

Efforts to Disseminate Information about the New Residential Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protection Ordinance

Throughout the implementation process, Rent Review Office staff have focused on developing materials, resources, and tools to improve understanding and facilitate compliance for tenants, landlords, advocacy groups, and real estate professionals.

Marketing and Outreach

Since the Ordinance was enacted in July 2019, staff have relied on several different marketing and outreach strategies to get the word out to community members about the RRSO. The outreach approach integrated grassroots efforts with innovative online tools to be as comprehensive as possible in reaching tenants, landlords, and advocates across the City.

Outreach efforts included:

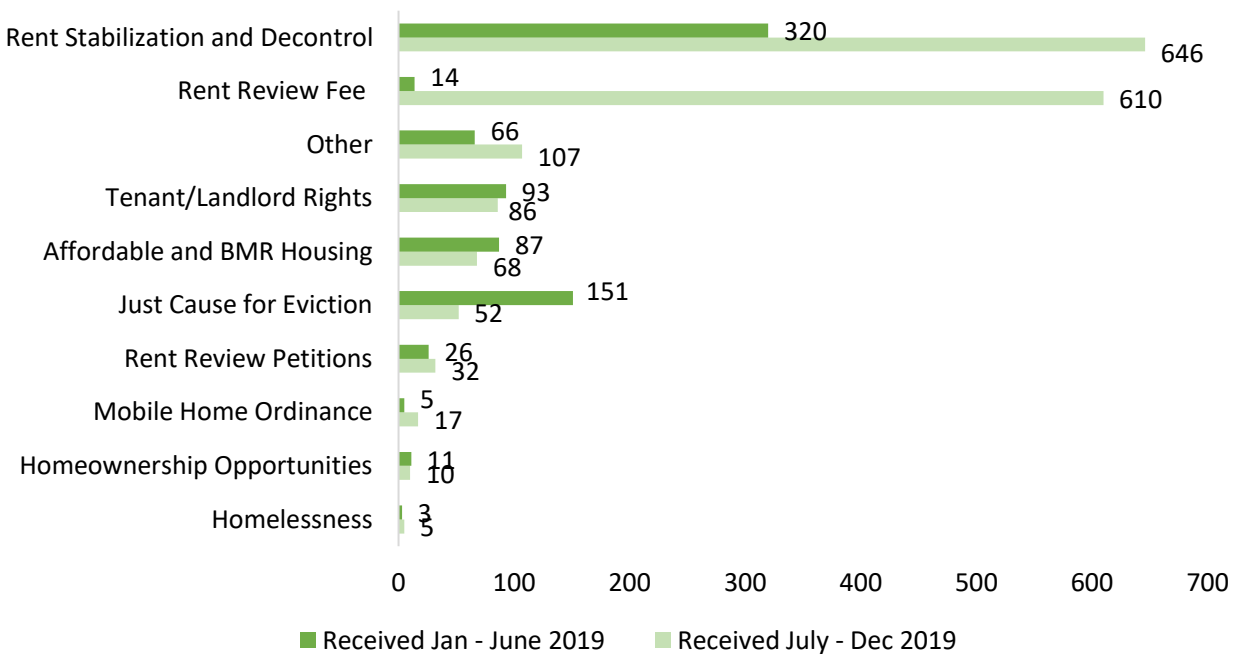
- *Initial landlord outreach mail:* Following Council's vote to pass the RRSO, staff sent a letter to the owners of 6,180 identified rental properties informing them about the new RRSO, noticing requirements, and contact information for the Rent Review Office if they had additional questions.
- *Outreach to Community-Based Organizations:* Staff distributed flyers and resources (described in detail in the following section) to over 40 stakeholder groups. They also offered to attend various meetings to provide in-person overviews of the RRSO and address stakeholders' questions and concerns.
- *Stakeholder email communication:* Staff used MailChimp for ongoing communication with a growing listserv of interested parties. Emails were sent with updates, new forms, and to promote workshops and other educational events.
- *Announcement in Stack newsletter:* The City of Hayward has an active distribution list of 71,825 individuals who receive the Stack newsletter. Through the Stack, staff have sent updates about the RRSO, including outreach about workshops and education opportunities as well as contact information for the Rent Review Office for individuals to reach out with specific questions or feedback.
- *Social media communication:* Along with email communication and the Stack, information with links to additional resources were shared on all of the City's social media outlets.
- *Press release and news media coverage:* The City of Hayward's Community and Media Relations Division prepared and distributed a press release to local news and media outlets which led to news media coverage in print and television to help increase education and awareness of the new RRSO when it was enacted.
- *Targeted marketing:* Staff contracted a marketing vendor to implement GeoFence technology at five locations throughout Hayward. With GeoFence, the vendor enables a geographic boundary that engages individuals with online advertisements for the RRSO and Housing Division's website when they pass through the boundary with location services enabled on their mobile devices. Through this process, we can drive Hayward residents who may not have convenient access to City Hall to our website where they can learn more about the RRSO and their rights as Landlords and Tenants. After two months of the campaign, the rate of individuals who see the advertisement and click on it has been twice the rate expected by the vendor.

