

Tenant Information Session: Resist Renovictions



WHAT IS ACORN?



- ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now) is a community and tenant union made up of working class people fighting for the changes THEY want to see changed. We have campaigns on affordable housing, healthy homes, fair banking, affordable childcare, and more.
- We are membership based and a membership run organization. We run like union - our members chip in dues that keeps us independent. We don't rely on funding from the government or big corporations.
- ACORN Canada started in Weston, Toronto (1775/1765 Weston Rd) in 2004 - we are now across the country with offices from British Columbia to New Brunswick with over 140,000 members!
- If you're not a member yet - join today! We have six chapters across Toronto - ACORN is in your neighbourhood!

WHAT ARE RENOVICTIONS?

- A **renoviction** is when a landlord evicts a tenant under the guise of performing **major renovations**.
- Sometimes tenants are offered a buyout - which varies but could be any amount between \$2,000 to \$5,000 (or higher)
- Often, the landlord will send an N13 form OR just a written notice telling the tenant they have to be out because of major reno work that needs to be done.
- If you get an N13 form or any notice from your landlord about a renoviction - **you do not have to move out**.
- The landlord needs a building permit from the City of Toronto to do major renovations of the building - you can view it on the City of Toronto's website.

The city calls it “redevelopment”
To tenants, it's gentrification and displacement.

Gentrification

- the process of renovating and improving a house or district so that it conforms to middle-class taste.

Displacement

- the enforced departure of people from their homes and neighborhoods



Protecting Affordable Housing = Stopping Evictions

IMPORTANT NOTE

Just because your landlord tells you to move, or gives you an eviction notice, YOU DO NOT HAVE TO MOVE

You can get organized, and fight it, to protect your home!



Tactics Developers Use to Displace Tenants



1. Eviction Notice

- Developer notifies tenants that they have to move out by a certain date so they can renovate
- Not a legal order to vacate, but comes across as one to most tenants.

2. Stopping Repairs

- Developer stops doing repairs, and starts making life difficult for existing tenants
- Intimidation and harassment is common

Tactics Developers Use to Displace Tenants

3. Offering of Cash

- Developer offers cash in exchange for tenants to sign to voluntarily terminate their lease and right to the apartment
- Offer posed as “take it now or you may lose out”

4. Issuing N13 or N12

- **N13**: Landlord wants to demolish the rental unit, repair it, or convert it to another use
- **N12**: Landlord wants unit for personal use (less common for renoviction, but still happens)

YOUR RIGHTS AS A TENANT



1. Right to say NO - I don't want to move.
2. Right to 3 months rent + right to return to our units at same rent.
3. Right to force developers to prove to at LTB that they need to you to move out in order to do repairs.

Process for LEGAL Renoviction:

N13:

- Must be given 120 days before eviction date
- Tenant does not have to move out if they disagree with what the landlord has put in the N13 - do not sign anything!
- Tenants who receive N13s are entitled to compensation from the landlord in most circumstances: either **1 or 3 months rent** (depending on reason listed on form) by termination date OR **offer tenant another acceptable rental unit**

Notice to End your Tenancy
Because the Landlord Wants to Demolish the Rental Unit, Repair it or Convert it to Another Use
N13
(Disponible en français)

To: (Tenant's name) include all tenant names	From: (Landlord's name)
Address of the Rental Unit:	

This is a legal notice that could lead to you being evicted from your home.

The following information is from your landlord

I am giving you this notice because I want to end your tenancy. I want you to move out of your rental unit by the following termination date: / /
dd/mm/yyyy

My Reason for Ending your Tenancy
I have shaded the circle next to my reason for ending your tenancy.

Reason 1: I intend to demolish the rental unit or the residential complex.

Reason 2: I require the rental unit to be vacant in order to do repairs or renovations so extensive that I am required to get a building permit and the rental unit must be vacant to do the work.

