

City of Cambridge
Offices of the Mayor and City Manager
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Sumbul Siddiqui, Mayor
Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager

October 14, 2020

Dear Property Managers and Owners,

We are writing to update and inform you about three important City of Cambridge Housing topics.

We want to assure you that we appreciate all that you have done in recent months to preserve tenancies in our community. We also recognize that the many housing, housing related, and economic challenges that have resulted from COVID-19 will not be fully abated in the coming months and both owners and tenants will continue to be financially impacted until we experience the end of the Pandemic and a full economic recovery.

First, the City of Cambridge recently enacted the *2020 Tenants' Rights and Resources Notification Ordinance*. This Ordinance was passed by the City Council on September 14, 2020 and is effective 30 days following the date of passage. Therefore, the effective date is October 14, 2020.

The purpose of the Ordinance is to inform Cambridge residents of their housing rights and the resources that are available to them at both the start of tenancies and when tenancies are terminated in order to maintain housing and community stability for the City's tenants, owners, and neighborhoods.

Please review the attached documents, which explain the purpose and compliance requirements of this Ordinance. Attached documents include:

- The City of Cambridge Tenants' Rights and Resources Notification Ordinance;
- A Frequently Asked Questions Guide; and
- The Rights and Resources Guide that is to be given by you to your Tenants.

The documents may also be found on the City of Cambridge Website at [Cambridgema.gov/tenantrights](https://www.cambridgema.gov/tenantrights).

Second, we would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that there are several financial assistance programs offered through both the City and the State that may assist your tenant in preventing or addressing rent arrears. Programs include:

- The City's Housing Stabilization Fund that can assist tenants who are paying more than 40% of their income in rent with 4 months of assistance. Please share the attached flier and this link with your tenants <https://www.cambridgema.gov/covid19/housingfund>
- The City also offers a Rental Assistance Program through the Cambridge Multi Service Center. Please call 617-349-6340 for more information.

- The State has long offered the Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) Program to eligible Massachusetts residents. This program is administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and accessed through the Regional Administering Agencies (RAA). Metro Housing Boston serves Cambridge and the link to apply for assistance is: <https://www.metrohousingboston.org/what-we-do/rental-relief-and-eviction-prevention>
- The State also offers the Emergency Rental and Mortgage Assistance (ERMA) Program, which is also administered by DHCD and accessed through the RAAs, which for Cambridge is Metro housing Boston.

For more information about these programs or, other financial assistance resources for tenants, please contact either the Cambridge Multi Service Center at 617-349-6340 or the City's Housing Liaison, Maura Pensak, at mpensak@cambridgema.gov or 617-349-6337. Additionally, the State is providing information and resources to tenants and landlords by calling 211.

Third, we would like to address questions about federal, state and local eviction moratoria.

The City of Cambridge enacted an emergency order on April 3, 2020 entitled "Temporary Emergency Order by the Commissioner of Public Health and the City Manager Establishing a Moratorium on Eviction Enforcement and Non-Essential Entry by Property Owners and Their Agents into Occupied Dwelling Units." The second part of this Order, which addresses guidelines for entry, was amended on July 23, 2020. The City Moratorium prohibits landlords from enforcing evictions, either residential or commercial. This means a constable or sheriff cannot levy on an execution and move out a tenant. This order is in effect until further notice.

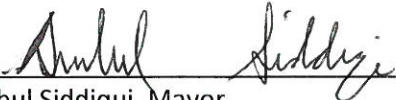
The State's Eviction Moratorium is set to expire on October 17, 2020. At this time, we do not know if this expiration date will be postponed by the Governor, thus continuing the moratorium or if it will expire. However, the Governor has announced a comprehensive eviction diversion initiative with increased funding and expanded programs in order to keep people safely housed during the Pandemic.

In addition, the United States Department of Health and Human Services through the Centers for Disease Control issued an order entitled "Temporary Halt in Residential Evictions to Prevent the Further Spread of Covid-19". This order became effective on September 4, 2020, and remains in effect through December 31, 2020, unless otherwise extended. This is a national moratorium that applies in all states unless there is a state or local order that provides the same or greater protections for tenants than this CDC order offers.

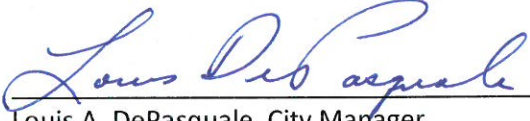
If you have any questions concerning the applicability of the eviction moratoria to your tenants, please consult an attorney.

We hope that the available City and State resources will assist you and your tenants, and we appreciate your assistance in preserving tenancies in Cambridge. We hope that we will be able to continue to work in partnership with you and your tenants to ensure your success and maintain a vibrant and diverse community.

Please contact the City's Housing Liaison, Maura Pensak, at mpensak@cambridgema.gov or by calling her at 617-349-6337 if you have any questions or feedback.



 Sumbul Siddiqui, Mayor



 Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager