



City of
**Santa
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Maintenance of Residential Rental Properties

**Presentation for Tenants and
Owners**

May 6, 2026

Presented by

- Steve Nice – Information Coordinator
- Antonio Vargas – Information Coordinator
- Maurice Cochee – Code Enforcement Supervisor

What Requires Maintenance

- Rent Control
 - Deteriorated Conditions
 - Base Amenities
 - Housing Services



Deteriorated Conditions

- Board Regulation 4200 lists examples of conditions that must be remedied.
- Includes conditions not expressly listed.
- New owners are responsible for deferred maintenance.



Examples of Maintenance-Related Conditions

- Board regulations provide remedies for failure to make necessary repairs inside units. These might include issues such as:

- painting
- floors and coverings
- leaks
- plumbing problems
- heat

- insect infestations
- counters
- grout
- screens
- appliances



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Examples of Maintenance-Related Conditions

- Board regulations provide remedies for failure to make necessary repairs in common areas. These might include issues such as:

- porches
- dangerous walkways
- electrical problems
- worn paint
- broken windows or doors
- elevators





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Base Amenities

How are Base Amenities Determined?

Pre-1/1/1999 Tenancies

- The required base amenities and housing services are those provided on April 10, 1978 or the date the unit was first rented after April 10, 1978.

Post-1/1/1999 Tenancies

- The required base amenities and housing services are those provided on the initial date of the current tenancy.
- Parking, storage or the right to have a pet become base amenities if added after the initial date of tenancy.

Examples of Unit-Specific Base Amenities

- Carpet
- Storage
- Appliances
- Drapes
- Parking



Examples of Common Area Base Amenities

- Yards, patios, balconies or play areas
- Landscaping
- Yard-care services
- Laundry facilities
- Recreational facilities
- Security gates, doors, fencing
- Electric Vehicle (EV) charging



Housing Services

- Roommates
- On-site Management
- Owner-paid Utilities

Questions?





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Remedies

Available remedies when there is a lack of maintenance

- Rent Control
 - Petition for Rent Decrease
 - Rent Decrease for Construction Impacts



Rent Decrease Petition

- A tenant may file a rent decrease petition when an owner does not make necessary repairs.
- A tenant may also file a decrease petition when amenities or housing services are no longer provided.
- An owner may file a decrease petition requesting a rent decrease for the removal of a base amenity or housing service.



Rent Decrease Petition

- Tenant makes written request for repairs.
 - (A Code Enforcement Order can also serve as notice.)
- After 30 days, tenant files decrease petition with Rent control.
- Mediation conference is scheduled.
- If the matter is resolved in mediation, a written settlement agreement is signed setting out what will be done.
- If any issues are not resolved, a hearing is held.
- Hearing officer issues written decision
- Either party can appeal the decision to the Rent Control Board.

Rent Decrease Petition

- Regulation 4200 sets a decrease range for many possible issues.
- The Hearing Officer determines the amount of decrease based on the degree of deterioration, lack of maintenance, or limitation to housing service or amenity.
- The Hearing Officer or the Board may grant a decrease that is greater or less than the suggested range based upon the evidence that is presented at the hearing.
- Decreases remain in effect until the owner rectifies the issue and requests a compliance determination.

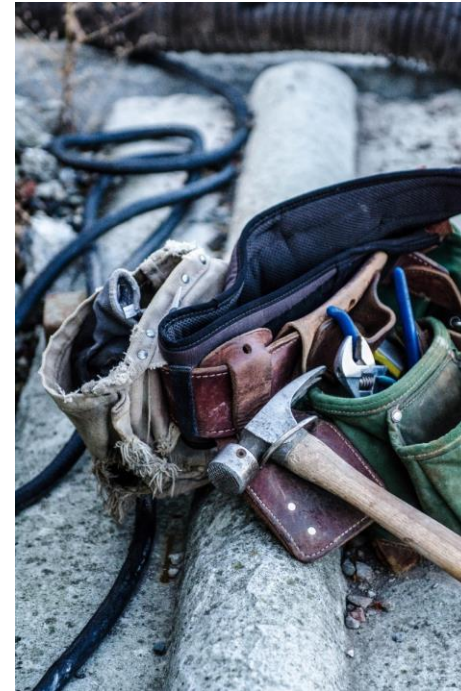


Construction-Related Rent Decrease

When and How

Can a Petition be Filed?

