



Tenants' Rights Campaign Reporting on Public Engagement

Neighborhood & Housing Services Department | May 2023

Background

This document summarizes stakeholder feedback and public input on the Tenants' Rights and Responsibilities Campaign which was a community engagement effort led by the City of San Antonio's Neighborhood and Housing Services Department (NHSD) from February to April 2023.

The Tenants' Rights and Responsibilities Campaign is in alignment with several strategies in the City's Strategic Housing Implementation Plan (SHIP), including:

- **Ensuring Accountability to the Public Strategy #2 (EAP2):** Implement a citywide public awareness campaign on (a) Fair Housing Laws and (b) the importance of affordable housing including its economic and social benefits.
- **Promote and Protect Neighborhoods Strategy #5 (PPN5):** System-wide eviction and foreclosure prevention; increase awareness of rights through proactive education, responsive coordinated outreach and services, increased tenant protections, and accountability.

The Tenants' Rights and Responsibilities Campaign focused on three major components:

- **City Council Resolution** in support of existing tenant rights to live in safe, decent, and affordable housing; to live free of retaliation / discrimination; and consolidate existing laws and policies that protect tenants at the local, state, and federal levels.
- **Educational Materials** to accompany the Resolution, which would include the major protections provided by each law from the Resolution in plain language, outlining tenant responsibilities, a contact if the tenants' rights were violated, and awareness of additional housing assistance / resources.
- **Revised Notice of Tenants' Rights Document** to improve readability and update resources offered.

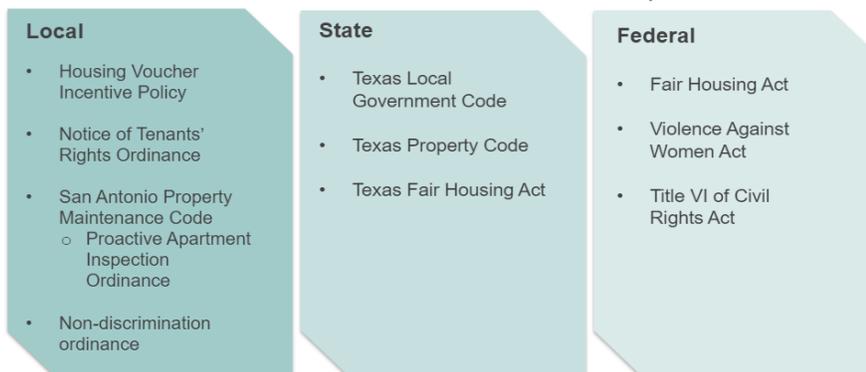
Historical Context

On Tuesday January 24, 2023, Councilmembers McKee-Rodriguez (D2), Rocha Garcia (D4), Castillo (D5), and former Councilmember Sandoval (D7) attended a press conference along with several San Antonio non-profit organizations in support of the creation of a 'Tenant Bill of Rights'. The Tenant Bill of Rights would take the form of a City Council Resolution that consolidates and supports existing tenant protections under local, state, and federal law (as shown in the figure below).

Resolution on Tenants' Rights



Consolidates & affirms local, state, and federal tenant protections





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On Thursday February 23, 2023 at the Planning and Community Development Committee (PCDC) meeting the City Attorney's Office presented a draft Resolution and NHSD presented a public engagement strategy for the educational materials and feedback on the Notice of Tenants' Rights.

The subsequent stakeholder meetings, Renters' Rights Power Hour Sessions, and community engagement survey efforts are published in this report. This report will be shared with the public via the NHSD website www.sa.gov/Directory/Departments/NHSD. The report will also be shared directly with participants in community meetings who provided their contact information.

Audience

Stakeholder Meetings

Between February and April 2023, NHSD staff conducted dozens of stakeholder briefings to both inform community groups about Tenants' Rights and Responsibilities campaign, Renters' Rights Power Hour sessions, as well as offer opportunities to give input on draft deliverables / materials.

Meetings with stakeholder and community groups included the following:

- Renters' Rights Power Hour Session Attendees
- Texas Organizing Project (TOP)
- Texas Housers
- City Council Member Offices
- The Housing Commission
- Renters' Solutions Subcommittee of the Housing Commission
- St. Mary's University - School of Law
- San Antonio Legal Services Association (SALSA)
- Fair Housing Council of Greater San Antonio
- Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (TRLA)
- Community Housing Development Organizations
- San Antonio Apartment Association (SAAA)
- San Antonio Board of Realtors (SABOR)
- Real Estate Council of San Antonio
- National Association of Residential Property Managers – SA Chapter
- Fuerza Unida
- Domesticas Unidas
- Historic Westside Residents Association and other Neighborhood Associations
- Tier 1 Neighborhood Coalition
- My City is My Home
- Southwest Workers Union
- Big Mama's Safe House
- COPS/Metro Alliance
- Opportunity Home San Antonio
- Coalition for Tenant Justice

Summary of Comments Received & Staff Responses

Based on feedback from stakeholder groups, NHSD staff compiled several different themes on the campaign materials and final deliverables (as shown in the graphic below).



