



## General Government Committee

### Tenant Relocation Assistance Briefing

**Agenda Date:** 9/25/2019  
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#### **Title**

Tenant Relocation Assistance Briefing

#### **Recommended Action**

##### **Committee Recommendation:**

Not referred to a committee

##### **City Manager Recommendation:**

Receive an overview of local government relocation programs and options that Olympia could explore to reduce the risk of homelessness and other hardships associated with no-cause evictions. Briefing only; No action requested.

#### **Report**

##### **Issue:**

Whether to discuss the ways cities mitigate impacts of no-fault and other evictions from rental housing.

##### **Staff Contact:**

Cary Retlin, Home Fund Manager, Community Planning and Development, 360.570.3956

##### **Presenter(s):**

Cary Retlin, Community Planning and Development

#### **Background and Analysis:**

General Government requested that staff provide an overview of local government relocation programs and options that Olympia could explore to reduce the risk of homelessness and other hardships associated with no-cause evictions. Rental households now make up a majority, 53 percent, of Olympia households. As Olympia has grown and our vacancy rate has decreased, rents have increased along with the pressure to renovate rental units and terminate rental agreements at no fault of the tenant.

#### Relocation Programs

Cities around the country have explored different ways to reduce the impact of termination of tenancy and eviction on renters. There are two primary ways of funding those programs.

One method requires that landlords register with the city and pay a fee that funds services that could include relocation assistance. The City of Corvallis, Oregon, is a nearby example. Opportunities with that model include the ability to provide other services with the funds, like conflict resolution or damage to rental units. Challenges include registering and collecting fees from landlords, and the possibility that relocation assistance owed may exceed program income (a problem frequently faced by the Washington State Mobile Home Relocation Program). That model could be staffed by the city or contracted to a partner.

A second method requires that landlords pay tenants relocation assistance directly (one example is Portland, Oregon). Rates could be set based on rent or deposits and would be required to be paid to tenants if the relocation assistance is triggered by the terms of the tenancy termination. Challenges include ensuring that landlords are issuing payments to tenants and enforcing the ordinance. Advantages include assurance that funding would be available for all tenants since it is not dependent on a separate city fund.

**Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):**

Informal conversations with local property managers suggest that either program would increase costs of business that would likely result in an increase in rents over time.

**Options:**

1. Direct staff to bring a program proposal similar to Portland's model to a future General Government meeting.
2. Direct staff to bring a program proposal funded similarly to the Corvallis program back to a future General Government meeting.
3. Take other action.

**Financial Impact:**

None at this time. This briefing will include discussion of a fee-based funding model (Corvallis), and a model that requires landlords to pay relocation expenses directly to tenants (Portland).

**Attachments:**

Portland Program Page  
Corvallis Program Page  
Zillow Market Report