

Landlord Licensing



What is Landlord Licensing?



Landlord licensing would make it so that there are:

- **The business owner (landlord) pays a small fee for their own license** and by-law officials ensure healthy standards. **The cost will not be pushed into the tenants** as provincial laws prevent this.
- **Annual inspections** of all buildings in the City of Ottawa with 3 or more units
- **Landlords that fail these inspections would face large financial punishments from the City**
- Landlord Licensing would create a system similar to the licensing of restaurants.

The Current System

Currently, inspections of buildings are complaint based. Complaint based inspections don't work for many reasons:

- tenants don't know to call 311
- tenants don't know their rights
- tenants are afraid of landlords and the threat of eviction
- complaints are dropped once a new tenant moves in
- there are language barriers
- tenants eventually become unwilling to sacrifice their time and energy complaining when they fail to get results.

What would a Landlord Licensing program look like?

- The program will charge landlords a per unit fee, annually (in Toronto it's \$11).
- Buildings will have an annual inspection of common areas, boilers, elevators, and electrical systems. The inspections will also check if landlords are keeping up with cleaning, maintenance and pest control requirements.
- Online/Physical postings in common areas of landlords who pass or fail inspection
- Timelines for repairs based on severity (Ottawa ACORN won this already!)
- Non-compliance from timelines will result in the City completing the repair and billing the landlord
- Requiring landlords to create maintenance plans and objectives for achieving them

Some of this has been won by ACORN!

- **After the mass efforts from ACORN members through countless actions outside bad apartment buildings, a 100 person rally out City Hall multiple times, meeting with city councilors, and tons of press coverage, a Rental Housing Property Management Bylaw was passed in 2020!**
- Rental Management and Pest-Control Bylaw:
 - Capital Maintenance Plan: **plan to upkeep big ticket items** (furnace, elevators, etc.)
 - Integrated Pest Management Plan: plan around pests
 - Tenant Service Request: way to receive and follow up on tenant issues
 - Tenant Support Registry: people with disabilities who require accommodation
 - Information for Tenants: this is a package that tenants receive that has info about the building, their rights, and different systems/processes for building (garbage, parking, etc.)

Pushback From Landlord Lobby

Good Landlords Will Be Punished

- Good landlords will benefit from this, because they can advertise that they have a clean healthy building. The slumlords that abuse tenants without horrible conditions will finally be held accountable to their tenants. We need proactive inspections of all buildings.
- We don't only inspect restaurants that are known to be bad – all restaurants get inspected regardless of anything else. Buildings should be the same, the only way to know if a building is bad is through proactive inspections.



QUESTIONS?

(3 min)