

**CHAPTER 99 RENTAL HOUSING REGISTRATION AND
REQUESTS FOR RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTIONS**

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§99.01 PURPOSE AND INTENT

(A) The purpose of this section is to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the community at large, and the residents of residential rental properties in the City of Cambridge.

(B) The purpose of this section is also to ensure that rental housing in the city is decent, safe, and sanitary, and is so operated and maintained as not to become a nuisance to the neighborhood or an influence that fosters blight and deterioration, or does not create a disincentive to reinvest in the community.

(C) The operation of a residential rental property is a business enterprise that entails certain responsibilities. Owners and operators are responsible for taking such reasonable steps as are necessary to ensure that the citizens of the city who occupy such rental properties may pursue the quiet enjoyment of the normal activities of life in their surroundings that are: safe, secure, and sanitary; free from noise, nuisances, or annoyances; and free from conditions that endanger the health, or safety of persons, and the security of property.

(D) The City of Cambridge finds that a registration program is appropriate to effectively identify residential rental properties, gather contact information for property owners of residential rental properties, provide educational materials to property owners and occupants of residential

rental properties, and to provide a more efficient system to ensure that the stock of residential rental property within the City is properly maintained.

(E) It is also the purpose of this section to provide a mechanism for a Tenant, Owner, or Neighborhood Association to request the City of Cambridge to inspect a Rental Dwelling or Living Unit for let or occupancy for compliance with the building code, fire code, and the City's housing maintenance code so as not to become a nuisance to the neighborhood and/or community.

§99.02 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this section, the following definitions shall apply unless the context clearly indicates or requires a different meaning.

APARTMENT. A community, complex, or building having a common owner and containing four (4) or more living units.

APPLICANT. The natural person completing the registration form prescribed herein.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR. The City Administrator or the City Administrator's designee.

DWELLING. A building, or portion thereof designed or used exclusively for residential occupancy, including one family, two family, and multiple family dwelling units; efficiency units; manufactured homes; and townhomes, but not including hotels, motels, or hospitals.

FAMILY. One or more persons related by blood, marriage, adoption or foster parent relationships occupying a dwelling and living as a single housekeeping unit, or a group of not more than four persons not so related, maintaining a common household and using common cooking facilities, as distinguished from a group occupying a rooming/boarding house or hotel/motel, as herein described.

LET FOR OCCUPANCY or TO LET. To permit possession or occupancy of a dwelling or living unit by a person who is not the legal owner of record thereof, pursuant to a written or unwritten lease, or pursuant to a recorded or unrecorded agreement whether or not a fee is required by the agreement.

LIVING UNIT. A single unit providing complete, independent living facilities for one or more persons including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (Housing Related). "Housing-related neighborhood organization" means a nonprofit corporation incorporated that:

(1) designates in its articles of incorporation or bylaws a specific geographic community to which its activities are limited; and

(2) is formed for the purposes of promoting community safety, crime prevention, and housing quality in a nondiscriminatory manner.

NO OCCUPANCY ORDER. The residential rental dwelling or unit cannot be used for sleeping, eating, cooking, or living.

OCCUPANT. Any person living or sleeping in a dwelling or having possession of a space within a dwelling.

OPERATE/RENT. To let for occupancy or to let.

OWNER. Any person, agent, operator, firm, or corporation having a legal or equitable interest in the property; or recorded in the official records of the state, county, or municipality as holding title to the property; or otherwise having control of the property, including the guardian of the estate of any such person, and the executor or administrator of the estate of such person if ordered to take possession of real property by a court, or any person representing the actual owner.

PERSON. An individual, corporation, firm, association, company, partnership, organization, or any other group acting as a unit.

RENTAL DWELLING. Any apartment, general housing unit, or single family dwelling let for occupancy.

RENTAL MANAGER. Any natural person who has been delegated by the residential rental property owner the charge, care, or control of a residential rental property, and is able to respond in person to issues related to the residential rental property.

RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY. Any building, or one or more portions thereof, occupied or intended to be occupied for residential purposes by a residential tenant.

RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY OWNER. Any person or entity owning residential rental property within the city.

RESIDENTIAL TENANT. A person who does not own, but occupies a dwelling for residential purposes, for payment of a fee or other compensation to the owner, under a lease or contract, written or verbal.

SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING. A dwelling with less than two (2) living units.

STRUCTURE. Anything constructed or erected on, or connected to the ground.

§99.03 REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Registration of each residential rental property shall be made on a separate form provided by the city, and shall include the following information:

(1) The name, address, email (if applicable) and telephone number of the residential rental property owner and rental manager(s);

(2) The name, address, email (if applicable) and telephone number of the natural person completing the registration form;

(3) The address of the residential rental property. In the case of an apartment building, the applicant shall provide the address and name for the building, as well as the number of dwelling units contained therein;

(4) Whether or not the residential rental property owner or rental manager conducts a criminal background check on each and every residential tenant;

(5) Whether a written lease exists for the residential rental property and each unit dwelling thereon; and

(6) Whether a written lease addendum commonly known as a "Drug Free/Crime Free Lease Addendum" exists for each and every written lease.