What we heard

Summary of Key Themes Across Stakeholder Groups:

- Right to be free of retaliation or discrimination
- Right to organize
- Preferred Language Access
- Notice of Tenant's Rights – delivery stage, compliance, enforcement
- Education for renters and rental housing providers on legal obligations, responsibilities, and processes
- Access to resources and contact information
- User-friendly literature, digital content, and attractive visuals

Key Changes Based on Feedback

Based on feedback from stakeholder groups, NHSD staff made the following updates to campaign materials and final deliverables.

Council Resolution

- Addition of Proactive Apartment Inspection Ordinance and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act on language access
- Protections addressing retaliation and right to organize

Educational Materials

- Proactive distribution of informational documents on tenant rights and resources- breaks down the Resolution for renter audience
- 'Renterzine' informational booklet in collaboration with Texas Housers

Notice of Tenants' Rights

- Addition of a QR Code to replace long URLs
- Updated to make Notice more official looking and reader-friendly

Renters' Rights Power Hour Sessions

From March 30th, 2023, to April 19th, 2023, five public engagement meetings were held to inform the public about renters' rights in San Antonio. The total number of attendees for all five meetings was 56, with 30 attendees submitting survey responses. Of the 30 responses, 25 were completed on paper immediately following the meeting and five were completed online.

The survey asked the attendees to provide feedback regarding their knowledge of renters' rights before and after the meeting, their evaluation of the session, and additional comments. Along with this input, attendees could also provide insight on an interactive poster board activity.



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Survey Demographics - All demographic-based questions were written as optional in the survey.

The tables below show the results of the demographic-based questions for those who elected to respond. While the sample size was small, the responses provide insight into the diversity of San Antonio residents when compared to the [US Census Bureau](#) statistics.

- Of those that completed the survey, 23.1% indicated they were between the ages of 45-54 and 19.2% indicated they were 75+ years old.
- The results also revealed underrepresentation of specific race and ethnic groups. For example, about 6.8% of San Antonio residents identify as Black or African American, yet only 3.3% of respondents identified as such.
- The census also indicates that about 64% of San Antonio residents are white, whereas only 23.3% of respondents identified as such.
- On the other hand, there was a strong representation of the Hispanic/Latino community, for 64.7% of San Antonio identifies as Hispanic or Latino and 60% of our respondents did as well.
- There was also a strong representation of individuals living with a disability, for 48% of respondents indicated having one or more disabilities. This percentage is much higher than the 11.3% of San Antonio citizens under age 65 living with a disability.

Age	
18 to 24	3.8%
25 to 34	7.7%
35 to 44	15.4%
45 to 54	23.1%
55 to 64	15.4%
65 to 74	15.4%
75 years or older	19.2%
Total	26 Responses

Race and Ethnicity (Respondents could select multiple if appropriate)	
American Indian or Alaska Native	3.3%
Asian or Asian American	0%



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Black or African American	3.3%
Hispanic, Latino, Latina, or Latinx	60%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	3.3%
White	23.3%
Decline to State	6.7%
Total	27 Responses

Living with a Disability	
Yes	48%
No	52%
Total	25 Responses

Type of Disability (Respondents could select multiple if appropriate)	
Blind or low vision	10%
Deaf or hard of hearing	10%
Physical or mobility	25%
Intellectual or developmental	10%
Mental health	15%
Chronic medical condition	30%
Other	0%
Total	12 Responses

Gender	
Male	33.3%



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Female	63.0%
Non-binary / third gender	3.7%
Transgender Female	0%
Transgender Male	0%
Gender Non-Binary	0%
Gender not listed here	0%
Decline to state	0%
Total	27 Responses

Council District	
District 1	8.7%
District 2	0%
District 3	13.0%
District 4	0%
District 5	4.3%
District 6	13%
District 7	17.4%
District 8	4.3%
District 9	34.8%
District 10	4.3%
Total	23 Responses



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Summary of Public Meeting Participation:

Total Meeting Attendees	
Meeting	Attendees
3/30/23 Renters' Rights Power Hour [Baskin Elementary]	11 people
4/5/23 Renters' Rights Power Hour [Mission Library]	19 people
4/13/23 Renters' Rights Power Hour [2 nd Baptist Church]	10 people
4/15/23 Renters' Rights Power Hour [Maverick Library]	9 people
4/19/23 Renters' Rights Power Hour [Walker Ranch Senior Center]	7 people
Grand Total	56 people

Survey Results

There were 30 individuals who responded to the renters' rights session survey. The tables below show the results of the multiple-choice questions on the survey.