- Different process than regular rent decrease petition.
- Tenants notify Rent Control that substantial repairs, rehabilitation, or upgrades are planned.
- Agency will mail a notice to the landlord.
- Mediation may be scheduled prior to petitions being filed.
- Petitions are detail dependent.

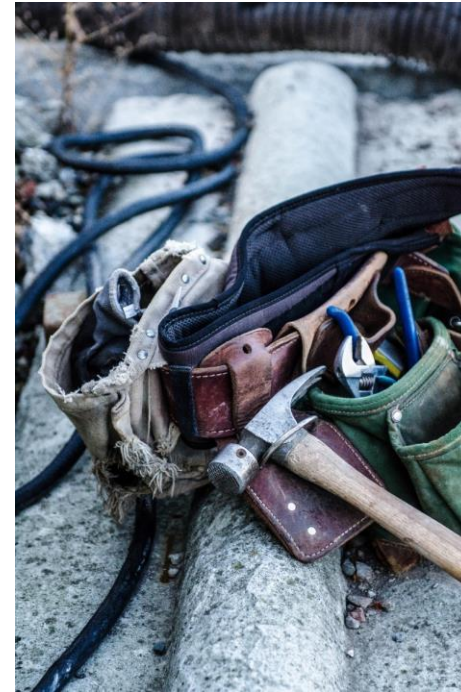


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Construction-Related Rent Decrease

How is a Petition Decided?

- Decreases may be granted when
 - a unit is uninhabitable due to construction
 - construction substantially reduces a housing service
 - construction interferes with a tenant's ability to occupy the unit as a residence.
- No decrease is authorized for unavoidable construction impacts caused by necessary repair or maintenance unless:
 - The construction is carried out in an unreasonable manner, or
 - The construction takes an unreasonably long time to complete



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Construction-Related Rent Decrease

- Regulation 4400 sets a decrease range for many possible issues.
- Decreases are effective from the date the condition began.
- Mediation service available



- **Examples include**
 - inadequate construction management:
10-75% of rent
 - safety:
10-100% of rent
 - loss of access to stairs, walkways, hallways:
\$15-175/mo.
 - loss or reduction of yards, patios, balconies, play areas or landscaping:
\$15-175/mo.

Accessing Petitions on Our Website

[Top Resources](#) | [Divisions](#) | [News](#)

Top Resources

Rent Control Board

Board commissioners and details of past and upcoming Board meetings.

Rent Control Law & Regulations

Rent Control Charter Amendment and Regulations by Chapter.

News & Announcements

Click here for news, upcoming events, and public hearings

Maximum Lawful Rent and General Adjustments

Maximum Allowable Rents (MAR), annual General Adjustments (GA), and Notice of Increase Form

Registration Forms

Forms to register new tenancies, amenities and ownership information

Paying Registration Fees

Pay registration fees using convenient online bill pay.

Petition Forms and Instructions

Tenants & owners may file petitions to resolve disputes or adjust rents

Information by Subject

Links to information sheets on various topics including evictions, maintenance, buyout offers, etc.

More Rent Control Topics

Look Up a Rent, Document Portal, Eviction limitations, and other important information



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Rent Control Petitions

[Rent Decrease Petition](#)

Tenants whose rental units need repair or maintenance, or whose housing services or amenities have been reduced, may petition to have their monthly rent decreased. A rent decrease stays in effect until the necessary repairs have been made or amenities restored.

A decrease petition may also be filed by a property owner who wishes to remove a service or amenity in exchange for a decrease in rent.

[Excess Rent Complaint](#)

If a tenant has paid more than the maximum lawful rent (or other forms of excess rent as defined in [Chapter 8](#)), he or she may file a complaint to recover the amounts determined to have been overcharged. A complaint may also be filed by a tenant if the property owner has failed to properly register the tenancy or the property.

[Construction-Related Rent Decrease Petition](#)

Rent Control Board Regulation 4400, titled "Rent Decreases for Construction Impacts," provides a remedy for impacts in services or maintenance, or interferences with occupancy, resulting from construction activity.

