

April 11, 2023

**R-23**

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
City of Long Beach  
California

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Receive and file a presentation on current rent assistance programs and resources for tenants and landlords. (Citywide)

**DISCUSSION**

On March 7, 2023, the City Council requested the City Manager work with the Development Services Department (Department) to provide a report regarding current rent assistance programs and resources available, as Los Angeles (LA) County's COVID-19 Tenant Protections Resolution (Resolution) expired on March 31, 2023. Although the Resolution expired, certain tenant protections remain in effect. The following report is a summary of general protections; further details will be provided in a forthcoming memo to the Mayor and City Council, and presentation.

**Los Angeles County's COVID-19 Tenant Protections Resolution**

The Resolution, formerly known as the LA County Eviction Moratorium, which went into effect March 4, 2020, provided certain protections to residential tenants, commercial tenants, and mobile home space renters affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in LA County. The Resolution was last amended on January 24, 2023, and was extended through March 31, 2023.

The Resolution prevented evictions for non-payment of rent due between July 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023 (Rent Protection Period) due to a COVID-19 financial hardship, for tenant households with an income at or below 80 percent of the Area Median Income. For tenants who utilized this non-payment of rent protection or with tenants with unauthorized occupants or pets, the following protections are being extended beyond March 31, 2023:

- Protections against no-fault evictions, except for qualified owner move-ins
- Qualified tenants that had notified their landlords before March 31, 2023 of their inability to pay rent during the Rent Protection Period, and made a payment plan, would not be evicted and remain protected after the expiration of the Resolution. Such residential tenants have up to 12 months to repay any past due rent that was accrued during the Rent Protection Period
- Starting April 1, 2023, landlords are required to provide tenants with a 30-day notice to "cure or quit" prior to filing an eviction based on back due rental payments accrued prior to March 31, 2023 and for presence of unauthorized occupants and pets

- Anti-harassment and retaliation protections during the Resolution's protection periods.

### **California Tenant Protection Act of 2019**

The California Tenant Protection Act of 2019 (Assembly Bill [AB] 1482) establishes statewide rent control and eviction protections for tenants. The law caps annual rent increases at 5 percent, plus the applicable Consumer Price Index or 10 percent, whichever is lower, and requires landlords to have a "just cause" reason for evicting tenants who have lived in a rental unit for at least one year. AB 1482 went into effect on January 1, 2020, and is set to expire on January 1, 2030, unless renewed. These protections apply to Long Beach residents.

### **COVID-19 Tenant Relief Act of 2020 (Tenant Relief Act)**

The Tenant Relief Act (AB 3088), contained several tenant protection provisions. Chief among them is preventing tenant eviction due to failure to pay rent from COVID-19-related hardship. AB 3088 prevented evictions for non-payment of rent due between March 1, 2020 and January 31, 2021 (Covered Time Period). However, the various protections and tenant assistance programs were expanded while the Covered Time Period was extended to June 30, 2021 and later on to September 30, 2021, by Senate Bill 91 and AB 832, respectively. These protections apply to Long Beach residents.

### **City of Long Beach - Just Cause for Termination of Tenancies**

On March 10, 2020, the City Council adopted the Just Cause Ordinance (Ordinance) (Long Beach Municipal Code 8.99), which will continue to provide tenants with protection against arbitrary evictions by requiring landlords to have a just cause for evicting tenants. It also establishes relocation assistance and notice requirements. Below are the main provisions of the Ordinance:

- At-fault reasons for eviction include, but are not limited to, non-payment of rent, breach of lease agreement, and criminal activity on the property.
- No-fault reasons for eviction include, but are not limited to, owner or relative move-in or demolition or substantial remodel of the property.
- Notice Requirements: Landlords must provide tenants with a written notice of termination that includes the reason for the eviction. The notice must be given at least 30 days before the termination date. If the tenant has lived in the unit for at least one year, the notice period is extended to 60 days.
- Relocation Assistance: Landlords are required to provide relocation assistance to tenants who are displaced due to a no-fault eviction. The amount of relocation assistance or rent waiver shall be equal to the greater of \$4,500 or two months of the tenant's for substantial remodel cases, and one month of the tenant's rent for all other no-fault just cause terminations.

### **LB-Cares and Long Beach Emergency Rental Assistance**

The City of Long Beach (City) provided the most critical assistance to tenant households during the pandemic to prevent catastrophic displacement due to non-payment of rent. The two programs provided by the City, LB-Cares followed by the Long Beach Emergency Rental Assistance Program (LB-ERAP), provided rental assistance to approximately 7,817 Long Beach renter households and their landlords totaling close to \$74.5 million. Although these programs are ending, their breadth and depth have greatly softened the potential impact of displacement on renter households.

### **Right to Counsel**

The Department will continue to work closely with LA County through its Memorandum of Understanding-driven contract to mutually support the provision of legal services, right to counsel, and tenant outreach and education to qualified Long Beach residents through the LA County's existing Stay Housed L.A. Program. Additional funding of \$200,000 from the City's emergency funding for homeless prevention is being added to the contract; the contract is expected to serve Long Beach residents until June 30, 2023, or until funding is exhausted.

### **Fair Housing Foundation Support**

In addition, the Department maintains a contract with the Fair Housing Foundation to provide tenants with information and support needed to exercise their rights, so that they can remain safely in their homes. The Department also has a staff-member dedicated to housing services and referrals, assisting both tenants and landlords in navigating housing policy and understanding their rights and responsibilities.

### **City Staffing – Long Beach Resource Line**

Additionally, the Long Beach Resource Line, operated by trained and knowledgeable Resource Navigators from the Health and Human Services Department and supported with funding received from the Long Beach Recovery Act, provides support to all Long Beach residents through information and assistance in topics such as housing, food access, and legal aid.

Although the tenant protection laws for renters affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in LA County have sunset, the protections that remain are more effective in protecting tenants than the protections that existed before COVID-19 pandemic.

This matter was reviewed by Principal Deputy City Attorney Richard F. Anthony on March 14, 2023 and by Revenue Management Officer Geraldine Alejo on March 25, 2023.

### **TIMING CONSIDERATIONS**

City Council action on this matter is not time critical.

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FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal or local job impact associated with this recommendation. This recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with existing City Council priorities.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



CHRISTOPHER KOONTZ  
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

APPROVED:



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THOMAS B. MODICA  
CITY MANAGER