Knowledge of Renters' Rights Before Session (Ranked 1-5 with 1 being less knowledgeable, 5 being more knowledgeable)	
Average	3.35
Total	24 Responses

Knowledge of Renters' Rights After Session (Ranked 1-5 with 1 being less knowledgeable, 5 being more knowledgeable)	
Average	4.44
Total	24 Responses

Overall Satisfaction with Session (Ranked 1-5 with 1 being less satisfied, 5 being more satisfied)	
Average	4.72
Total	22 Responses



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Have you ever utilized a rental assistance program to help you pay your rent?	
Yes	28.6%
No	71.4%
Total	28 Responses

Have you ever consulted with a Fair Housing Counselor for a tenant/landlord resolution or mediation?	
Yes	0%
No	100%
Total	28 Responses

Has it ever been difficult to understand your lease because your preferred language was not available or provided?	
Yes	3.6%
No	96.4%
Total	28 Responses

Interactive Activity and Survey Comment Findings

Respondents had the option to provide additional comments and participate in an interactive poster board activity. Below is a summary of these findings.

Landlord Conflict Resolution

About 40% of respondents indicated either current or past issues with landlords, yet only 17% of respondents discussed efforts to resolve these conflicts. This finding, paired with the fact that zero percent of respondents contacted a Fair Housing Counselor to assist in solving tenant/landlord disputes, suggests that tenants are unsure of where to begin when addressing concerns with landlords and property managers.

Other Topics of Public Concern

Respondents had the option to suggest other renter related topics that they wished to be discussed



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in future sessions. Of these, concerns in rent increases, non-rent fees, and the application process for rental assistance were the most popular.

Additional Comments

Respondents also provided additional input on the presentation, unanswered questions, and other topics that did not fit into any other category. While few provided responses to this question, those that did were mainly concerned with emergency funding and what to do in the event of an eviction. One respondent suggested that this meeting be presented to high school and college aged students.

Next Steps

The Council Members at PCDC voted to move the Resolution and revised Notice of Tenants' Rights document and ordinance for Council Consideration on May 4th, 2023.



Appendix

RENTERS' RIGHTS POWER HOUR

The City of San Antonio is partnering with the Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid (TRLA) and the Fair Housing Council of Greater San Antonio to host free in-person workshops with legal experts who will help explain tenant and landlord responsibilities. Give input and share ideas on how to bring awareness to your neighbors about these rights.



FIND A SESSION NEAR YOU

Thursday, March 30 • 6-7:30 p.m.

Baskin Elementary, 630 Crestview Dr, San Antonio, TX 78201

Wednesday, April 5 • 4-5:30 p.m.

Mission Branch Library, 3134 Roosevelt Ave, 78214

Thursday, April 13 • 6-7:30 p.m.

Second Baptist Church Community Center, 3310 E Commerce St, 78220

SPANISH SESSION

Saturday, April 15 • 1-2:30 p.m.

Maverick Library, 8700 Mystic Park, 78254

Wednesday, April 19 • 5-6:30 p.m.

Walker Ranch Senior Center, 835 W Rhapsody, 78216



**NEIGHBORHOOD &
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For more information, visit SanAntonio.gov/NHSD.
Spanish and ASL translation services will be available.





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LA HORA DEL PODER DE LOS DERECHOS DE LOS INQUILINOS

La Ciudad de San Antonio se está asociando con Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (TRLA) y el Consejo de Vivienda Justa del Gran San Antonio para organizar talleres gratuito en persona con expertos legales que ayudarán a explicar las responsabilidades de inquilinos y propietarios. Da tu opinión y comparte ideas sobre cómo concienciar a tus vecinos sobre estos derechos.



ENCUENTRA UNA SESIÓN CERCA DE TI

jueves, 30 de marzo • 6-7:30 p.m.

Baskin Elementary, 630 Crestview Dr, San Antonio, TX 78201

miércoles, 5 de abril • 4-5:30 p.m.

Mission Branch Library, 3134 Roosevelt Ave, 78214

jueves, 13 de abril • 6-7:30 p.m.

Second Baptist Church Community Center, 3310 E Commerce St, 78220

SESIÓN EN ESPAÑOL

sábado, 15 de abril • 1-2:30 p.m.

Maverick Library, 8700 Mystic Park, 78254

miércoles, 19 de abril • 5-6:30 p.m.

Walker Ranch Senior Center, 835 W Rhapsody, 78216



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Para obtener más información, visite SanAntonio.gov/NHSD.

Los servicios de traducción en español y ASL estarán disponibles.