[Petition for Determination of a Tenant Not-in-Occupancy](#)

A property owner who believes that a rental unit is not being used as the tenant's principal place of residence may file this petition to seek a determination that the tenant is "not in occupancy." If approved, a one-time increase in the rent level will be authorized by the Rent

Follow these steps to file for a rent decrease

1

Prepare a written notice that identifies the maintenance and/or amenity issue(s)

You may use the Notice to Landlord provided [here](#), or you may write your own letter. In either case, it is recommended that you specifically and clearly state the nature of all complaints or problems. If you use this form, you must check the box next to the appropriate category or categories. In addition, it is recommended that you explain each problem in detail. For example, if you check broken window, state which window is broken and what the exact problem is. For example, "Kitchen window won't close completely, and lock is broken."

Be sure to raise **all** issues in your notice for which you intend to seek a decrease. If there are additional problems but you do not list them in your notice, you may not include them in your petition. Please note, Rent Control Board regulations may prevent you from filing another petition until six months after the decision on your first petition becomes final.

Be sure to keep an **exact copy** of your writing to the landlord. You will need to submit an **exact copy** of the notice/letter you initially served your landlord when you file your petition.



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Questions?



Santa Monica Code Enforcement

Presented by:

Maurice Cochee

Code Enforcement Supervisor

Code Enforcement Division



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Code Enforcement Division

- Created as a Division in the City Government in 2011 to meet the growing demand of Code Enforcement calls for services which include the following:
 - Deteriorating housing conditions (85% of housing in Santa Monica is multi-family)
 - Construction work without permits
 - Zoning violations, Building Code violations, and other Santa Monica Code violations



Santa Monica Property Maintenance Code Adoption

- On August 22, 2023, City Council heard and approved an ordinance establishing Article 13 – Neighborhood Preservation.
 - Article 13 includes three chapters:
 - Chapter 13.02 – Property Maintenance
 - Chapter 13.04 – Vacant Properties
 - Chapter 13.06 – Public Nuisance
 - Focusing on Chapter 13.02 – Property Maintenance
 - The code sets absolute minimum standards to protect public health, safety and welfare. It empowers the City to take administrative action against those who allow nuisance conditions to persist, preventing depreciated property values and impaired investments in the community.



Property Maintenance Code Importance

- Santa Monica's Property Maintenance Code (Chapter 13.02) is important for several reasons:
 - **Addresses aging housing stock**
 - The property maintenance code ensures that existing structures remain safe and habitable as they age, preventing conditions from breaking down or falling into disrepair.
 - **Gives the city enforcement tools**
 - Before the code's adoption in August 2023, Santa Monica lacked comprehensive administrative remedies to compel property owners to maintain their properties. Chapter 13.02 provides efficient legal mechanisms for Code Enforcement to issue violations, citations, and orders requiring property owners to abate nuisance conditions.
 - **Covers gaps not addressed by other codes**
 - The property maintenance code reaches conditions that fall outside standard building or housing codes, including landscaping, cleanliness, litter, outdoor storage, walkway hazards, and nuisance conditions on both residential and commercial properties.
 - **Ensures owner accountability**
 - The code makes clear that property owners remain legally responsible for maintenance violations regardless of lease agreements, tenant conduct, or contracts with third parties.



Overview of Required Maintenance

- Property owners must maintain housing according to minimum standards set by:
 - California Building Codes
 - California Health & Safety Code
 - California Civil Code
 - Santa Monica Municipal Codes
- California law imposes an implied warranty of habitability on all landlords, requiring rental properties to be "safe, clean, and fit for human occupancy". This obligation is codified in California Civil Code §1941.1 and California Health & Safety Code §17920.3, which establish mandatory minimum standards that landlords must maintain regardless of lease terms.



Common Areas

- Accessory structures (garage/storage rooms)
- Exterior electrical, mechanical and plumbing fixtures not attached to the building
- Gardens and courtyards
- Hallways, corridors, stairwells and staircases
- Walkways and sidewalks
- Laundry facilities
- Trash/recycling areas
- Carports and parking areas
- Swimming pools, gates and fences

Building Structure

- Building exterior weather-proofing
- Roofs
- Stairs and Landings
- Entry ways and overhangs
- Exterior electrical, mechanical and plumbing fixtures attached to the building.



