



Rent Registry

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

(Ordinance No. 2019-03, El Cerrito Municipal Code Chapter 10.100)

(Also available at www.el-cerrito.org/housing)

This page is for informational purposes only. Please read the ordinance for all legal requirements.

What is the Rent Registry?

Annually all residential rental property owners are required to submit rents and other relevant information into a City database during the annual business license renewal process.

When does it take effect?

The ordinance creating the Rent Registry ([El Cerrito Municipal Code Chapter 10.100](#)) was adopted by the City Council on May 21, 2018, and is effective on June 20, 2019. The rent registry will allow the City to gather data in order to understand and monitor rental housing trends.

How do I complete the registration?

The City will notice all properties subject to the ordinance in July of each year as part of the annual business license renewal. Property owners must register all rentals subject to the ordinance within thirty days of receipt of notice from the City no later than **July 31st**. Registration must be completed one of two ways: 1) Online using the City's secure database; or 2) By mail/in-person on forms provided by the City. Registration is deemed to be complete when all required information has been provided and all outstanding fees have been paid. A *Notice of Completion* will be provided to property owners once all requirements have been satisfied.

Which type of rental properties are not required to register?

All rental properties, including single-family residences, are subject to the ordinance. However, there are some exemptions such as affordable housing developments where the rents are controlled/regulated ("deed restricted") by a government agency and rental of rooms if the owner resides in the unit. You must complete one *Rent Registry Form* per rental property.

What is the reporting period that is required to be registered?

All required information for the last 24-months, from the effective date, must be registered with the City. This means that rents, rent increases and tenant history must be registered for the period July 2017 – June 2019. Please compile all applicable property records prior to completing the registration.

What if I rent a room in my home?

Generally, renting a room is exempt from the ordinance. However, please review Chapter 10.100.020 (H) for a complete list of exceptions.



I own a triplex and live in one unit. What are the reporting requirements?

If a unit is owner-occupied, you must report this information to the City. When completing the registry, please select “*owner-occupied*” in the *Occupancy Status* field, when applicable. You are required and will be prompted to complete the rent registry for all units in a building whether they are owner or tenant occupied.

Is there a fee for this program?

Each residential rental unit subject to the ordinance is required to pay an annual registration fee of \$44.00 per unit. This fee is calculated to recover costs to administer the program.

How do I pay the fee?

Landlords are required to pay the fee annually. The City will invoice all properties subject to the ordinance in July of each year as part of the annual business license renewal. Once invoiced, payments can be made online, by mail or in-person.

Are there limits to rent increases under this ordinance?

This ordinance does not regulate rents or rent increases. However, the City Council will use the data collected from the rent registry to inform them about rental market trends, including rent increases, to guide future City housing policy.

What other rental housing regulations apply in El Cerrito?

There are various regulations that are described in detail below.

All businesses, including rental properties, are subject to the City of El Cerrito’s [Business License Tax Ordinance](#), Chapter 4.32 of the Municipal Code.

All residential rental properties in El Cerrito are subject to the City’s [Residential Rental Inspection Program](#) (RRIP), El Cerrito Municipal Code Chapter 16.30. The purpose of the RRIP is to ensure that all residential properties/units comply with the El Cerrito Municipal Code. For issues related to health and safety, please contact the City’s [Code Enforcement Division](#) at 215-4363.

Adopted in 2008, the [Condominium Conversion Ordinance](#), El Cerrito Municipal Code Chapter 19.45, establishes regulations that apply to the conversion of existing multifamily rental housing to condominiums.

On May 21, 2019, the City Council adopted the [Just Cause for Eviction and Prohibition on Harassment of Tenants Ordinance](#), El Cerrito Municipal Code Chapter 10.300 (Ordinance No. 2019-04), which was to become effective June 20, 2019. As passed, the ordinance would limit the bases for termination of residential tenancies. It would only apply to multi-family properties with five or more units that received a Certificate of Occupancy issued before January 1, 2015.

However, on June 10, 2019, a referendum petition was filed with the City Clerk related to the Ordinance. This process, allowed by California Elections Code, suspends implementation of the ordinance and may require the City Council to either repeal the ordinance or call an election to allow



voters to decide. Please visit www.el-cerrito.org/tenantprotections for updates. Depending upon the timing of the Contra Costa County Elections Office whether the petition has a sufficient number of valid voter signatures, Council will meet in July or August to take any further action that might be required.

Please visit our website www.el-cerrito.org/CommDev for more information.

What if a property is sold or transferred?

As required by Section 10.100.030 (E) of the ordinance, landlords must notify the City if there is a change in ownership or management within thirty days.

What if I need to change or update the registration information?

Please complete and submit the *Rent Registration Amendment* form to the City. The form is available online at www.el-cerrito.org/housing.

Can I report rent increases to the City throughout the year?

No, the annual registration and information submittal is due every July. The City will provide registration notices to all business license holders at least thirty days prior to the due date.

I need technical assistance in order to complete the online form.

Please contact our office at 215-4314 or housing@ci.el-cerrito.org.

Please visit the City's [website](#) for additional information and future workshop dates.

What if the registry requirements are not satisfied?

Failure to comply will result in enforcement proceedings, including administration penalties. Administrative penalties may include fines.

Where can I read more about the ordinance?

Please review [El Cerrito Municipal Code Chapter 10.100](#) for a copy of the full ordinance at www.el-cerrito.org/housing.

Questions or Comments?

Please contact us at:

City of El Cerrito, Community Development Department

Email: housing@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

Website: www.el-cerrito.org/housing

Phone: 510-215-4314