

Charter

Tenant-Landlord Commission

Adopted by the County Board on October 18, 2016

Introduction

The Tenant-Landlord Commission was established in 1974 as an advisory body to the County Board of Arlington County, Virginia.

Mission

The Mission of the Tenant- Land Lord Commission is to promulgate fair and equitable relationships between landlords and tenants in residential spaces in Arlington County.

Governing Documents

- The Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act (VRLTA)
- Arlington's Affordable Housing Master Plan (AHMP) (approved September 19, 2015)
- Arlington County's Relocation Guidelines

Functions and Scope:

1. Provide information to tenants, landlords and the public concerning the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords.
2. Advise the County Board on problems, policies, and programs in the area of tenant-landlord relations and rental housing.
3. Examine and evaluate current housing, health, and other regulations and laws as they may relate to the problems of tenants and landlords; offer suggested amendments to Arlington's policies and regulations which would aid tenants and landlords; propose legislation for enactment by the General Assembly which would enable Arlington to deal with the problems of tenants and landlords on the local level.
4. Encourage tenants and landlords to present their grievances; gather facts relevant to understanding the grievances; conciliate and provide advice on grievances whenever possible; seek new methods of bringing tenants and landlords together.
5. Assess and approve proposed relocation plans for County assisted or site plan projects.
6. Develop an annual work plan that reflects the goals of the County's Affordable Housing Master Plan which promotes the goals of Supply, Access and Sustainability with specific reference to proposed policies that impact tenants and landlords.
7. Establish relationship with the Office of Human Rights to be apprised of situations involving fair housing issues on a regular basis.

Membership

The Tenant-Landlord Commission shall be comprised of nine members appointed by the County Board. These members are drawn from:

- Three members representing tenants interests
- Three members representing landlord interests
- Three members representing public interests or at-large

Members will be appointed for up to two three-year terms. The County Board will appoint and maintain a roster of members. All members serve at the pleasure of the Board.

The Tenant-Landlord Commission members are expected to serve a liaison function to tenants, and interested parties in Arlington. A member of the Commission who fails to attend three (3) Tenant-Landlord Commission meetings in a single year without providing advance notice to the Chair, or staff may be asked to resign his or her remaining term on the Commission. The Advisory Group Chair, after consultation with the County Board liaison, shall notify the member if such an action is warranted.

Chair and Vice Chair Appointment

The Chair of the Tenant- Landlord Commission, is appointed annually by the County Board. One member of the group may be appointed by the County Board or by the Tenant-Landlord Commission to serve as Vice-Chair. If no Vice- Chair has been appointed and the Chair is absent from a Commission meeting, or if a Vice- Chair has been appointed, but both the Chair and the Vice- Chair are absent from a Commission meeting, a quorum of the Committee members may appoint a temporary, acting Vice- Chair to lead that meeting.

Staff Liaison

The County Manager shall appoint a staff member of the Housing Division to serve as liaison to the Commission. The staff provides technical assistance and support services such as provision of meeting space, notice of meetings, minutes/notes, interpretation of State and local policies, and project status. Staff also may prepare reports, responses as requested and attend meetings and hearings when applicable.

Meetings

The Commission shall meet the second Wednesday monthly or at such other times as the Chairman and any three of the members shall request.

All meetings will comply with Virginia Open Meeting requirements and the Freedom of Information Act. All meetings of the full Commission will be advertised on the County-maintained website of the Commission, with meeting time and location, and are open to the public. All materials distributed to the Commission members, meeting agendas, and meeting minutes will be made available to the public in a timely manner through publication on the Commission website.

The Advisory Group Handbook provides additional information on the conduct of meetings as well as communication protocols that should guide all members in their work as Commissioners.

Reporting to the County Board

The Tenant-Landlord Commission will provide recommendations to the County Board on policy issues affecting tenants and landlords including relocation plans proposed for replacement, demolition or rehabilitation of rental properties where residents are affected and other housing conditions that affect the safety, health and welfare of tenants. The commission will at a minimum submit an annual report to the County Board on Arlington's needs, trends, problems and achievements in the area of tenant-landlord relations, after consultation with the Board Liaison. The Tenant-Landlord Commission may from time to time, be asked to provide comment at a regular Board meeting or Board work session. In addition, testimony from Commissions on budget and spending priorities are encouraged.

Update of this Charter

From time to time, the Tenant-Landlord Commission shall review this charter to ensure that it meets current needs. Any requests for changes must be processed through the County Board Liaison.