



City of Seattle's Renter Protections

Photo by John Skelton

Human Services, Equitable Development, & Renters Rights Committee

Faith Lumsden & Geoff Tallent | January 23, 2018

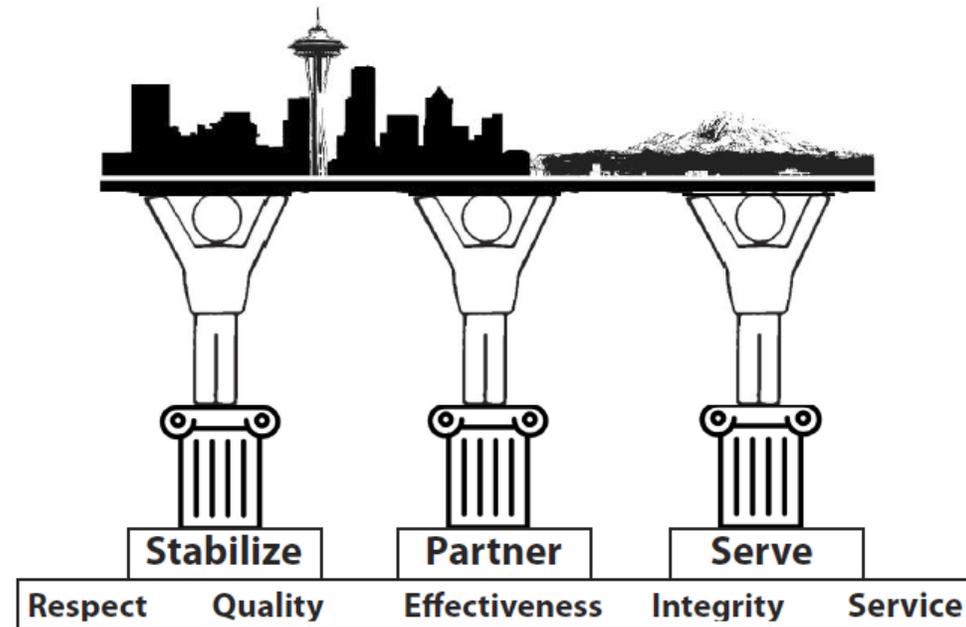
SDCI PURPOSE AND VALUES

Our Purpose

As stewards and regulators of land and buildings, we preserve and enhance equity, livability, safety, and health of our communities.

Our Values

- Respect
- Quality of work
- Effectiveness
- Integrity
- Service



Presentation

- Renter Protections
 - Moving in
 - While Renting
 - Moving Out
- Other Services
- “Renting in Seattle”



Introductory Video

- Part of the “Renting in Seattle” project
- Will be narrated in key languages
- 30 second PSA length
- Main messages
 - The City has many tenant protections
 - Knowing your rights is important
 - The City is here to help



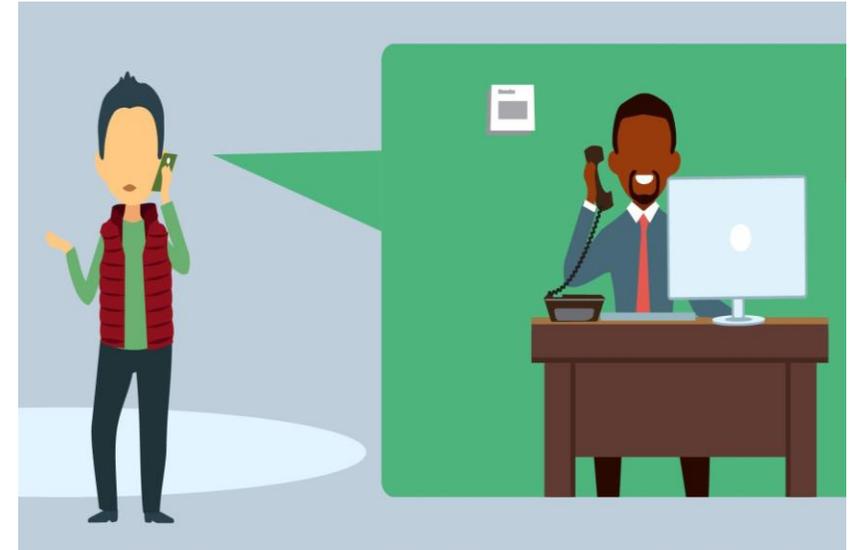
Moving In

- Rental housing must be registered and meet minimum housing standards in order to be rented (Rental Registration and Inspection Program & Housing and Building Maintenance Code)
- Landlords must accept the first qualified applicant
- Landlords cannot deny renting to tenants based on:
 - race, religion, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, etc.
 - source of income (e.g. Housing vouchers)
 - criminal records with some exceptions
- Application fees and security deposits may not exceed one month's rent
- Renters have a right to pay move-in costs in installments
- Landlords must provide the City's summary "Information for Tenants" including voter registration information.



