

Los Angeles Times

L.A. Moves to Protect Renters Who Got a Pet During the Pandemic Lockdown

By Angie Orellana Hernandez

January 23, 2024

The Los Angeles City Council voted Tuesday to prevent landlords from evicting tenants who took in a pet at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic — even if it was prohibited by their leases.



The 13-0 vote, with Councilmembers Heather Hutt and Katy Yaroslavsky absent, will etch into law a tenant protection that was introduced during the pandemic lockdown but that was slated to expire at the end of January. Supporters say the ordinance will avert further worsening of the homelessness crisis, as well as minimize further crowding at animal shelters.

Tenants who have unauthorized pets, however, must notify their landlord within a month. The ordinance does not apply to pets who began living in the rental unit after Jan. 31, 2023.

The issue was raised in February 2023 in a report from the city Department of Animal Services, which said tenants would be forced to decide between remaining housed or giving up their pets

Now, tenants won't have to surrender their pets to shelters, which are currently "bursting at the seams," according to Larry Gross, president of the [Board of Animal Services Commissioners](#).

Victory for Renters and their Pets!



"It will keep families together, because many of these pets were brought in three or four years ago, and they're part of people's families," said Gross, who is also executive director of the [Coalition for Economic Survival](#). "It's a tremendous victory for pets, for tenants, and it was the most humane thing that the city could have done."

Prior to the vote, Councilmember Eunisses Hernandez also spoke in favor of the ordinance, stating that the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown had a wide-ranging "social, economic and health impact on our communities."

"Many people lost their loved ones and were dealing with isolation from quarantine, which led many to get new additions to their families," Hernandez said. "These pets have helped people get through difficult times, and tenants should not be evicted from their homes because of the pets."

Audience members at the meeting also expressed concern over possible evictions and over the mental health of tenants who sheltered pets to better their mental health.

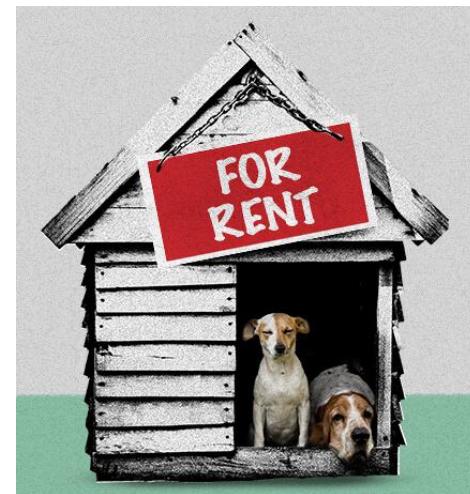
"Animals are the only thing keeping them going," said one Animal Services volunteer.

Many landlords also backed the ordinance. In a Dec. 5 letter to the City Council, the California Apartment Assn., which represents landlords and other property owners, wrote that it supported the "Animal Services' report and city's goal of resolving this unique situation."

The organization asked the City Council to include the provision mandating that tenants inform their housing provider of an animal's presence.

"It is important for the property owner to be aware of animals and general activity in the community," the letter read.

Nearly a week after the landlord association's request, the City Council voted 14 to 0 to have City Atty. Hydee Feldstein Soto draft the language for the ordinance, which goes into effect immediately.



City of Los Angeles Renters
4% RENT INCREASE ALLOWED
For Rent Controlled Properties

FEB. 1, 2024

Things you should know:

- ↑ Rent increase allowed Feb. 1, 2024 through June 30, 2024.
- ✚ Landlords can add an extra 1% per utility, up to 6%, if they pay the entire gas and electric bill.
- ✓ Check if your unit is rent controlled at zimas.lacity.org.
- ✉ File illegal rent increase complaints at housing.lacity.org.

Be informed. Be protected. Be at home.



HOUSING.LACITY.ORG

Renters living in units covered by the City of Los Angeles Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO) now can receive rent increase of 4%. An additional 1% for gas and 1% for electric service can be added if the landlord provides the service to the tenant. State law requires landlords to provide an advance 30-day written notice for rent increases of less than 10%.

