

# Local Eviction Prevention Policy and Program Tool Methodology

Last Update: 5/8/2025

The National League of Cities and Stanford Legal Design Lab have worked with cities all over the country since 2020 on eviction prevention technical assistance programs. Based on this work, the researchers selected 19 policies and programs to track in the *Local Eviction Prevention Policy and Program Tool*.

## Data Collection

Policies were collected between November 2024 and May 2025 and therefore are only up to date as of that timeframe. Policies and programs change often, and those changes will not be reflected in the tool until an update has been made. Additionally, given that this data has been manually collected, it is susceptible to human error. This tool is not intended to be comprehensive of all policies and programs instituted in cities nationally but a starting place for identifying relevant policies and programs.

## Selecting Cities

The researchers sought to include representation of cities with eviction prevention policies and programs from a range of populations and states. The population categories chosen are as follows: <10,000, 10,001-50,000; 50,001 – 150,000; 150,001 – 375,000; and >375,001. We stratified cities into these population categories and then randomly selected cities from each group to examine whether they have eviction policies/programs on file either on their website or through Municode. If the city does not have any documented policies/programs we move on to the next city in the randomly sorted list. The goal is to have one city per state for each population category though some states may not have cities within a population category with a policy or program. As of April 21, 2025, only two out of 49 cities (0.3%) in the <10k group have a policy as compared to an average of 58% in the other population size groups. Therefore, we predominately focused on the larger population sized cities where there was a higher probability of finding new policies.

*Cities were not included in the tool if they did not have any eviction prevention policy or programs.*

## **Determining the stage of the eviction process in which a policy or program intervenes**

Each policy or program was evaluated to determine the stage of the eviction process during which it intervenes. For categorization and filtering purposes, the eviction process was broken down into three stages based on a generalization of common court and legal proceedings related to evictions: 1) Before an eviction is filed, 2) During eviction proceedings or 3) After an eviction judgement.

While local eviction processes and individual policy and program designs may vary, an assessment was made for each type of policy and program identified that reflects the most common designs and implementation practices based on researchers' direct work with cities. In many cases, a policy and program were found to intervene at multiple points in the eviction process.

## **Search Process used to collect the data**

**Step 1:** Google search “city + keyword(s)” for all keywords and policies and programs for each city. For example, researchers used: “Philadelphia eviction diversion” then “Philadelphia eviction moratoria,” etc. If nothing was found on the first page of the initial Google search for a given policy or program, researchers moved onto step 2.

**Step 2:** Search directly in city website “keyword(s).” For example, researchers used: “eviction diversion” and “diversion program” in the city website.

**Step 3 (for policy only):** If the policy ordinance was not found through Step 1 and Step 2, researchers searched directly on Municode “keyword(s).” If a policy or program was not found through Steps 1 – 3, the researchers assumed no such policy or program exists for a given city.

## **Policies and Programs Overview and Keywords Used**

Details on how the researchers distinguished between policies and programs are as follows. See the tab “Learn More About Eviction Policies & Programs” within the tool itself for descriptions of the policies and programs.

## Access to Legal Representation (Program)

Cities were considered to have access to legal representation program if a city provided legal support in a way that fell short of a right to counsel program. Types of support can include things such as legal clinics, court advocates, or the ability to discuss a case with a lawyer without officially being represented by them. Non-profit legal aid clinics were not included unless it was clear that the city partners with the provider.

**Keywords:** Access to Legal Representation, Legal Support, Justice Advocate Program

## Court Supportive Services (Program)

Court supportive services provides both tenants and landlords information and support before, during and after an eviction is filed. This can include providing timely information regarding the court trial (such as appointment reminders or including flyers promoting services with court appointments documentation) and access to social, legal and financial resources at the courthouse.

**Keywords:** Court Supportive Services, Housing Court, Housing Municipal Court

## Emergency Rental Assistance (Program)

Cities were considered to have an emergency rental assistance program if the city ran, or is running, or provides funding to other organizations to run an emergency rental assistance program. If the city provided funds to an external or third-party organization for an emergency rental assistance program in the last two years (identified through their grants CAPER or Action Plan) that program was included. This was typically the case for smaller cities. Programs run by counties or non-profits were included only if it was clear that the city was a partner.