Education and Technical Assistance

Staff provided education and technical assistance to tenants, landlords, real estate industry professionals, and tenant/landlord advocacy groups to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the RRSO. Key to this effort were monthly workshops, delivered in collaboration with Project Sentinel to provide an overview of the RRSO as well as focus on special topics identified by staff through interactions with the Hayward community as needing additional education and support. Staff also partnered with ECHO Housing for Fair Housing workshops for tenants and landlords. Presentation slides were posted to the website and emailed to attendees.

Throughout 2019, staff tracked and categorized all individual inquiries made to the Housing Division. As expected, the number of inquiries received from July to December 2019 was more than double the number received in the first half of the year (prior to the enactment of the new RRSO). Eight out of ten inquiries from July through December were about rent stabilization or the rent review fee, as shown below in Figure 1.¹ Upon administering the updated rent review fee in November 2019, staff had the opportunity to interact with many of Hayward’s landlords. Through these interactions, staff educated landlords about the new RRSO, such as their noticing responsibilities to tenants and the City and provided resources in-person and electronically.

Figure 1. Comparison of 2019 Housing Division Inquiries



¹ Inquiry totals may reflect multiple interactions with one community member. Inquiries are only reported through December 2019 in order to demonstrate the increase in response to the new RRSO. Inquiries from January 2020 through March 2020 tapered, then increased substantially following the onset of COVID-19; however, the majority of those inquiries were about financial resources to cope with the pandemic.

Resources and Materials

Staff placed significant focus and effort on making sure tenants and landlords had the resources and tools necessary to understand their rights and responsibilities under the new RRSO. Staff started by creating a plain language summary of the RRSO along with topic-specific fact sheets. They also created documents to facilitate the petition process, including petition forms for landlords and tenants, flowcharts, infographics, and detailed worksheets to help landlords calculate potential pass-throughs. Tenants can use the City's petition form to petition a potentially unlawful rent increase, as well as other violations of the RRSO. Landlords can petition for passing through capital improvement costs or for a fair return. Staff also created documents to promote and facilitate compliance for landlords, including public notice and acknowledgement of receipt forms and an increase notice form. Table 1 lists all the materials and resources developed to help landlords and tenants understand their rights and responsibilities, along with the intended audience for each document and its available languages. All of the materials are available on the [City's Website](#).

Table 1. RRSO Fact Sheets, Summaries, Petitions, and Compliance Documents created by Staff for RRSO Implementation

	Audience		Translations		
	Landlords	Tenants	English	Spanish	Traditional Chinese
Fact Sheets and Summaries					
RRSO Summary	X	X	X	X	X
Landlord Compliance Guide	Under Review				
Rent Review Fact Sheet	X	X	X	X	X
Just Cause for Eviction Fact Sheet	X	X	X	X	X
Tenant Harassment and Retaliation Protection Fact Sheet	X	X	X	X	X
Prohibition of Discrimination Related to Sources of Income Fact Sheet	X	X	X	X	X
Mediation and Arbitration Fact Sheet	X	X	X	X	X
Petition Process					
Landlord Petition Flowchart	X		X	X	X
Tenant Petition Flowchart		X	X	X	X
Tenant Petition Process Infographic	X	X	X	X	X
Landlord Petition	X		X	X	X
Landlord Capital Improvement Schedule A	X		X	X	X
Landlord Fair Return Schedule	Under Review				
Tenant Petition		X	X	X	X

	Audience		Translations		
	Landlords	Tenants	English	Spanish	Traditional Chinese
Compliance					
Notice to Tenants Acknowledgement of Receipt	X		X	X	X
Public Notice to Tenants	X		X	X	X
Rent Increase Notice	X		X	X	X