



Rent Stabilization Board

May 22, 2017

Dear Property Owner:

Pay Your Fee Online!
You may pay your 2017/2018 registration fee online via credit card or e-check. Go to our website at www.cityofberkeley.info/rent.
Also: **Join our Constant Contact mailing list** to receive real-time updates on registration fees, AGAs, workshops, and other important information.

Enclosed is the 2017/2018 registration material for Berkeley residential rental units. This material includes a billing statement, return envelope, and a Unit Status Form with instructions.

The Berkeley Rent Board has determined that the fee for the 2017/2018 registration year is **\$270** for each unit covered by the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. This represents an increase to \$250 to keep up with inflation-related expenses, as well as an additional, one-time \$20 fee to fund projects intended to improve property owners' online registration capabilities.

The Rent Board has made it a priority in recent years to focus on and expand its online presence. An upgraded Rent Tracking database has allowed us to establish an online fee payment service, widen our outreach with property owners via Constant Contact e-news bulletins, improve our real-time updating of rent ceiling data through My Rent Ceiling, send billing statements to owners electronically, and much more. The one-time additional \$20 fee in 2017 is intended to ensure that the potential of those services comes to fruition through a full online registration service, so that property owners will be able to resolve registration matters more completely online and at their convenience. In addition to providing property owners with better access to make real-time updates to their registration status and billing statements, this will also help reduce future costs incurred by the agency in both staffing and materials.

This year's fee represents the third increase in registration fees since 2015. I have been asked periodically why the Board kept the fee unchanged from 2009 through 2015 and then imposed larger fee increases for the past three years. The Board's longstanding policy is to increase the fee only when necessary to meet costs. For six years we were able to avoid raising the fee, and were still able to meet our financial obligations by not filling staff positions. Over the past three years, however, the Bay Area's housing crisis has resulted in a 25% increase in demand for our services, and our costs correspondingly have risen. Still, our strategy of imposing fewer but larger increases has resulted in savings for property owners, compared with the amount owed had we increased the fee in accordance with real-time inflation, as this chart shows:

	YEAR	ACTUAL FEE	FEE WITH CPI	SAVINGS
	2009	\$194	\$194	\$0
	2010	\$194	\$197	\$3
	2011	\$194	\$203	\$9
	2012	\$194	\$207	\$13
	2013	\$194	\$212	\$18
	2014	\$194	\$218	\$24
	2015	\$213	\$222	\$9
	2016	\$234	\$229	(\$5)
	2017	\$270	\$235	(\$35)
TOTAL FEE PAID		\$1,881	\$1,917	\$36

For **units where the tenancy commenced prior to January 1, 1999**, the Board has again authorized a direct pass-through of the portion of the registration fees not already included in the Annual General Adjustments granted since 2005. This assures that even long-term tenants continue to bear their share of registration fee increases. The pass-through may be taken after proper notice and under certain conditions (see enclosed instructions and sample notice).

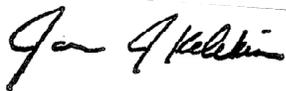
Registration fees are due no later than Monday, July 3, 2017. The Rent Stabilization Ordinance requires that **payments not received by the Rent Board or postmarked by the due date will be assessed a 100% penalty.** Please return the bottom half of the billing statement with your payment in the enclosed return envelope on or before July 3rd. Our regular office hours are Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, from 9:00 a.m.-4:45 p.m.; and Wednesdays from noon-6:30 p.m. **Our offices will be open from 9:00 a.m.-6:30 p.m. on Monday, July 3, 2017.**

The billing statement is based on the most recent information provided to our office. Please review the enclosed Unit Status Form carefully. If any information on this form is incorrect, cross it out and write the correct information directly on the form. Please see the enclosed sample. **If a prior year's fee or late penalty appears on your statement, it is important to resolve this account immediately.** An outstanding balance may adversely affect your eligibility to impose Annual General Adjustment increases or to effectuate an eviction for any unit on the property and may result in a collection action.

Online payment via credit card or e-check is available by going to our website at www.cityofberkeley.info/rent and clicking on "Online Payments." Payments may be made online **only** if you intend to pay your bill in full **and** make no account adjustments. As always, if you wish to pay your bill in person or by U.S. mail, you may submit your payment using check, cash or credit card. To charge registration fees to your MASTERCARD or VISA, complete the credit card section of the billing statement and provide your phone number, V-Code (the last three numbers on the back of your credit card) and credit card billing address zip code.

If you have any questions concerning the enclosed bill, please call our Registration Unit at (510) 981-7368.

Sincerely,



Jay Kelekian
Executive Director

KEY REGISTRATION REMINDERS

- ✓ Registration fees must be **paid in full by July 3, 2017, or a 100% penalty will be assessed** on any outstanding fee amount.
- ✓ All units that are **rented or available for rent on July 1, 2017, must be registered** by July 3rd.
- ✓ **Accurate and updated Vacancy Registration Forms are required.** The Ordinance requires that for a property to be in compliance with registration requirements, owners must register any new tenancy by filing a Vacancy Registration Form within 15 days, even if the rent has not changed. If a tenancy remains unreported, you must file a Vacancy Registration Form immediately.
- ✓ **Properties not in full compliance** with registration requirements for all units **are not eligible to implement any rent ceiling increases** for any unit on the property. Non-compliance may also be used as a defense in an eviction action.