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Building Violations

- Work without permit
- Construction hours
- Construction-related
- Bootleg units
- Residential substandard housing
- Dangerous buildings
- Noise complaints



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Habitability (unit interiors)

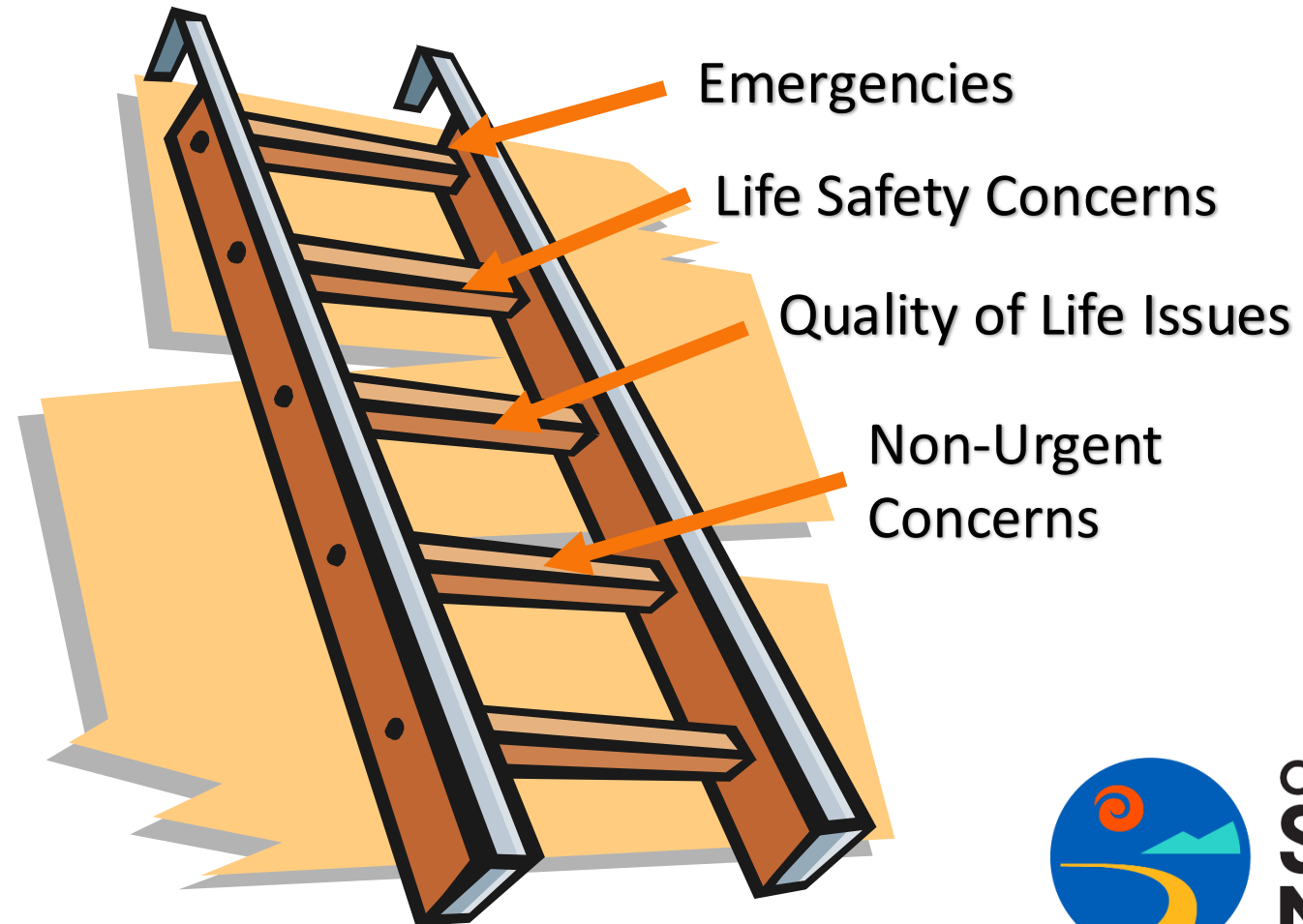


- A habitable dwelling unit
 - correctly provides basic protection, sanitation facilities and access to utilities.
- An uninhabitable unit
 - is unsafe, unsanitary, or unlivable.
 - substantially interferes with a tenant's ability to live safely and comfortably in the property and represents a breach of local building codes or health regulations.



