

ORDINANCE NO. 8-20

ORDINANCE: To amend City Code Chapter 18, titled “Rental Facilities and Landlord-Tenant Relations,” to prohibit the increase of certain rent through July 31, 2020; to prohibit the increase of certain rent above rent guidelines on or after August 1, 2020; to prohibit certain notices to tenants; to require certain notices to tenants; and to generally amend City law concerning rental facilities and landlord-tenant relations.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND as follows:

SECTION I – That Chapter 18 of the Rockville City Code entitled “Rental Facilities and Landlord-Tenant Relations” be amended as follows:

Chapter 18

RENTAL FACILITIES AND LANDLORD-TENANT RELATIONS

ARTICLE IV. - LANDLORD-TENANT RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

DIVISION 4. - LANDLORD RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

Sec. 18-180. - Rent increases during state of emergency – prohibited.

(a) Definitions. In this Section, the following terms have the meanings indicated.

Emergency means the catastrophic health emergency declared by the Governor of Maryland on March 5, 2020, as amended or extended by the Governor, under Section 14-3A-02 of the Public Safety Article of the Maryland Code.

Tenant has the meaning stated in Section 18-1.

- (b) Rent increases – when prohibited.
 - (1) A landlord must not increase a tenant’s rent through July 31, 2020.
 - (2) A landlord must not increase a tenant’s rent on or after August 1, 2020, by an amount that exceeds the voluntary rent guidelines established under Section 18-194(a) if:
 - a. the rent increase would take effect during the emergency; or
 - b. notice of the rent increase does not comply with subsection (e) and Section 18-194(b).
- (c) Notices of rent adjustment issued during emergency.
 - (1) From May 11, 2020, until 90 days after the expiration of the emergency, a landlord must not notify a tenant of a rent increase if the increase would exceed the voluntary rent guidelines established under Section 18-194(a).
- (d) Notices of rent adjustments effective through July 31, 2020.
 - (1) If a landlord provided notice of a rent increase to a tenant and the increase was effective between May 11, 2020 and July 31, 2020, inclusive, the landlord must inform the tenant in writing:
 - a. to disregard the notice; or
 - b. that the increase is amended to take effect on or after August 1, 2020, and to be less than or equal to the voluntary rent guidelines established under Section 18-194(a).
- (e) Notices of rent adjustments effective on or after August 1, 2020.
 - (1) If a landlord provided notice of a rent increase to a tenant and the increase was effective on or after August 1, 2020, and exceeded the voluntary rent guidelines established under Section 18-194(a), the landlord must inform the tenant in writing:
 - a. to disregard the notice; or
 - b. that the increase is amended to be less than or equal to the voluntary rent guidelines established under Section 18-194(a).
- (f) Notice of expiration of emergency. The City must post on its website information about the requirements of this Section, including, when the information is

available, the date that an emergency expires and the date that is 90 days after the expiration of the emergency.

SECTION II – This ordinance takes effect immediately upon adoption.

SECTION III – This ordinance expires and has no further force or effect upon the 181st day following the expiration of the catastrophic health emergency declared by the Governor of Maryland on March 5, 2020, as amended or extended by the Governor.

NOTE: ~~Strikethrough~~ indicates material deleted.
 Underlining indicates material added.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of an Ordinance adopted by the Mayor and Council of Rockville at its meeting of May 11, 2020.



Sara Taylor-Ferrell
City Clerk/Director of Council Operation