(B) Within 30 days of a transfer of ownership, change in rental manager, change in the number of rental units, or change in dwelling occupancy from owner occupancy to rental tenant occupancy, the residential rental property owner or rental manager shall complete and submit a registration form for each and every residential rental property affected by the transfer or change.

(C) A residential rental property owner owning residential rental property at the time of the adoption of this chapter shall have until December 31, 2017 to comply with the registration provisions contained therein.

§99.04 REGISTRATION FEES

The fee for registration shall be set forth by the City of Cambridge's fee schedule. Registrations received outside of the renewal time will be pro-rated. Renewal applications received after January 31 following the expiration of the registration will pay a double fee.

§99.05 REGISTRATION EXPIRATION

Registrations are biennial based on the calendar year. All registrations shall expire at midnight on December 31 of all odd numbered years. All renewal registration application materials for the next year shall be received before the expiration date. All renewal registrations received after December 31 will be considered late, but will not receive any fee penalties unless the registration is received after January 31 following the expiration of the registration.

§99.06 REGISTRATION EXEMPTION

All owners of residential rental properties are required to register their properties according to this section, however, the following property owners are exempt from the registration fee and the requirement to post a registration certificate.

(1) A residential rental property owner is related to the tenant as a parent, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, step-parent, step-child, step-grandparent, or step-grandchild and the owner or agent affirms in the registration that each of the renters is one of these relations.

(2) Any building or dwelling unit which is a State of Minnesota licensed rest home, assisted living facility, convalescent care facility, licensed group home, Housing with Services, or nursing home. The owner or agent of a residential rental property licensed or registered by the State of Minnesota must provide the current license or registration number on the registration form.

(3) Any Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Public Housing Agency.

(4) A residential property that is occupied by the Owner or the Owner's family and two or less tenants where the Owner and the tenants share all living space within the dwelling.

§99.07 RENTAL MANAGER REQUIRED

(A) Each residential rental property owner shall appoint a rental manager upon whom the city may lawfully serve notices pertaining to the administration of this or any other chapter of the city code or state or federal law, service of which shall be as effective as if made upon such residential rental property owner.

(B) The residential rental property owner may serve as the rental manager, provided all requirements of a rental manager prescribed within this chapter are met by the residential rental property owner.

§99.08 REGISTRATION TRANSFER

Every new owner of residential rental property (whether a fee owner or contract purchaser) shall be required to furnish a new registration application to the City Administrator. No registration fees shall be required of the new owner in which the property is purchased provided the application is received within 30 days of the transfer, and the previous owner has paid all the associated fees, has complied with all requirements of this section, and has corrected any violations of the City Code or any other codes.

§99.09 POINT OF CONVERSION

Whenever a dwelling is converted to a residential rental property, the dwelling shall be registered within 30 days as set forth in this chapter.

§99.10 REPORT OF CHANGES IN OWNERSHIP

Residential rental property owners that are registered must report to the City Administrator any changes in the identity of the owner of a residential rental property, including a change in the majority shareholder or shareholders and officers in the case of a corporation. Owners must report a change within 30 days after closing the property transaction.

§99.11 NOTICE TO TENANT, REQUIREMENT TO POST

The owner or its agent must post, in accordance with the instructions provided by the City, in each rental unit a copy of the Registration Certificate provided by the City upon registration. This certificate shall specifically include the following minimum information:

- (1) The street address and building name (if applicable) of the registered property;
- (2) The name, street address, and telephone number of either the owner or the rental manager;
- (3) The expiration date of the registration;
- (4) Information about how to access the *Landlord and Tenants Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* provided by the Minnesota Attorney General.
- (5) Date of issuance.
- (6) Number of dwelling units located within the residential rental property.

§99.12 REMEDIES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE

(A) Revocation, Suspension, Denial, or Non-Renewal of Registration.

(1) The City Administrator may revoke, suspend, deny, or decline to renew any registration issued under this chapter for part or all of a rental dwelling upon any of the following grounds:

- (a) False statements on any application or other information or report required by this chapter to be given by the applicant;
- (b) Failure to pay any application, penalty, or inspection fee required either by this section or City Council resolution;
- (c) Failure to correct deficiencies in the time specified in a compliance order;
- (d) Failure to allow an authorized inspection of a rental dwelling;

(e) Any other violation of this chapter.

(2) Before the City Administrator may revoke, suspend, deny, or not renew a registration, written notice must be sent to the applicant or owner setting forth the alleged grounds for the potential action. The notice must also specify a date for a hearing before the Administrative Hearing Officer. The Administrative Hearing Officer may give due regard to the frequency and seriousness of violations, the ease with which such violations could have been cured or avoided and good faith efforts to comply and shall issue written findings.

