



Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 20-0526 **Version:** 0 **Name:** Baltimore City COVID-19 Renter Relief Act

Type: Ordinance **Status:** Enacted

File created: 4/27/2020 **In control:** City Council

On agenda: **Final action:** 5/18/2020

Enactment date: **Enactment #:** 20-364

Title: Baltimore City COVID-19 Renter Relief Act
For the purpose of prohibiting the increase of rent during and after certain declared emergencies; prohibiting certain notices to tenants; requiring certain notices to tenants; prohibiting certain late fees; defining certain terms; providing for a date of termination of the prohibitions; providing for a special effective date; and generally relating to protecting Baltimore City tenants.

Sponsors: President Brandon M. Scott, Bill Henry, Zeke Cohen, Ryan Dorsey, Kristerfer Burnett, Leon F. Pinkett, III, John T. Bullock, Mary Pat Clarke, Sharon Green Middleton, Edward Reisinger, Eric T. Costello, Shannon Sneed, Robert Stokes, Sr., Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer

Indexes: Baltimore City, COVID-19, Rental

Code sections:

Attachments: 1. 20-0526~1st Reader, 2. Finance 20-0526, 3. HCD 20-0526, 4. Law 20-0526, 5. HABC 20-0526, 6. Bill Synopsis 20-0526, 7. Hearing Agenda 20-0526, 8. Hearing Minutes 20-0526, 9. Hearing Notes 20-0526, 10. 20-0526~3rd Reader, 11. Signed Ordinance 20-0526, 12. 2nd Reader Amendments Floor Amendment 1 20-0526, 13. 2nd Reader Committee Amendment 20-0526, 14. 2nd Reader Floor Amendment 2 20-0526

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
6/15/2020	0	Mayor	Signed by Mayor	
5/11/2020	0	Land Use Committee	Recommended Favorably with Amendment	
5/11/2020	0	City Council	Advanced to 3rd Reader on same day	
5/11/2020	0	City Council	Approved and Sent to the Mayor	
5/6/2020	0	Land Use Committee	Recommended Favorably with Amendment	Pass
4/30/2020	0	City Council President	Refer to Dept. of Finance	
4/30/2020	0	City Council President	Refer to City Solicitor	
4/30/2020	0	City Council President	Refer to Dept. of Housing and Community Development	
4/30/2020	0	City Council President	Refer to Housing Authority of Baltimore City	
4/27/2020	0	City Council	Assigned	
4/27/2020	0	City Council	Introduced	
4/27/2020	0	Land Use Committee	Scheduled for a Public Hearing	

Introductory*
City of Baltimore
Council Bill

Introduced by: President Scott

A Bill Entitled

An Ordinance concerning

Baltimore City COVID-19 Renter Relief Act

For the purpose of prohibiting the increase of rent during and after certain declared emergencies; prohibiting certain notices to tenants; requiring certain notices to tenants; prohibiting certain late fees; defining certain terms; providing for a date of termination of the prohibitions; providing for a special effective date; and generally relating to protecting Baltimore City tenants.

By adding

Article 13 - Housing and Urban Renewal
Section(s) 8-4
Baltimore City Code
(Edition 2000)

By renumbering current

Article 13 - Housing and Urban Renewal
Sections 8-4 and 8-5, respectively, to 8-5 and 8-6, respectively
Baltimore City Code
(Edition 2000)

Section 1. Be it ordained by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, That the Laws of Baltimore City read as follows:

Baltimore City Code

Article 13. Housing and Urban Renewal

Subtitle 8. Rent Increases

§ 8-4. Rent increases barred - during states of emergency.

(a) *“Emergency” defined.*

In this section, “emergency” means the catastrophic health emergency declared by the Governor of Maryland on March 5, 2020, as amended or extended by the Governor, under State Public Safety Article, _ 14-3A-02.

(b) *Scope.*

This section only applies to rental fee increases on existing tenants. Nothing in this section may be construed as applying to leases for new tenants.

(c) *In general.*

A landlord may not increase a tenant’s rental fee if:

- (1) the increase would take effect during an emergency; or
- (2) notice of the increase is not in compliance with subsection (d) of this section.

(d) *Notice of rent adjustment.*

(1) *In general.*

During an emergency and within 90 days after the expiration of an emergency, a landlord may not notify a tenant of a rental fee increase.

(2) *Pre-emergency rent increase notices.*

A landlord must inform a tenant in writing to disregard any notice of a rental fee increase if:

- (i) the landlord provided the notice to the tenant prior to an emergency; and
- (ii) the effective date of the increase would occur on or after the date the emergency began.

(e) *Late fees prohibited.*

A landlord may not charge or otherwise assess a tenant for nonpayment or late payment of a rental fee during an emergency or within 90 days after the expiration of an emergency.

(f) *City to post notice.*

The Department of Housing and Community Development must post on its website information regarding the requirements of this section, including the date that an emergency expires and the date that is 90 days after the expiration of the emergency.

§ 8-5. [§ 8-4.] Landlord's right of review.

The provisions of this subtitle do not limit a landlord's right, under the applicable provisions of the City Building, Fire, and Related Codes Article, to an administrative review of a violation notice.

§ 8-6. [§ 8-5.] Enforcement by tenant.

A tenant may seek relief from an appropriate court to restrain or enjoin any violation of the provisions of this law.

Section 2. And be it further ordained, That the catchlines contained in this Ordinance are not law and may not be considered to have been enacted as a part of this or any prior Ordinance.

Section 3. And be it further ordained, That this Ordinance takes effect on the date it is enacted. It will remain effective through the 121st day following the expiration of the catastrophic health emergency declared by the Governor on March 5, 2020, as amended or extended by the Governor; and, immediately after that date, with no further action by the Mayor and City Council, this Ordinance will be abrogated and of no further effect.