For questions, please call Lynda Brophy, 619/578-7680.



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Direct Deposit Program

Take it from Mrs. Foster: The Direct Approach is Best! Benefits of Direct Deposit Program Include Safety, Speed



Last year, we introduced our new direct deposit program, which makes it possible for you to get our portion of the rent deposited directly to your bank account on the first of each month. This program was an instant “hit” with the thousand-plus owners who chose to participate. If you haven’t signed up yet, you may want to reconsider the benefits, which include speed (payments arrive faster, plus you save the time and travel of making the deposit yourself) as well as keeping your funds safe.

Mrs. Anna Marie Foster, 86, a rental property owner leasing two houses to Section 8 families, recently reminded us of the importance of this latter feature. Having once had a check stolen from her mailbox, she’s wary of receiving of checks in the mail. Additionally, Mrs. Foster doesn’t drive, so it’s hard for her to get to the bank.

Mrs. Foster has three sons, 15 grandchildren, and 10 great grandchildren. She is a longtime resident of Allied Gardens with two rental properties in City Heights which she and her late husband purchased in 1937 for approximately \$8,000 each. “Some things have really changed,” said Mrs. Foster. “But at least I can count on my rent checks getting to the bank on time!”

For more information about the direct deposit program, call Cris Bolton (619) 578-7688.



Mrs. Anna Marie Foster

Free Educational Workshops

“How-to” Workshops Provide Helpful Information for Owners

We’re wrapping up this year’s workshop schedule with two upcoming sessions that you might find helpful. Both will be held at our main office, 1625 Newton

Avenue, San Diego, California 92113. For more information, or to sign up, please call 619/578-7303.

Rent Increase “How-to’s”

Wednesday, November 20
2:30–4:30 p.m.

*Tips for increasing your rent
after the initial lease period*

New Owners: What to Expect

Wednesday, Dec. 4
2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

*Designed for owners new to the
Rental Assistance program*

Legal Update: Two New State Laws Affect Owners and Tenants

Extended Eviction Notice Timeframe

A new California law goes into effect January 1, 2003, that extends the written termination notice from the current 30-day notice period to a 60 day notice period. The law effects month-to-month rental agreements, wherein the tenant has resided in the rental unit for over one year. The same rules regarding the need to include the *cause* in notices remains the same. That is, for market rate tenants no cause is required in most instances, while Section 8 tenants must be given the cause of their eviction during the term of their lease.

Exemptions to the law may occur if:

- The rental property is a single-family home or condo
- You are selling the property, and it is listed with a broker
- Criminal activity has occurred (in which case owners might be able to issue a three-day nuisance order in accordance to the timeframe allowed by state law)
- You are buying a property and intend to live in it yourself

Changes in Move-Out Requirements

Another pending state law has to do with security deposits and other move-out issues. Key elements of this law, which becomes effective January 1, 2003, are as follows:

Move-in fees no longer permitted

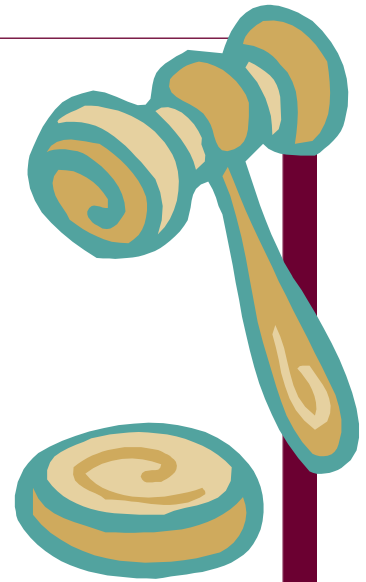
It will be illegal to charge new residents nonrefundable fees to defray move-in costs.

