



Tips

- Read all notices you receive from your landlord about rent changes.
- If you cannot read English, have someone translate the notice for you. Do NOT just throw them away.
- Keep track of rent receipts, and any changes to your rental agreement, including new and loss of amenities.
- The allowable annual rent increase for rent controlled units from March 1, 2015 through February 29, 2016 is 1.9%; March 1, 2014 through February 28, 2015 was 1.0%.



Who is the Asian Law Caucus?

- The Asian Law Caucus is the nation's oldest legal and civil rights organization serving the low income Asian Pacific American community.
- The mission of our housing program is to preserve the human right to affordable housing.
- We focus on helping those most vulnerable to landlord abuses, such as immigrants, the elderly and those who are limited English proficient.
- Our staff can provide assistance in Cantonese and Mandarin.

The information provided here is general. ALC does not intend for anything stated here to establish any attorney/client relationship with the reader. If you have questions about your own situation, please consult an attorney.

Asian Law Caucus

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San Francisco, CA 94111
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General Information on Rent Control and Rent Increases



ALC Phone:
415 896-1701



Specific Rules Regarding Allowable Rent Increases

Allowable Rent Increases Under Rent Control

- Each year landlords can only raise rent by a small percentage set by the Rent Board. For 2015, multiply the tenant's base rent by 1.019.
- Landlords can "bank" or accumulate the annual increase and impose it in later years.
- The rent increase notice should include the dollar increase, the percentage amount of the increase, and the date of the increase.
- In addition to the base rent, rent can be increased due to improvements, utilities, new services agreed to, such as parking or storage, or bond measure passthroughs.

Timing of Rent Increases Under Rent Control

- The first annual increase can be imposed 12 months after the tenancy began; the next annual increase can be 12 months later.
- The landlord must give at least a 30-day written notice of the annual rent increase. A 60-day notice is required if the rent is increased by more than 10% total in one year.

Illegal Rent Increases Under Rent Control

- More than base rent allowable percentage increase.
- More than 10% for improvements.
- More than 50% of passthrough costs.
- Landlords cannot charge more rent solely for additional occupants, including a newborn child.

Units Outside of Rent Control (Different Rules)

- Rental unit with a certificate of occupancy after June 13, 1979. This "new construction exemption" is the biggest exemption in San Francisco.
- Units in hotels, motels, rooming and boarding houses, where the unit has not been occupied by the same tenant for 32 or more continuous days.
- HUD Housing projects
- When all the original tenant(s) vacate.
- Single family homes – exempted from the rent increase limitations IF the tenancy started on or after January 1, 1996.

The Basics

What is Rent Control?

The San Francisco Rent Ordinance established rules regarding rental units which were built before 1979. These rules include restrictions on the allowable rent increases and evictions. There is no limit on the amount of rent charged for an initial lease.

The Rent Board governs disputes and questions under the Rent Ordinance. This applies only for units in San Francisco.

What if my Landlord Raised My Rent in Violation of the Rules?

Tenants can petition the Rent Board to decrease their rent if the landlord is failing to provide agreed upon or legally required services, or if rent was increased beyond allowable limits. If your landlord increased your rent, you can find more information on what to do by contacting the ALC, or the organizations below.

More Information:

- SF Rent Board Fact Sheet:
<http://sfrb.org/index.aspx?page=949>
- SF Rent Board
415-252-4602 (M-F, 9:00 AM – Noon and 1:00 – 4:00 PM)
- Eviction Defense Collaborative
995 Market Street #1200
San Francisco, CA 94103-1725