(3) Upon a decision to revoke, deny, or not renew a registration, the owner/applicant will not be eligible for any new rental registrations for a period determined by the City Administrator, but not to exceed one year. Any person who has had two or more registrations revoked, suspended, denied, or not renewed for violations of this chapter will not be eligible for any new rental registrations for a period determined by the City Administrator, but not to exceed two years.

(4) A decision to revoke, suspend, deny, or not renew a registration or application will specify the part or parts of the rental dwelling to which it applies. Until a registration is reissued or reinstated, no rental units becoming vacant in such part or parts of the rental dwelling may be re-let or occupied. Revocation, suspension, or non-renewal of a registration will not excuse the owner/applicant from compliance with all terms of this section for as long as any units in the rental dwelling are occupied.

(5) Failure to comply with all terms of this section during the term of revocation, suspension, or non-renewal is a misdemeanor and grounds for extension of the term of revocation, suspension, or continuation of non-renewal of the registration.

(6) Appeal. Following receipt of a decision by the City Administrator to deny, revoke, suspend, or not renew a registration, the owner/applicant may request a hearing before the City Council. The request must be made in writing to the City Administrator within ten days of the City Administrator's decision.

(B) Posting of unregistered properties. Any dwelling found in violation of this chapter may be posted with a placard near or upon the main entrance of the dwelling.

§99.13 INSPECTIONS

(A) Responsibility. It is the responsibility of the Owner to be in compliance with City ordinances and State laws.

(B) Maintenance standards. Every rental dwelling must maintain the standards in the City Housing Code Chapter 97, in addition to any other requirements of the ordinances of the City or the laws of the State of Minnesota

(C) Inspections and Inspection Fees.

(1) The City Administrator is authorized to make inspections at the request of a Tenant, Owner, or Neighborhood Association to ensure compliance with the building code requirements, fire code requirements, and city ordinances such as the City's Housing Code.

(2) All designated agents authorized to make the requested inspection may enter at reasonable times any rental dwelling with the Tenant's or Owner's permission. If any owner, operator, occupant, or other person(s) in charge of a rental dwelling refuses to permit access and entry to the rental dwelling, or any part thereof, the designated agent may, upon showing that probable cause exists for the inspection, seek a court order directing compliance with the inspection in order to secure entry.

(3) The requested inspection will be conducted and a fee charged in accordance with the city's fee schedule.

(a) If violations are not corrected and re-inspections are required, a fee will be charged for each subsequent re-inspection occurring after the due date for compliance with an order. The amount of the re-inspection fee will be set by ordinance of the City Council.

(b) The violation and/or re-inspection fees prescribed above are to be billed directly to the owner of the property.

(c) The City Administrator may waive a re-inspection fee in case of error, mistake, injustice, or other good cause.

(d) Failure to attend a scheduled inspection date or failure to pay any fees associated with inspections may have additional penalties and/or fines as outlined in Chapter 38 of the City Code.

§99.14 SUMMARY ACTION REMEDIES

When the conduct of any owner or their agent, representative, employee, or lessee or the condition of their rental dwelling is detrimental to the public health, sanitation, safety, and general welfare of the community at large or residents of the rental dwelling as to constitute a nuisance, fire hazard or other unsafe or dangerous condition and thus give rise to an emergency, the City Administrator has the authority to issue a No Occupancy Order or close off individual units or such areas of the rental dwelling.

Notice of No Occupancy Order must be posted at the location of the rental dwelling and at the units or areas affected and shall indicate the units or areas affected. Upon notice of a No Occupancy Order, the City Administrator may impose terms and conditions as necessary to remedy the nuisance, fire hazard, or other unsafe or dangerous condition.

§99.15 OWNER'S RIGHT TO APPEAL

Any person aggrieved by a decision or action of the City Administrator shall be entitled to appeal to the City Council by filing a notice of with the City Administrator. The appeal must be filed within ten (10) days of the City Administrator's decision. The City Administrator will schedule a date for a hearing before the City Council and notify the aggrieved person of the date.

The hearing must be conducted in the same manner as if the aggrieved person had not received summary action. The decision of the City Administrator is not voided by the filing of such appeal. Only after the Council has held its hearing will the decision or action of the City Administrator be affected.

§99.16 ASSESSMENT OF UNPAID FEES OR FINES

Any unpaid violation fine or reinspection fees may be assessed against the property in the manner set forth in §38.07 of the City Code.

§99.17 MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

All records, files, and documents pertaining to the Rental Housing Registration Program and Requests for Rental Housing Inspections shall be maintained in the office of the City and made available to the public as allowed or required by applicable laws, rules, codes, statutes, or ordinances.

§99.18 ASSESSMENT OF UNPAID ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTIES

Any unpaid administrative penalty for failure to comply with the provisions in this code may be assessed against the property in the manner set forth in §38.07 of the City Code.