Note: You have the right to move back into the rental unit once I have completed the repairs or renovations. If you want to move back in once the work is done, you must give me written notice telling me you want to move back in. Also, you must keep me informed in writing any time your address changes.

Reason 3: I intend to convert the rental unit or the residential complex to a non-residential use.

Details About the Work I Plan to do
I have described below the work I plan to do for the reason shown above, including specific details about how I will carry out the work.

Work planned	Details of the Work

Page 1 of 4

Process for LEGAL Renoviction:

2. Tenants can challenge the case at LTB if:

- You do not believe your landlord is really going to do the work they claim.
- The work can be done without you moving out.
- Your landlord won't be able to get a building permit.
- The work your landlord wants to do does not require a building permit.

*Fines for illegal evictions have been raised to \$50,000 (previously \$25,000) for an individual landlord and \$250,000 (previously \$100,000) for a corporation

Process for LEGAL Renoviction:

3. Tenants are allowed to formally request to move back into the suite at the same price as before.

- If the tenant wants to move back in once the work is done, the tenant must give the landlord written notice that they want to move back in.



Process for LEGAL Renoviction:

Your landlord needs to have a building permit.



What requires a building permit?

- erect, install, extend, alter or repair a building
- demolish all or part of a building
- perform construction or alterations that result in a material change to a building or an accessory structure

How to check if your landlord has a building permit:

- You can search the status of building permits on the City of Toronto website:

<http://app.toronto.ca/ApplicationStatus/setup.do?action=init>



How ACORN Can Help Tenants Fight Renoviction:



1. Fill out paperwork to challenge eviction at Landlord Tenant Board
2. Help you gather evidence.
3. Provide coaching for the landlord tenant board case
4. Public shaming / challenge why City is giving permit to renovictor
5. Public Shaming Campaign Against Landlord.
6. Get tenants together in the building to have a collective campaign

How ACORN Can Help Tenants Fight Renoviction:



The Tenant Defence Fund

- City of Toronto offers grants to tenants that are facing AGI's or dispute maintenance issues at LTB, called the Tenant Support Grant
- Recently expanded to include renovictions and demovicitons (N13's)
- To apply, require that affected buildings have a minimum of five (5) units in the building and two (2) tenant applicants who will sponsor the application and liaise with City staff.
- Grants of \$1250 available to most tenant groups. Special circumstances may warrant a grant of \$15,0000

25 Leduc / 2 Torbolton ACORN Tenant Union



Overview:

- New management bought two townhome buildings in Rexdale
- Sent notices to tenants to be out by March 31, 2021 and a buyout offer of \$5,000
- Tenants organize with their neighbours and form an ACORN tenant union in their buildings.
- Have a few actions (one at the building, phone blitz, delivered a letter to the property management office)
- Have two online actions (we will share in the chat)
- Because of ACORN's actions we pressured Councillor Ford to reach out to the City's SSHA and to help tenants access the tenant defence fund
- Got great press attention
- Did outreach days in the community
- ACORN helped win \$10,000 for tenants to access form the tenant defence fund and helped get a paralegal.
- March, 2021 is going to be we're not moving month!

What laws allow this to happen?

Municipal:

- 1) Municipal Redevelopment Grants
- 2) City approves building permits for developers that are evicting tenants for renovations
- 3) Weak bylaw enforcement



Burnaby ACORN's victory: Tenant Assistance Policy



- Help finding a new place to rent, if requested;
- Rent top-up payments, if needed, to bridge the gap between rent for the new unit and existing rent level;
- Financial support with moving; and
- The right to return to the new development at the same rent (plus any Residential Tenancy Act rent increases) in a suite with the same number of bedrooms.

<https://www.burnaby.ca/City-Services/Planning/Housing/Tenant-Assistance.html>

We need REAL Rent Control!



Provincial

- Right now rents are attached to the *lease* and not the *unit*...
- Gives landlord incentives to get long term tenants out so they can jack up the rent as soon as the unit is vacant

ACORN is demanding
Vacancy Control!

QUESTIONS?



Thank you!