



CITY OF COSTA MESA

Agenda Report

77 Fair Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

File #: 25-446

Meeting Date: 9/9/2025

TITLE:

UPDATE ON SUPPORT SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE FOR RESIDENTS AND TRACKING OF AT-FAULT EVICTIONS

DEPARTMENT: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

PRESENTED BY: ALMA REYES, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER

JAY BARKMAN, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS MANAGER

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RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council:

1. Receive and file staff's update on the donation of \$100,000 to two local non-profit organizations, Enough for All Fund (\$50,000) and Someone Cares Soup Kitchen (\$50,000) to provide assistance to impacted residents.
2. Request direction on tracking at-fault evictions.

BACKGROUND:

At the August 5, 2025 City Council Meeting, City Council provided direction to identify funding in the amount of \$100,000 to donate to two local non-profits to provide aid to residents in need of support services. Additionally, the City Council directed staff to explore tracking of at-fault evictions and creation of a City rental registry.

Discussion of the above items included questions regarding the non-profits ability to receive City funds for the purpose of assisting impacted residents. Council Member Marr requested that, in the event that a non-profit is unable to accept the donations, staff return to the Council for additional direction and guidance on how to proceed with the donation of the funds.

In addition, the City Attorney was provided with direction to explore various legal organizations that may be able to assist with administering a Legal Defense Fund.

ANALYSIS:**Donation Update**

At the August 5, 2025 Council Meeting, the City Council directed staff to identify funding in the amount of \$100,000 for a donation to two local non-profit organizations: Enough for All Fund (\$50,000) to assist resident with rent, groceries, and other necessities; and Someone Cares Soup Kitchen (\$50,000) to provide daily meals and groceries to impacted residents.

Council Members noted that the most urgent needs for impacted residents were primarily financial, particularly assistance with food, utilities, and rent. The donations are intended to address these needs.

At this time, staff have been in contact with the two identified non-profit organizations regarding the City's proposed donations. The Enough for All Fund Program has confirmed that the \$50,000 donation can be accepted and is prepared to receive funding.

Someone Cares Soup Kitchen indicated that acceptance of the City's \$50,000 donation will require discussion and approval by its Board of Directors.

Tenant Protections

On October 8, 2019, the Governor of California signed into law Assembly Bill 1482 (AB1482), otherwise known as the Tenant Protection Act of 2019. This law prohibits owners of residential real property from evicting a tenant without just cause when said tenant has occupied a residential unit for a minimum of 12 consecutive months. The law delineates the established conditions for an At-Fault or No-Fault eviction.

On September 30, 2023, the Governor of California signed into law Senate Bill 567 (SB567), which amends AB1482 to place additional requirements on owners of residential property when issuing no-fault just cause evictions, as well as to prescribe new enforcement mechanisms with respect to the provisions of AB1482 and SB567.

The City of Costa Mesa adopted the Tenant Protection Ordinance (Ordinance) on November 7, 2023, to further state law and support Costa Mesa renters with a few noteworthy enhancements requiring landlords:

- Notify the City within 72 hours after giving notice of a no-fault eviction
- Provide one month of Fair Market Rent to assist in relocation to a new unit

During the development of the Ordinance, staff explored mechanisms to obtain data related to at-fault evictions. After conducting research and consulting with City partners, staff determined that no mechanism or organization maintains such data. The only available information pertains to unlawful detainers, which are civil matters processed and maintained by the judicial system and not readily accessible. Since the Ordinance was adopted in November 2023, the City has received notification of 21 no-fault evictions.

At-Fault Eviction Tracking and Rental Registry

The League of California Cities issued a report in 2024 titled “[A Comprehensive Update on the Evolving Landscape of Tenant Protections](https://www.calcities.org/docs/default-source/annual-conference---session-materials/comprehensive-update-on-the-evolving-landscape-of-tenant-protections.pdf) <<https://www.calcities.org/docs/default-source/annual-conference---session-materials/comprehensive-update-on-the-evolving-landscape-of-tenant-protections.pdf>>,” discussing how cities in California have a long history of responding to the challenging rental market. The report describes the legislative and judicial history of landlord-tenant laws and anti-displacement policies, including the use of rental registries, and limits to at-fault just cause evictions. Registries are, generally used to monitor compliance in jurisdictions with just cause programs. The jurisdiction-specific data provided by rental registration helps to better inform further policymaking and tailor policies to local needs.”

