



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

Legislative Summary

CB 118921

Record No.: CB 118921

Type: Ordinance (Ord)

Status: Passed

Version: 2

Ord. no: Ord 125280

In Control: City Clerk

File Created: 02/22/2017

Final Action: 03/31/2017

Title: AN ORDINANCE relating to renters; establishing the Seattle Renters' Commission, representing the interests of renters located in Seattle, to advise and make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on public policy matters of importance to renters citywide; amending Section 3.35.030 of the Seattle Municipal Code, and adding a new Chapter 3.65, consisting of Sections 3.65.010, 3.65.015, 3.65.020, 3.65.030, 3.65.040, 3.65.050, and 3.65.060, to the Seattle Municipal Code.

Date

Notes:

Filed with City Clerk:

Mayor's Signature:

Sponsors: Burgess, Herbold, Juarez, O'Brien

Vetoed by Mayor:

Veto Overridden:

Veto Sustained:

Attachments:

Drafter: patrick.wigren@seattle.gov

Filing Requirements/Dept Action:

History of Legislative File

Legal Notice Published:

Yes

No

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
1	City Clerk	02/22/2017	sent for review	Council President's Office			
	Action Text: The Council Bill (CB) was sent for review. to the Council President's Office						
	Notes:						
1	Council President's Office	02/23/2017	sent for review	Affordable Housing, Neighborhoods, and Finance Committee			
	Action Text: The Council Bill (CB) was sent for review. to the Affordable Housing, Neighborhoods, and Finance Committee						
	Notes:						

- 1 Full Council 02/27/2017 referred Affordable Housing, Neighborhoods, and Finance Committee
- 1 Affordable Housing, Neighborhoods, and Finance Committee 03/03/2017 discussed
Action Text: The Council Bill (CB) was discussed.
Notes:
- 1 Affordable Housing, Neighborhoods, and Finance Committee 03/15/2017 pass as amended Pass
Action Text: The Committee recommends that Full Council pass as amended the Council Bill (CB).
Notes: Committee passed proposed substitute version D2
In Favor: 3 Chair Burgess, Vice Chair Herbold, Member Johnson
Opposed: 0
- 2 Full Council 03/20/2017 passed Pass
Action Text: The Council Bill (CB) was passed by the following vote, and the President signed the Bill:
In Favor: 8 Councilmember Burgess, Councilmember González, Council President Harrell, Councilmember Herbold, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Juarez, Councilmember O'Brien, Councilmember Sawant
Opposed: 0
- 2 City Clerk 03/23/2017 submitted for Mayor's signature Mayor
Action Text: The Council Bill (CB) was submitted for Mayor's signature. to the Mayor
Notes:
- 2 Mayor 03/31/2017 Signed
- 2 Mayor 03/31/2017 returned City Clerk
- 2 City Clerk 03/31/2017 attested by City Clerk
Action Text: The Ordinance (Ord) was attested by City Clerk.
Notes:
-

CITY OF SEATTLE

ORDINANCE 125280

COUNCIL BILL 118921

..title

AN ORDINANCE relating to renters; establishing the Seattle Renters' Commission, representing the interests of renters located in Seattle, to advise and make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on public policy matters of importance to renters citywide; amending Section 3.35.030 of the Seattle Municipal Code, and adding a new Chapter 3.65, consisting of Sections 3.65.010, 3.65.015, 3.65.020, 3.65.030, 3.65.040, 3.65.050, and 3.65.060, to the Seattle Municipal Code.

..body

WHEREAS, more than 54 percent of households in Seattle are renter households, 48 percent of Seattle's household population reside in renter households, and in some neighborhoods renters make up more than 80 percent of households, according to the 2011-15 American Community Survey; and

WHEREAS, the median household income of renters is less than 50 percent of the median income of homeowners in Seattle, according to the 2010-14 American Community Survey; and

WHEREAS, the median net worth of renter households in the United States is less than three percent of the median net worth of homeowner households, according to the 2013 Federal Reserve Board's Survey of Consumer Finances; and

WHEREAS, the renter population is representative of many protected classes, including people of color, people living with disabilities, and LGBTQ people, as well as young adults, seniors, low-income people, those paying rent with assistance, those with felony records, and renters who have experienced homelessness; and

WHEREAS, 53 percent of white Seattle residents own their homes, compared to 29 percent of African-American and 27 percent of Latino residents, according to the 2010 Census; and

