



TORONTO ACORN



Municipal Platform

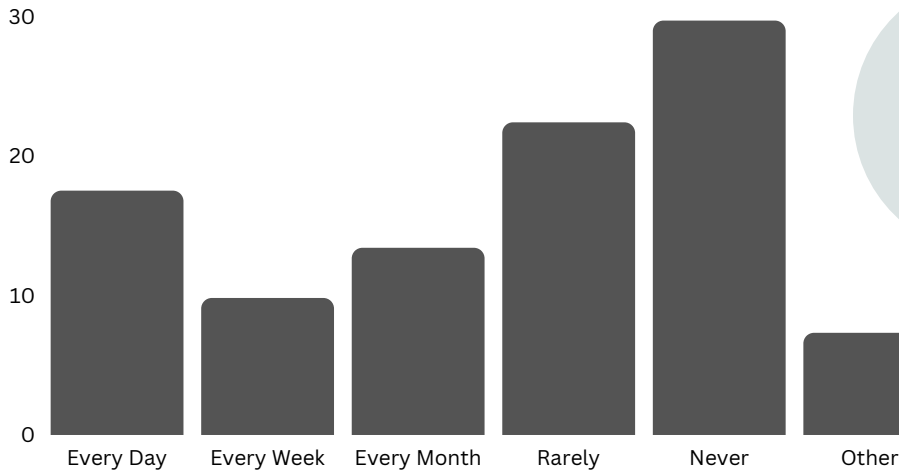
OUR PLATFORM

- ✓ BEAT THE HEAT
- ✓ LANDLORD LICENSING
- ✓ MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING
- ✓ FUND AFFORDABLE HOUSING
- ✓ NO TENANT DISPLACEMENT
- ✓ RENT CONTROL ON MUNICIPAL CONTRACTS

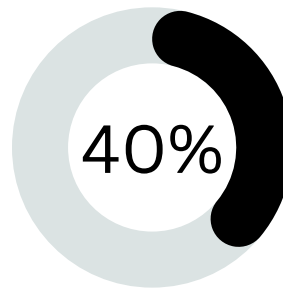
WHAT IS ACORN?

ACORN Canada or Association of Communities for Reform Now is a multi-issue, mass-based community and tenant union of low-to-moderate income people. The purpose of the union is to give power to people so that they can have their voices heard at the highest levels of the country. With chapters across the region, province, and across the country, ACORN is able to be both a local based union winning local campaigns, as well as a large organization combining forces to fight for policy changes at the national level.

Toronto ACORN started in 2004 and has grown to six chapters across the city since then.



tenants who responded to our 2023 State of Repair Report saying how often they see cockroaches in their homes.



of tenants who responded to our 2023 State of Repair Report have problems with the heat in the summer.

There are massive problems with lack of repairs, pests and proper heat and cooling in building across Toronto

CONTACT US

LANDLORD LICENSING



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RENTSAFE FUNDING

- In-unit inspections added to RentSafe to affect evaluation scores.
- The City needs to step in to do repairs automatically when landlords ignore, through remedial action and bill the landlord on their property tax.
- More inspectors to protect existing affordable housing.
- In 2021, RentSafe had 33 full time staff for 3500 buildings. We need a ratio similar to the proposed ratio for rooming houses where there is a 1 inspector per 12.5 buildings.
- A new fine system to issue major financial penalties to negligent landlords with automatic tickets by inspectors for any property standard violation.
- New units being rented should be inspected before they are rented
- Violations in the system can only be cleared when the tenant verifies the work has been done

RENT ESCROW

Create a rent escrow account at the city so tenants can pay their rent into the city when the landlord is not doing repairs. The city can then use this account to do the needed repairs themselves.

LICENSING LANDLORDS

The City should move towards a landlord licensing regime. When you need a licence to operate a hot dog cart - you should have one for a building.

Cities like New Westminster in BC have licensed landlords for example. Licensing is required to tackle issues like renovations.



DID YOU KNOW?

46.8% of tenant households spend more than 30% of their pretax income on shelter costs or to live in unaffordable housing.