**Keywords:** Emergency Rental Assistance

## Eviction Diversion (Policy & Program)

Cities were considered to have an eviction diversion program if the city explicitly combined multiple services together under the umbrella of an “Eviction Diversion” or “Diversion” program. Services may include rental assistance, mediation, access to legal representation and other supportive services. Sometimes these programs are run by the county, state or local courts. Such programs were not included unless it was clear that the city led or partnered on the diversion program.

To be considered a policy, some element of the diversion program had to be mandated. For example, requiring landlords to participate in a diversion program before being able to file an eviction.

**Keywords:** Eviction Diversion, Diversion Program

## **Eviction Sealing (Policy)**

Cities were considered to have an eviction sealing policy if the city has an ordinance that seals or expunges eviction records after a certain period. Eviction sealing can establish a period after which the eviction record will be sealed (e.g., 3 years after the eviction), and can prohibit leases from requiring a sealed eviction record be disclosed.

**Keywords:** Eviction Masking and Sealing, Eviction Masking, Eviction Sealing, Eviction Expungement

## **Eviction Mediation (Policy & Program)**

Cities were considered to have an eviction mediation program if landlord-tenant mediation was offered as “optional” or “voluntary” from the city, not the court. Mediation programs run by a third party were not included unless it was explicitly stated that the city partnered with the third-party agency.

Cities were considered to have an eviction mediation policy if the city (not the court) had an ordinance mandating that landlords must attempt mediation prior to filing for an eviction. It is possible that information included under Eviction Mediation is duplicative of information included under Eviction Diversion Program, since mediation can be part of a larger Eviction Diversion Program.

**Keywords:** Eviction Mediation

## **Eviction Moratoria (Policy)**

Cities were considered to have an eviction moratorium if an executive order by the mayor, a city council resolution, or city ordinance was enacted to prevent evictions from taking place. Eviction moratoria can be enacted for several reasons, including public health concerns, extreme weather concerns, and natural disasters.

**Keywords:** Eviction Moratoria, Eviction Moratorium

## Just Cause Eviction (Policy)

Cities were considered to have a just cause eviction policy if the city has an ordinance that states that landlords can only evict tenants for “just” or “good” causes. These policies can prevent evictions and promote housing stability for renters by limiting the legal causes for which a landlord can evict a tenant or refuse to renew a lease.

**Keywords:** Just Cause Eviction, Good Cause Eviction

## Landlord Advisory Board or Commission (Policy & Program)

Cities were considered to have a landlord advisory board or commission program if it was clear that the city organized recurring meetings for landlords to provide feedback on various programs, policies, or discuss issues surrounding tenant-landlord relations and renting. These boards or commissions did not need to be exclusively made up of landlords, in many cases landlords were one stakeholder that needed to be represented as part of a larger group focused on landlord-tenant relations and renting or housing generally. To be considered a policy, the landlord advisory board or commission needed to be enshrined by ordinance.

**Keywords:** Landlord Advisory Board, Advisory Board, Landlord Advisory Commission, Advisory Commission, Landlord Advisory Committee, Housing Advisory Committee

## Landlord Training or Education Program (Program)

Cities were considered to have a landlord training or education program if there was sufficient evidence that the city appeared to routinely offer a landlord training or education program. A first scan was conducted to see if the program was city-led. In some cases, cities contract with other providers (non-profits, community organizations, etc.) to provide training. A city was considered as having a landlord training or education program if there was sufficient and clear evidence that the city contracts this training out (through budget allocations, city logos listed as a partner on the trainer’s website, etc.). Programs run by the city’s police department and/or programs that exclusively discussed crime reduction in rental properties were not included. PDF guides, resource landing pages, and one-time informational sessions were not included.

**Keywords:** Landlord Training, Landlord Education

## Landlord & Tenant Engagement & Outreach (Policy & Program)

Cities were considered to have Landlord & Tenant Engagement & Outreach programs, such as having a website landing page tailored to landlords or tenants’ hotlines, listservs, housing connector resources. These resources proactively providing access or information on eviction prevention resources to both landlords and tenants as well as building partnerships. A first scan was conducted to see if the program was city-led. In some cases, cities contract with other providers (non-profits, community organizations, etc.) to provide training. A city was considered

as having a landlord & tenant engagement & outreach program if there was sufficient and clear evidence that the city contracts this partnership out (through budget allocations, city logos listed as a partner on the trainer's website, etc.).