While Renting

- Rental housing must be properly maintained by the landlord (HBMC)
- Landlords cannot raise rent if the unit does not meet basic maintenance standards
- Rent increases less than 10% require 30 days notice, larger rent increases require 60 days notice
- Renters must be given 30 days written notice of changes to rental agreements
- Landlords can only access the unit in emergencies or with advance 24/48 hours notice.
- Renters can request reasonable accommodation
- Landlords may not take discriminatory action based on race, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, etc.
- Landlords may not retaliate because of a tenant complaint.



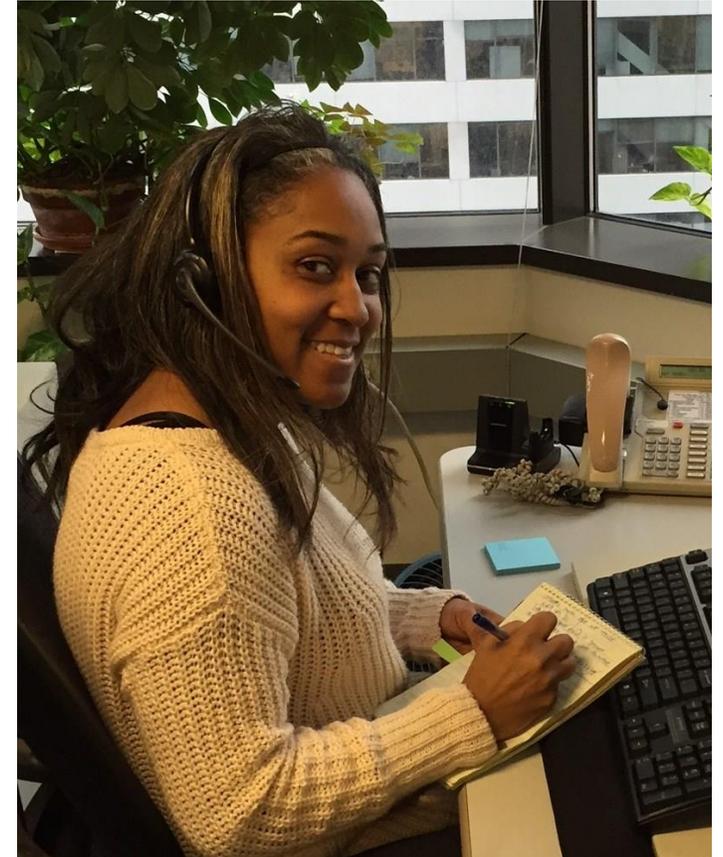
Moving Out

- Renters on month-to-month agreements can only be made to leave for one of 18 specific causes – no arbitrary termination
- Renters must receive the security deposit refund within 21 days, along with an accounting of any deposit withheld
- Renters may get relocation assistance when displaced by:
 - Development
 - A notice to discontinue an illegal unit
 - Emergency conditions hazardous to health and safety.



City Services

- Call SDCI for any issue with maintenance, move-in fees, rental agreements, rent increases, etc. and guidance on renter protections regulated by the City – 206-615-0808
- Call Seattle Office of Civil Rights for fair housing and discrimination complaints – 206-684-4500
- City helps fund:
 - Solid Ground and Tenants Union for renter counseling and outreach
 - Legal Action Center for legal aid
 - 211 for emergency and low-income housing referrals
- Utility discounts and energy efficiency programs



“Renting in Seattle” project

- ✓ Requested and funded by the Council
- ✓ Enhanced outreach - 28 events in 2017
- ✓ Cross- department coordination – SOCR, DON, OIRA, OH, HSD, CSB
- ✓ Focus on Immigrant & Refugee communities
- ✓ Ethnic Media print ads
 - Web portal – March 2018
 - Single phone number – March 2018
 - Infographics illustrating the renter experience – March 2018



Questions & Resources

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SDCI Renter Programs -
www.seattle.gov/rentinginseattle

