



# Pinellas County

## Staff Report

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File #: 22-0992A, Version: 1

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### **Subject:**

Ordinance amending Chapter 42 of the Pinellas County Code adopting a Tenants Bill of Rights requiring the provision of information renters' rights under federal, state, and local law, prohibiting discrimination based on source of income, and requiring notice of late fees.

### **Recommended Action:**

Approval of the ordinance amending Chapter 42 to include a Tenants Bill of Rights which accomplishes the following:

- Requires landlords to provide tenants with a Notice of Rights under Florida Law and County Code to tenants upon entering a new rental term.
- Prohibits discrimination based on source of income when renting a residential unit.
- Requires written notice of late fees.

There are two ordinances attached to this item for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners. The difference between the two ordinances is found Sec. 42-432 Areas Embraced as described below:

- Unincorporated Areas Only - this version of the ordinance only applies to the unincorporated areas of Pinellas County.
- Countywide - This version of the ordinance applies countywide, except where a city ordinance is in conflict (the city ordinance prevails) or where a city elects to opt out of the provisions of the ordinance.

### **Strategic Plan:**

Ensure Public Health, Safety and Welfare

2.1 Provide planning, coordination, prevention, and protective services to create and enhance a safe, secure and healthy community

Foster Continual Economic Growth and Vitality

4.3 Catalyze redevelopment through planning and regulatory programs

Deliver First-Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

5.2 Be responsible stewards of the public's resources

5.4 Strive to serve the needs of all Pinellas County residents and customers)

### **Summary:**

The Tenants Bill of Rights is the result of Pinellas County's ongoing commitment to addressing the affordable housing challenge. It builds upon the programs, policies, and regulations that the County has worked on to address the issues of housing supply and affordability.

**Background Information:**

The proposed Tenants Bill of Rights is the latest initiative undertaken by Pinellas County to address the housing affordability challenge. It joins a list of recent efforts that address short- and long-term needs to increase the quantity and improve the quality of housing units in the county. At a Board Work Session on April 21, 2022, staff briefed the Board of County Commissioners on a number of ongoing efforts related to increasing housing supply including, but not limited to the following:

- Penny for Pinellas Affordable Housing Program -As of April 2022, the program has helped fund 9 new projects with 1,169 new units of which 878 (75%) are affordable.
- Advantage Pinellas Countywide Housing Compact - Provides a long term framework for city/county collaboration on housing efforts.
- Update to the Affordable Housing Development Code - Improvements to the land development code to facilitate new affordable housing projects and improve outcomes.

The proposed Tenants Bill of Rights ordinance is designed to improve conditions for tenants in existing residential units across the county. It joins similar ordinances passed by other local governments within the Tampa Bay Region including St. Petersburg, Tampa, and Hillsborough County.

**Fiscal Impact:**

N/A - The cost of education and enforcement of this new ordinance can be accommodated within existing departmental budgets.

**Staff Member Responsible:**

Carol Stricklin, Director, Housing and Community Development

**Partners:**

Pinellas County Code Enforcement  
Pinellas County Office of Consumer Protection

**Attachments:**

1. Proposed Ordinance (unincorporated area only)
2. Proposed Ordinance (countywide)
3. Presentation
4. Public Notice Advertisement