Rent Increases Allowed **FEBRUARY 1** All Back Rent Owed is Due



The City of Los Angeles COVID-19 eviction protections for non-payment of rent fully expires on February 1, 2024. LA City Renters must pay their full current monthly rent, plus all the back rent that is owed to avoid eviction for non-payment of rent.



During the worst years of the COVID-19 pandemic, the City enacted a number of emergency measures, including a moratorium on evictions and rent increases. As our economy recovered from the crisis, the City Council extended deadlines for the end of these emergency rules, but the public health emergency is over and ordinary regulation of rental agreements is resuming.

All rent owed from October 1 - January 31, 2023 must be paid by February 1, 2024.

Your City Council office cannot resolve housing issues, that is the role of the Los Angeles Housing Department.

For further information on your rights as a renter in the City of Los Angeles, visit: housing2.lacity.org

In the last year, the City Council enacted a new set of ordinances to protect renters from arbitrary evictions, while allowing rental property owners to collect the rent they depend on. Here are the basic rules that are now in effect.

- Landlords cannot evict tenants for non-payment who owe less than one month's rent.
- If you've rented your apartment for at least six months, and have paid your rent, your landlord must show "Just Cause" for eviction.
- A renter may also be evicted through a "No Fault" eviction process. A landlord must pay three months fair market rent plus moving fees for "No Fault" evictions.
- If the landlord has raised your rent by more than 10 percent and you cannot afford to pay the increased rent, your landlord must pay three months fair market rent plus moving fees.
- If your rental unit was built before October 1978, it is covered by the City's Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO).
- Between now and June 30, 2024, landlords can raise rent on RSO units by 4 percent, if they do not pay for gas and electricity.
- If they pay for gas and electricity, they can raise the rent by 6 percent.
- After June 30, 2024, the allowable increase will be based on the Consumer Price Index, but cannot be more than 7 percent per year.

If you have further questions, or if you received an eviction notice or need help, contact the Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD) at housing.lacity.org/ask-housing or call (866) 557-7368 daily from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm.



COALITION FOR ECONOMIC SURVIVAL

TENANTS' RIGHTS ZOOM CLINIC

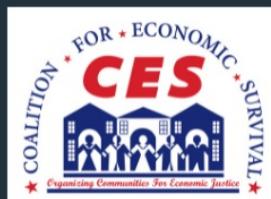
Every Saturday
at 10 a.m.



To request a link to register,
email: HelpingLArenters@gmail.com

Serving Renters Throughout
Southern California & Beyond...

Accommodations for Spanish &
Russian speakers are provided.



ATTENTION ALL RENTERS! ***Know Your Rights By Attending the Coalition for Economic Survival Tenants' Rights Zoom Clinic***

To sign up for the next Coalition for Economic Survival
Tenants' Rights Clinic via ZOOM
Request a Link by emailing:
HelpingLArenters@gmail.com

The Clinic serves the entire Southern California area.
Accommodations for Spanish, Russian speakers are provided.

One-On-One Assistance With an Attorney.

CES holds the Clinic **Every Saturday** via Zoom at 10 am.
and every Wednesday at 6 pm for West Hollywood Renters.

To request a link to register for any Clinic
email: HelpingLArenters@gmail.com.

Donate Now to the Coalition for Economic Survival



Donate to the Coalition for Economic Survival (CES)

Help Support the Coalition for Economic Survival. Donate Now!

One-Time

Monthly

\$10

\$25

\$50

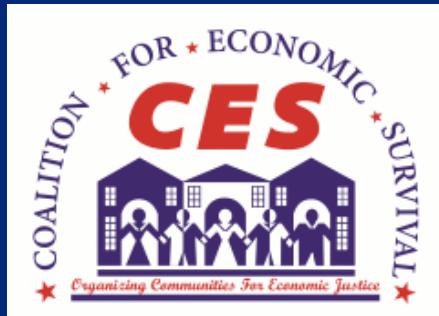
\$100

\$250

\$500

\$1,000

\$ Other



Coalition for Economic Survival

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