**Keywords:** Landlord Engagement, Tenant Engagement, Landlord Hotline, Tenant Hotline

## **Rent Control (Policy)**

Cities were considered to have a rental control policy if the city has an ordinance that limits the amount or percentage by which a landlord can increase rent. Ordinances that simply mandated that a landlord provide notice to the tenant of pending rent increases were not included unless accompanied by a limit on the amount or percent increase. Rent control policies that only apply to Housing Choice Vouchers were not included.

**Keywords:** Rent Control

## **Right to Counsel (Policy)**

Cities were considered to have a right to counsel policy if the city has an ordinance that clearly states that legal representation would be provided to tenants facing an eviction. Any legal representation or program that 1) was not an ordinance and 2) did not include access to full legal representation were considered "Access to Legal Representation."

**Keywords:** Right to Counsel

## **Source of Income Discrimination (Policy)**

Cities were considered to have a source of income discrimination policy if the city had an ordinance that specifically includes source of income as a protected class under fair housing legislation. No state action was included. [Twenty-three states](#) and the District of Columbia (as of May 2025) have statutes that prohibit source of income discrimination, and some cities are preempted by their states from passing local source of income policies. Policies that prohibit discrimination "on the basis of receiving public assistance" are included as source of income discrimination.

**Keywords:** Source of Income Discrimination

## Supportive Services (Program)

Cities were considered to have a supportive service(s) program if the city provides at least one supportive program outside of emergency rental assistance payments. The supportive services considered include housing counseling, housing navigators, and case workers. While legal support services are a type of supportive services, those are included under the “access to legal representation” category. A city was considered to have a “support service” program if at least one policy or program was found. If a city was evidenced to have a housing counseling program, researchers did not search to see whether the city has housing navigators, case workers, or tenant support hotlines.

**Keywords:** Housing Counseling, Housing Navigators, Case Workers

## Tenant Advisory Board or Commission (Policy & Program)

Cities were considered to have a tenant advisory board or commission program if it was clear that the city organized recurring meetings for tenants to provide feedback on various programs, policies, or discuss issues surrounding tenant-landlord relations and renting. These boards or commissions did not need to be exclusively made up of tenants, in many cases tenants were one stakeholder that needed to be represented as part of a larger group focused on landlord-tenant relations and renting or housing generally. To be considered a policy, the tenant advisory board or commission needed to be enshrined by ordinance.

**Keywords:** Tenant Advisory Board, Advisory Board, Tenant Advisory Commission, Advisory Commission, Tenant Advisory Committee, Housing Advisory Committee

## Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (Policy)

The Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) is a law that gives tenants the right to purchase their rental property before it can be sold. This law was enacted to protect tenants from displacement and ensure they have the opportunity to remain in their homes.

**Keywords:** Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act

## Tenant Training or Education Program (Program)

Cities were considered to have a tenant education or training program if there was sufficient evidence that the city appeared to routinely offer a tenant training or education program. A first scan was conducted to see if the program was city-led. In some cases, cities contract with other providers (non-profits, community organizations, etc.) to provide training. A city was considered as having a tenant training or education program if there was sufficient and clear evidence that the city contracts this training out (through budget allocations, city logos listed as a partner on the trainer’s website, etc.). Programs run by the city’s police department and/or programs that

exclusively discussed crime reduction in rental properties were not included. PDF guides, resource landing pages, and one-time informational sessions were not included.

**Keywords:** Tenant Training, Tenant Education

## Additional Notes

In some instances, certain policies and programs have different names depending on the jurisdiction. For example, San Francisco, CA passed [ordinance section 37.9\(a\)](#) which outlines “just cause” reasons for eviction, while Poughkeepsie, NY passed [ordinance section 12.176](#) which outlines “good cause” reasons for eviction. In such cases, multiple keywords were used to search for policies and programs to capture variances in names.

In some instances, the policies and programs tracked in this tool are a collection of separate programs. For example, “Supportive Services” includes programs like housing counseling, navigators, and case workers. In such cases, researchers used keywords from the separate programs such as “housing counseling” and “navigators,” instead of “supportive services.”

## Questions

If you have questions or concerns, please reach out at [housing@nlc.org](mailto:housing@nlc.org).