



# Tenant Screening Ordinance

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December 16, 2025



# Olympia Housing Action Plan

Strategy 2: Make it easier for households to access housing and stay housed.

2a: “Identify and implement appropriate tenant protections that improve household stability”

# Council Process

November 2024:  
LUEC discussion on  
income to rent  
ratios

May 2025: LUEC  
discussion on  
tenant screening  
policies

March 2025: Council  
study session on  
tenant protections

July/Aug 2025:  
community survey  
on tenant screening  
policies

Sept 2025: Council  
study session on  
tenant screening  
policies

# Community Engagement

Community survey for  
landlords/property managers and  
renters/community service providers

- Open for three weeks in July-August
- **283 total respondents**  
(160 landlords/property managers and 123 renters/community service providers)

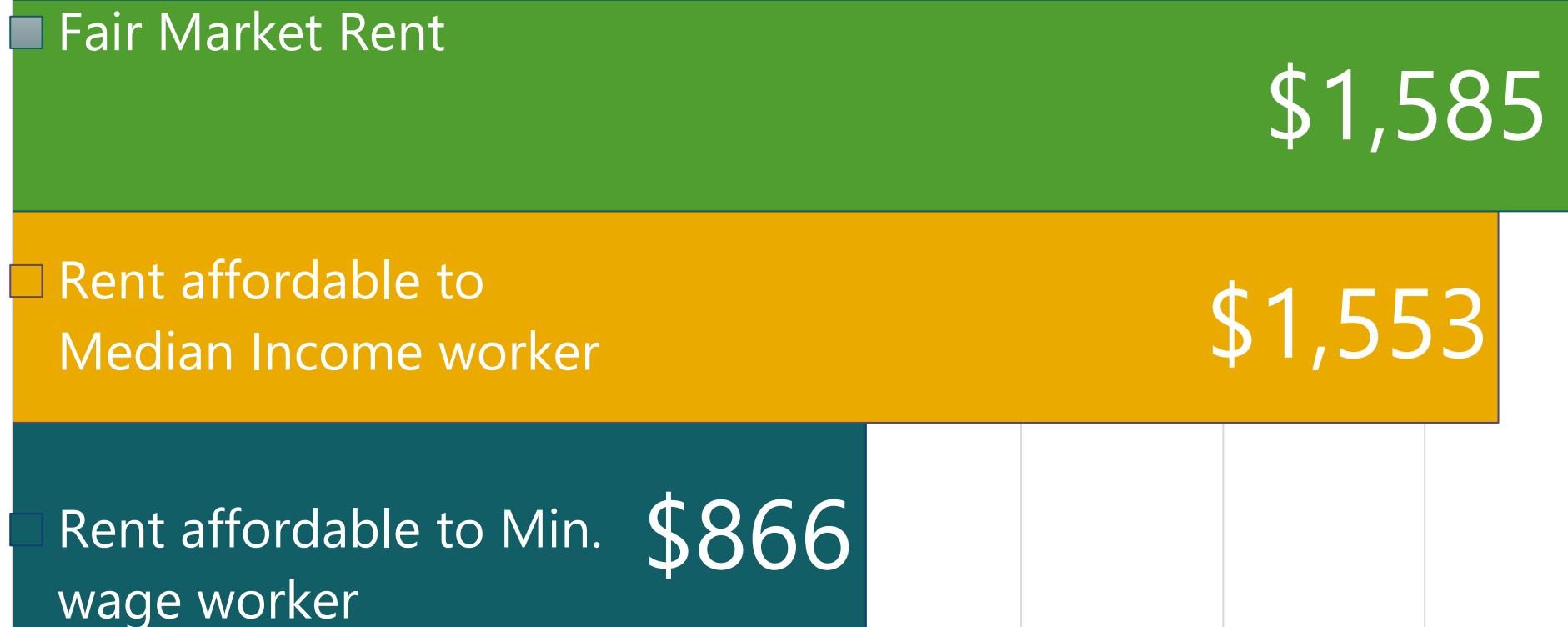


# Council Direction

- Draft an ordinance restricting income to rent ratios and preventing landlords from rejecting an applicant for failure to provide a Social Security number on a rental application
- Educate landlords on discriminatory impacts of overly restrictive tenant screening policies (specifically criminal, credit and rental history)



# Use of Income to Rent Ratio



Source: '[Out of Reach](#)' (2025), National Low Income Housing Coalition

# Ordinance language

- Prohibits landlords from requiring applicants to demonstrate more than 2.5 times the amount of monthly rent to qualify for a rental unit
- Allows applicants to use total household income to qualify
- Allows landlords to request a co-signer or guarantor if the applicant does not meet the income requirement
- Allows landlords to review an applicant's positive rental history if the applicant does not meet the income requirement

## Based on policies enacted in:

- Tacoma, WA
- Portland, OR
- Minneapolis, MN
- State of Colorado

# Alternative documentation to Social Security numbers

- **Examples of documents to establish identity:** birth certificate, driver's license, Individual Tax Payer Identification Number (ITIN), non-immigrant visa, Certificate of Naturalization (INS I-550)
- **Examples of documents to establish rental history:** reference from former landlord, copy of lease from former residence
- **Examples of documents to establish credit history or ability to pay rent:** current paystubs, bank records, ITIN, paid utility bills

# Use of Social Security numbers

- 69% of landlords/property managers surveyed require applicants to provide a Social Security number
- 57% of landlords/property managers surveyed reported they do not have an alternative process for applicants who don't have a Social Security number



# Ordinance language

- Landlords may request but not require applicants to provide a Social Security number for screening purposes
- Alternative documentation must be allowed to establish eligibility
- Landlords may not reject or offer different terms to an applicant who does not provide a Social Security number
- Landlords may not threaten, intimidate or harass an applicant due to their immigration/citizenship status

## Based on policies enacted in:

- Tacoma, WA
- Portland, OR
- Kenmore, WA
- Redmond, WA
- King County, WA

# Implementation

**Proposed effective date: April 1, 2026**

**Enforcement by City or by tenant (aligns with existing Rental Housing Code)**

# Options

1. Adopt the ordinance as drafted
2. Modify the ordinance
3. Do not adopt the ordinance and direct staff on next steps



Thank you