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Priority of Cases Filed with Code Enforcement



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Enforcement Process

- Complaint or Proactive Inspection
 - Respond to reported violations and performs proactive enforcement.
- Investigation
 - Officers review the facts, inspect the property, and determine whether conditions violate the municipal and/or state requirements.
- Compliance Action
 - Notice of Violation and/or Habitability Determination
 - Administrative Citation (Non-Compliance with Notice of Violation)
 - Refer to City Attorney for further prosecution
 - Additional fines and penalties
 - Administrative Hearing before a Hearing Officer
 - Criminal or Civil Prosecution
 - Recordation
 - Court ordered receivership or relief



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Habitability Determinations by the Building Official

- Habitability determinations are made by the Building Official or designee on a case-by-case basis.
- Possible Reasons: Any building or portion of a building which creates conditions that endanger the life, limb, health, property, safety or welfare of the public or the occupants, which could include:
 - Lack of hot and cold running water to plumbing fixtures in a dwelling unit.
 - Lack of or improper toilets, sinks, bathtubs, or shower in a dwelling unit.
 - **Visible** mold growth, as determined by a health officer or a code enforcement officer.
 - Lack of adequate heating.
 - Substandard/dangerous wiring/plumbing or mechanical fixtures or structural hazards
 - Lack of proper egress from the unit or property.
 - Dampness of habitable rooms.

Temporary Tenant Relocation

- Situations where temporary relocation benefits must be provided to tenants:
 - Termite fumigation (tenting)
 - Major and/or extensive construction work that requires tenants to temporarily vacate
 - Building Code violations where the City orders tenants to vacate
 - Unit is declared uninhabitable due to fire, water damage
- **Landlord is not required to provide temporary relocation benefits if condition is caused by the tenant or the tenant's guest.**
 - In addition, a landlord is not required to pay temporary relocation benefits if the displacement of the tenant is caused by an earthquake, natural disaster, terrorist attack, or other incident occurring or substantially initiated off of the property and not directly caused by the landlord (such as vehicle accident, criminal activity, public utility failure or adjacent building failure).



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Temporary Relocation Benefit Amounts

- **Per Diem Rates**
 - Hotel or Motel: \$390 per day per household
 - Meal Expenses: \$41 per day per person, if the temporary accommodation lacks cooking facilities
 - Laundry: \$1 per day per household if the rental property included laundry facilities.
 - Pet accommodations: \$38 per day per cat; \$70 per day per dog and actual daily boarding cost for all other pets.
 - The pet accommodation per diem is required for lawful pets if the temporary relocation accommodation does not accept pets and is a reimbursement.
- **Temporary Tenant Relocation Timelines:**
 - Less than 5 days:
 - Hotel/motel, Daily Per Diem Rate or Comparable Housing
 - More than 5 days, but less than 30 days:
 - Daily Per Diem Rates or Comparable Housing
 - 30 days or more:
 - Comparable Housing or Weekly Per Diem Rates
- **The tenant continues to pay rent during the period of relocation.**
- **The tenant is entitled to return to the unit at the same rent.**



Questions?



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Inter-Agency Responses

1. Referrals to appropriate agencies is routine.
2. Code Enforcement and Rent Control work cooperatively to address maintenance inquiries and to ensure violations are abated.
3. The Rent Control Law may prohibit owners from taking the annual rent increase when there is an unabated Code Enforcement order for the unit or for common areas.
4. In the case of serious code violations that are unabated, owners may be prohibited from setting a market-rate rent for a new tenancy.

Contact Info – Public Health

Customer Call Center

(888) 700-9995

Or

District Surveillance and Enforcement

(626) 430-5202

www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh



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Contact Info – Rent Control

- **Office Address**
Santa Monica City Hall
1685 Main Street, Room 202
Santa Monica, CA 90401
- **Phone**
(310) 458-8751
- **Email**
rentcontrol@santamonica.gov
- **Website**
www.smgov.net/rentcontrol



Contact Info – Code Enforcement

- In Person - Fill out a concern form at City Hall, Building & Safety, Room 111
- By phone - (310) 458-4984
- Email – Code.Enforcement@smgov.net
- Online - concern form available at our website:

www.smgov.net/Departments/PCD/About-Us/Code-Enforcement



Maintenance of Residential Rental Properties

Presentation for Tenants and Owners

Thank you for coming!

View online at santamonica.gov/rent-control-seminars-and-newsletters

This presentation is a summary of rights and responsibilities under law. For more complete information, go to santamonica.gov/rentcontrol.

Contact the Rent Control Agency, LA County Public Health or Code Enforcement directly.



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