A rental registry also serves as a communications tool to share data and information on compliance with tenants and landlords. Existing registries collect information either through annual reporting requirements or upon any changes in status to require landlords to provide details on:

- Compliance with rent amount increases pursuant to state law
- Rental unit properties (square footage, number of bedrooms)
- Fees paid to homeowner’s association for tenants of condominiums
- Housing vouchers used by tenants
- Changes in rent amount, or occupancy status
- Evictions or terminations, including copies of relevant notices

A common concern with the establishment of a rental registry is whether personal information will become subject to public disclosure. However, to address this concern jurisdictions can include language in their ordinance to declare certain information as received in confidence and exempt from Public Records Act requests.

At-fault evictions occur for many reasons ranging from nonpayment of rent, breaching a material term of a lease, creating a nuisance, to criminal activity. Cities that regulate at-fault evictions must maintain a program that requires significant resources, including technology systems, staffing, and funding. Most programs are designed to focus on assisting tenants and landlords with education to resolve disputes or are focused on housing standards and ensuring compliance with state rental laws. Cities with rental registry programs, may establish a “rent board” that develops regulations and hear claims or appeals from tenants and landlords. Additionally, cities with established rental registry programs rely on specific software for the tracking of rental units, disputes, compliance, and collection of fees.

As requested, staff conducted preliminary research into the creation of a rental registry, identifying examples of programs used by other cities. Cities with existing rental registries have required landlords to register for a range of reasons, from collecting data on rent amounts, enforcing rent control, tracking evictions, and investigating complaints about housing code violations.

Staff has identified the following cities with an established rental registry program that track evictions.

The table below provides information from eight cities with such programs.

City	Summary
Berkeley*	Rent Stabilization Board maintains a rental registry, tracks eviction data, and inspects units for compliance with housing codes.
Concord	Residential Rent Registry Program mandates annual registration of most rental units under its Tenant Protection Program Ordinance. Property owners must report tenancy details, rent levels, and eviction notices.
Los Angeles*	Rent Stabilization Ordinance requires landlords register rental units annually. The City collects eviction data and requires the filing of notices.
San Francisco*	Landlords must file an annual Rent Board Fee and report evictions. City tracks "at fault" vs. "no fault" evictions.
San Jose*	Rental registry under Apartment Rent Ordinance to track ownership, unit characteristics, and rents.
Santa Ana*	As of 2022 landlords are required to register or claim their rental unit as exempt under the Rent Stabilization and Just Cause Eviction Ordinance.
Santa Monica*	Landlords required to register with Rent Control Agency whenever a unit is rented to a new tenant.
Pasadena*	Rental registry established under voter-initiated City Charter amendment requires landlords to register units annually, supporting tracking of rent increases, eviction reasons, and unit characteristics.

*Charter Cities

The cities listed above require landlords to register their units in connection with enforcing their rent stabilization programs limiting annual increases to rent.

Based on the information collected from other agencies, implementing and maintaining a rental registry program requires significant resources. Program fees are common amongst cities with a rental registry program while some fees may be relatively modest other cities may enact higher fees to offset program administration costs. Fees may range from \$29 to \$400 per unit, with the most common fees falling in the range of \$200 per unit. Further, staff found that establishing such a program requires substantial start-up expenses for the implementation of software technology and annual subscriptions. Costs are estimated at approximately \$300,000 for implementation with on-going costs of approximately \$85,000 for annual subscriptions. Lastly, to maintain a robust program, these cities have dedicated staff to administer the program and support a large number of rental units. A dedicated team may include up to seven staff members, which is comprised of a program manager, housing specialists, and administrative and clerical support staff. Cities have also reported significant additional impacts on departments such as Code Enforcement due to increased complaints and Finance due to payment processing.

Through this preliminary research, staff understand that a rental registry program is a complex undertaking. In order to fully comprehend the complexities of the program an in-depth analysis is required that looks at both the opportunities and challenges, and necessary resources to implement this new program.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council may:

1. Receive and file the report.
2. Direct staff to further analyze and develop rental registry options and program budget and potential fees.
3. Direct staff to review and propose amendments to the City's current Tenant Protections Ordinance requiring noticing all (No-Fault and At-fault) evictions and proposal of additional resources necessary to track all evictions.

FISCAL REVIEW:

The City's \$100,000 donation will be funded through the Contingency Fund in the General Fund (Fund 101).

Should the City Council choose to establish a rental registry program, staff would have to identify available funding in the adopted FY 2025-26 budget or propose the necessary funding during the budget development process for FY 2026-27.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney has reviewed this report and approved it as to form.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND PRIORITIES:

This item supports the following City Council Goals:

- Strengthen the Public's Safety and Improve the Quality of Life
- Diversify, stabilize, and increase housing to reflect community needs.

CONCLUSION:

City staff have conducted preliminary research on how cities use their rental registries in connection with their rent stabilization programs and eviction tracking. At this time, staff is requesting that the City Council provide further direction prior developing detailed cost estimates or program alternatives.