1 WHEREAS, the City has sought to include diverse perspectives of Seattle residents, such as with
2 the 2016 Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) Focus Groups, and a
3 Renters' Commission will formalize participation of a group that comprises over half of
4 the city's population; and

5 WHEREAS, Resolution 31718, adopted by the City Council on November 21, 2016 and signed
6 by the Mayor on November 28, 2016, established citywide community involvement
7 principles for equitable outreach and engagement into historically disenfranchised
8 communities; and

9 WHEREAS, renters in Seattle are directly impacted by a wide variety of issues facing the city,
10 such as housing affordability, transportation access, green and other public spaces, land
11 use, renter protections, public health and safety, education, and economic growth; and

12 WHEREAS, a recent study published in the journal *Urban Affairs Review* found that low-income
13 renters are nearly twice as likely as homeowners to be displaced by gentrification; and

14 WHEREAS, the Equitable Development Initiative, created in 2016 as part of the Seattle 2035
15 Comprehensive Plan update, established strategies for City departments to leverage their
16 collective resources to create communities of opportunity for everyone, regardless of race
17 or means; and

18 WHEREAS, a Renters' Commission will offer useful insight and perspective inclusive of diverse
19 renter voices from across the city that otherwise might not be heard at City Hall without
20 such an intentional and proactive effort; NOW, THEREFORE,

21 **BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:**

22 Section 1. Section 3.35.030 of the Seattle Municipal Code, which was last amended by
23 Ordinance 125192, is amended as follows:

1 **3.35.030 Director—functions**

2 The Director of the Department of Neighborhoods shall manage the department and shall:

3 A. Serve as liaison with residents, neighborhood groups, and other community
4 organizations;

5 B. Provide staff for the Community Involvement Commission, the Seattle Youth
6 Commission, and the Seattle Renters' Commission;

7 C. Administer the Neighborhood Matching Fund Program and the Neighborhood
8 Matching Fund;

9 D. Conduct outreach programs to elicit public participation; present community concerns
10 to City departments; and strengthen and support the provision of coordinated departmental
11 responses to community concerns, including the delivery of high-quality customer service;

12 E. Assist communities in understanding and responding to proposed projects and
13 activities and convene public meetings on City issues and actions having an impact on
14 communities;

15 F. Assist communities in identifying local challenges and needs and help them implement
16 neighborhood and community plans and other actions to address such issues;

17 G. Support neighborhood-based community building through technical assistance,
18 translation services, capacity building, and other resources, as appropriate. Promote
19 intergenerational and multilingual neighborhood-based organizing, emphasizing engagement of
20 racially and economically diverse communities;

21 H. Provide technical assistance, training, and access to digital engagement tools to
22 communities undertaking general organizing efforts; and

1 I. Perform such other duties as assigned by the City in its annual budgets or by ordinance
2 from time to time.

3 Section 2. A new Chapter 3.65 is added to the Seattle Municipal Code as follows:

4 **CHAPTER 3.65 SEATTLE RENTERS' COMMISSION**

5 **3.65.010 Establishment**

6 There is established a Seattle Renters' Commission (referred to in this Chapter 3.65 as the
7 "Commission") that shall advise the Mayor and City Council on issues and policies of
8 importance to tenants in residential rental properties citywide.

9 **3.65.015 Definitions**

10 As used in this Chapter 3.65, "renter" means a tenant in a residential rental property.

11 **3.65.020 Membership**

12 A. The Commission shall be composed of 15 members. Appointments should be made to
13 ensure that varied renter perspectives are represented, including those of renters who identify
14 with or are affiliated with organizations that work with historically underrepresented groups,
15 such as low income renters, LGBTQ renters, immigrant renters, renters with felony records,
16 those paying rent with assistance, and renters who have experienced homelessness.

17 Appointments shall be made, to the extent possible, so that the Commission membership is
18 representative of the city geographically. Each member of the Commission must be a renter
19 within the City of Seattle at the time of their appointment and throughout their term.

20 B. Members serve without compensation.

21 **3.65.030 Appointment and term**

22 A. Member positions shall be numbered one through 15. Individuals shall be appointed
23 into these numbered positions. Members in positions one through six shall be appointed by the

1 City Council. Members in positions seven through 12 shall be appointed by the Mayor. Positions
2 13 through 14 shall be appointed by the Commission. Position 15 shall be a young adult position
3 pursuant to the Get Engaged Program, Chapter 3.51. All appointments are subject to
4 confirmation by a majority vote of the full City Council.