Separate Phone Line For RentSafe

A separate phone line makes it easier for tenants to make complaints and makes the response quicker. There was a separate line before RentSafe was created under MRAB.

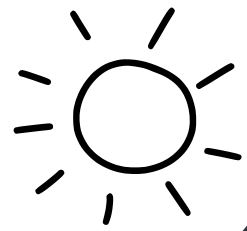
Colour Coded Signs

A building rating system, like DineSafe, with signs that clearly display the building rating and advertising 311 for any tenant issues. The signs would inform tenants of their rights, health and safety concerns and about the RentSafe system.

Fix The Inspections System for Evaluation

The building evaluation process should include tenant complaints, property standards violations, and the length of time it takes to get repairs done, work orders, in suite inspections and speaking to tenants directly, not just common area inspections.

BEAT THE HEAT



I get tired real fast. I am 62 years old, although I don't sound that old but I am. However, when the heat strikes, I get a headache, get very tired. The landlords don't care about renters. These buildings need to have AC, we have to accept what we have. I have been living here since 2018. Earlier I was in a basement unit, the landlord took care of me. But in my current unit, its bad. My landlord told me I can install an AC but I have to pay for it and also pay the hydro. The rent just keeps going up, how will I afford an AC? The government must compel these landlords to give appropriate service to the tenants.

VIVIANNE, ACORN MEMBER



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CLIMATE CRISIS SPECIFICALLY IMPACTS LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME AND OTHER VULNERABLE TENANTS. FOR YEARS, TENANTS HAVE BEEN RAISING THE ALARM ON UNSAFE CONDITIONS IN RENTAL HOUSING DURING THE HOT SUMMER MONTHS.

KEY FINDINGS FROM TORONTO ACORN SURVEY:

- 77% of tenants said that they are impacted by extreme heat.
- More than a third (36%) of the tenants don't have access to air conditioning (AC) or cooler temperatures in their units.
- Among those who don't have access to AC, cost emerged as a major reason.
- Close to a quarter of tenants said that they took it out because the landlord threatened them for eviction, extra fees etc.
- Around a quarter of respondents pay extra to access AC.
- Around 74% of tenants said that their children and other dependents are very impacted by extreme heat.
- Close to 40% tenants stated that they were asked to pay extra fees to keep their ACs.

ACORN'S DEMANDS:

- The city must develop and implement a maximum heat bylaw for rental housing.
- Provide free energy efficient air conditioners (Heat/ Cooling pumps) for low income community members, prioritising tenants with utilities outside their rent.
- Track heat-related deaths and illnesses.
- A financial penalty for landlords who fail to comply with the maximum heat bylaw.

TORONTO ACORN MUNICIPAL PLATFORM



NO TENANT DISPLACEMENT

The City needs to create strong protections against renovations

- Onus needs to be on the Landlords/ developers must make arrangements for each tenant to continue their tenancy at the same rent during and after the renovation.
- Tenant relocation policy - if tenants have to move out, landlords must find them a new place close by, top up their rent so they don't pay more, and major financial penalties if the right to return is interfered with. This must be on top of any lump sum of money the tenant receives. No public funds, or permit approvals, to predatory landlords.

RENT CONTROL ON MUNICIPAL CONTRACTS

- Any developments getting municipal public funds (Housing Now, Open Door or other) must have rent control and vacancy control on all units (not just the affordable units)
- Rental replacement should require full rent control on replacement units, and extend the affordability period to 99 years.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Mandate 100% of developments on public land, including Housing Now, are rental with 50% of the development as affordable housing.
- New developments like Downsview must have 30% set aside as deeply affordable, permanent, rental housing. Implemented on a site by site basis.
- Aggressively target public surplus lands for new affordable housing built by a public or non profit developer to be managed by non profit, co-op or land trusts.
- Put more money into the MURA program - to ensure that small buildings in financial distress aren't scooped up by big corporate landlords
- Tax all vacant units with a 5% vacant unit tax
- Tax all luxury homes and increase property taxes on homes worth more than 2 million.
- Increase the Municipal Land Transfer Tax on high value homes