Specific standards for security deposits

Tenants will now have the right to request a walk-through inspection—held two weeks prior to a scheduled move-out date—for the landlord to identify what items, if any, will be deducted from their security deposit. The tenant need not be present. If the renter prefers to decline an inspection, owners must provide a written waiver notice 48 hours prior to move-out day. Owners may still charge for damages if they occur after the inspection, or if they later discover an item that was hidden by the tenant's personal property. When charging for damages, the law will require that owners provide an itemized statement (either directly to the tenant or left in the unit on the day of the inspection if the tenant did not attend). The new law also increases penalties for wrongful withholding of security deposits.

Cleaning requirements

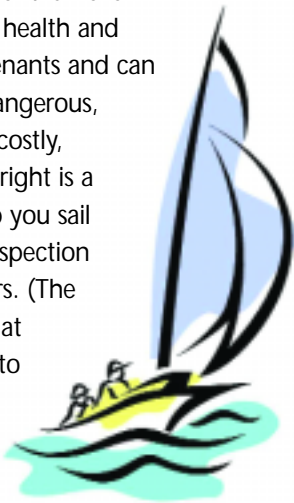
Owners may want to do walk-throughs with their new tenants as well, based on new cleaning requirements. The law will clarify what standard of cleanliness is needed in order for the tenant to not have to pay for cleaning. (Essentially, that the unit must be left in the same condition as when the tenant first moved in.)



Under the new security deposit laws, tenants will have the right to request a move-out inspection.

Sail Through your Property Inspection with this Inspection Checklist

Our inspections—now quicker and easier than ever—help ensure the health and safety of your tenants and can shed light on dangerous, and potentially costly, hazards. To the right is a checklist to help you sail through your inspection with flying colors. (The top five areas that cause units not to pass inspection are italicized.)



Please Note

Holiday Schedule

We know it's early in the year, but let us be the first to wish you and your family a happy and peaceful holiday season. And please note, as in past years, our offices will be closed December 25 through January 2—and we will have limited staff in the days immediately preceding and following those dates—due to a nonpaid employee work furlough.



Inspection Checklist

- Doors. Make sure doors to the outside have properly working locks. At least one exit door must be accessible to the outside without the use of a key.
- Ceilings, walls, and floors should have no large cracks, holes, peeling paint, leaks, or serious structural defects. Carpets should lay flat. (Note, we check for lead paint problems, but we can also help fix them.)
- Windows and screens. If windows are accessible from the outside, they need to have *working locks*. They also need to be in good condition, without cracks or leaks. (Hint: cracks and gaps can be fixed with silicone or weather stripping.) If screens are present, they should fit properly with no holes or tears. Make sure each bedroom has at least one window that opens (sometimes they're painted shut) and that *if iron bars are installed, they need to have a "quick release" capability*.
- Smoke detectors. Each floor should have its own working smoke detector.
- Kitchen and appliances should all be in good working condition, including: faucets (should run hot and cold without dripping or leaks), the oven/stove (*all knobs and burners should be present and working* and the stovetop free of grease), refrigerator (clean and with lights that turn on and with doors that shut properly), the dishwasher, and garbage disposal. Hot water heaters need to have earthquake straps and a properly installed pressure release valve.
- Heating. *A permanent (vs. portable), working heating system* needs to be in place.
- Electrical switches and outlets. Make sure that fuse boxes and wires are covered and that outlet cover plates are in place and not cracked.
- Bathrooms should be clean and free of mildew. *Also, be sure to reconnect the vent if your previous tenant disconnected it because of the noise.*
- Exterior. Last but not least, we'll take a look outside to make sure there's a working mailbox and that there isn't any chipped or peeling paint or graffiti. (For free graffiti-removal service, please call 619-525-8522.)

VIEWpoint is published by the Rental Assistance Department as a way to keep rental owners/managers updated on issues and policies regarding housing assistance programs. If you have any ideas for future stories, or if you have any suggestions about our programs, please contact Owner Liaison Lynda Brophy at 619/578-7680; lyndat@sdhc.org.



Good Neighbors
**San Diego
Housing Commission**

- ◆ 1625 Newton Avenue
- ◆ San Diego, California
- ◆ 92113-1038
- ◆ www.sdhc.net



A state agency authorized by
the City of San Diego