5 B. For the initial round of appointments, odd numbered positions will serve one-year
6 terms and even numbered positions will serve two-year terms. After the conclusion of initial
7 terms, all subsequent terms of each position shall be for two years, except for position 15, whose
8 term length is one year under Section 3.51.040. No members shall serve more than two
9 consecutive terms. Any vacancy in an unexpired term shall be filled in the same manner as the
10 original appointment. If a person is appointed to fill the duration of an unexpired term, then that
11 term shall count as one of the two consecutive terms only if the portion of the unexpired term
12 actually served is at least one year. Except for position 15, a member whose term is ending shall
13 continue on an interim basis as a member with voting rights until such time as a successor for
14 that position has been appointed and confirmed by the City Council.

15 C. Terms shall begin on March 1.

16 **3.65.040 Duties and ancillary powers**

17 A. The duties of the Commission include the following:

18 1. Provide information, advice, and counsel to the Mayor, City Council,
19 Department of Neighborhoods, Office of Housing, Office of Civil Rights, Seattle Department of
20 Construction and Inspections, Seattle Human Services Department, and other City departments
21 concerning issues and policies affecting renters, including, but not limited to, housing
22 affordability, transportation access, green and other public spaces, land use, renter protections,
23 public health and safety, education, and economic growth;

1 2. Monitor the enforcement and effectiveness of legislation related to renters and
2 renter protections;

3 3. Provide periodic advice on priorities, policies, and strategies for strengthening
4 and enhancing the enforcement and effectiveness of renter protections;

5 4. Report on an annual basis to the Mayor and the City Council. The reports shall
6 include an annual work plan, a briefing on the Commission's public involvement process for
7 soliciting community and citizen input in developing their annual work plan, and updates on the
8 work plan; and

9 5. Meet periodically with other City Commissions, City departments, the Seattle
10 Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, and other community groups and associations,
11 including those representing rental property landlords, to gather information, feedback, and
12 recommendations related to the Commission's work.

13 B. The Commission shall have the power to:

14 1. By a majority vote, elect one or more Commission members to serve as
15 Chairperson for a one-year term, and elect one or more members to serve as vice chairperson for
16 a one-year term, who shall serve as chair in the absence of the chairperson; and

17 2. Adopt rules of procedure to accomplish its functions.

18 **3.65.050 Meetings**

19 A. The Department of Neighborhoods shall provide staff support and meeting facilities
20 for the Commission and maintain its records. The Commission may also receive staff assistance
21 from other City departments. Staff support will include ongoing training and capacity building of
22 Commission members.

1 B. Meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public and the Commission shall
2 operate subject to the Washington Open Public Meetings Act (chapter 42.30 RCW). Meeting
3 notifications, agendas, minutes of proceedings, findings and recommendations, annual reports,
4 and other related materials shall be available to the public and posted on the Commission's
5 website.

6 **3.65.060 Unexcused absences and removal**

7 Any member may request an excused absence from a Commission meeting from the
8 Commission or from the Commission chair. The Commission may recommend, by a majority
9 vote of all members of the Commission, that the Mayor or Council remove any member who is
10 absent without excuse from three consecutive Commission meetings. The appointing authority
11 may remove any member for cause.

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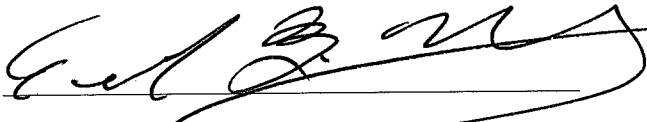
1 Section 2. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force 30 days after its approval by
2 the Mayor, but if not approved and returned by the Mayor within ten days after presentation, it
3 shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Section 1.04.020.

4 Passed by the City Council the 20th day of March, 2017,
5 and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this 20th day of
6 March, 2017.

7 

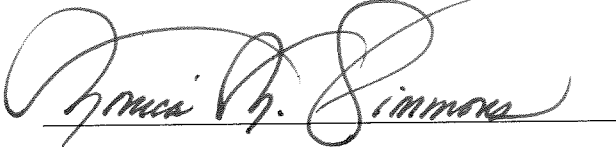
8 President _____ of the City Council

9 Approved by me this 31st day of March, 2017.

10 

11 Edward B. Murray, Mayor

12 Filed by me this 31st day of MARCH, 2017.

13 

14 Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

15 (Seal)