

H.772 Rental Reform

H.772 summarized here:

For Tenants

- 3 months' notice for lease non-renewal or conversion of the unit by landlord for family, remodel, etc. or for sale.
- Return of ½ security deposit 45 days in advance of termination subject to actual damages
- Limitation on rental increases to one time per year
- Major uncured code violations are an absolute defense to eviction for non-payment of rent. This is in addition to the existing habitability requirement.
- Time for answer to eviction complaint remains 21 days as in current law.
- Eviction process remains confidential unless and until judgement for the landlord.
- **\$1 million for Rental Arrears Assistance Fund. The fund currently will run out of funds in April of this year.**
- Defined ten-day grace period before late rent gives rise to eviction notice.
- **\$100K for statewide positive rental payment credit reporting pilot program to assist tenants in building a credit score via rent payment.**
- Enhanced anti-retaliation provisions for the tenant
- Preservation of right to jury trial

For landlords

- Shortened eviction process for non-payment or major violations of rental agreement. Down from current 6 months to about 60-90 days. Vermont is currently an outlier among states in terms of time for eviction.
- Special rapid process where tenant is engaged in activity that endangers the safety or health of other tenants or the landlord such as dealing drugs.
- Enhanced trespass law provisions addressed to the problem of non-tenants using the premises for similarly dangerous activities.
- Provisions to address repeated non-payment of rent.
- Posting notice on the unit door available by court order lasts throughout the eviction process. No need to repeat.
- Exceptions to application fee prohibition for background and credit checks (actual cost only) and pet deposits.
- Clarification of when landlord may dispose of tenant's property after eviction.

For both Tenants and Landlords

- Modernized and streamlined notice provisions to ensure tenants are actually notified. Also addresses problem of tenants avoiding notice.
- **CVOEO \$200,000 for statewide landlord-tenant classes on rights, responsibilities and remedies**
- **\$600,000 funding rental liaisons/mediation for landlords and tenants in the CAP agencies.**