Rent Program Annual Report 2025



ALAMEDA

Presented by the
City Attorney's Office

Yibin Shen – City Attorney
Bill Chapin – Rent Program Director

CITY OF ALAMEDA

The City Attorney's Office is pleased to submit the Rent Program's seventh annual report.

The Alameda Rent Program was created to implement the City's Rent Ordinance through education, community engagement and collaboration to promote equity and stability in the rental market.

This report and the public services described throughout would not be possible without the efforts of the following individuals:

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2025 By the Numbers...

775
Average monthly interactions with the public

80%
Of fully regulated properties submitted annual registration

51%
Tenancy information updated for nearly half of fully regulated units

4,487
Average monthly website visits

$502,863
Refunded to 212 tenant households following invalid rent increases

1.0%
Annual General Adjustment (AGA)

9,057
Annual information letters mailed to landlords and tenants

13,114
Registered tenant-occupied units in Alameda

47	• Units monitored for compliance after a "no fault" termination of tenancy
30	• Submissions to review a termination of tenancy
28	• Submissions to review rent increases and/or registration
27	• Buyout Agreement Submissions
25	• Petitions filed for rent adjustment hearings
24	• Informational workshops hosted
17	• Decisions by Hearing Officers (2 pending)
16	• Public Records Requests
15	• Temporary Relocation submissions
7	• Capital Improvement Plan submissions

2025 Program Highlights

Invalid Rent Increase Enforcement

The Rent Program achieved record-breaking enforcement results in 2025, returning over $500,000 to 212 tenant households affected by invalid rent increases—more than triple any previous year. This success was driven by the addition of a full-time administrative technician position focused on registration compliance and a comprehensive review of potential violations. The expanded capacity enabled staff to identify and resolve more cases than ever before in program history.

New Reimbursement Policy Regulation

In April 2025, the Rent Program implemented Regulation 25-01. The policy establishes a clear framework for landlords to correct invalid rent increases without facing excessive penalties, while still maintaining strong tenant protections. Following two community workshops in December 2024 that engaged over 40 participants and an online feedback form that received 72 responses (with 71% support for the proposed changes), the regulation introduces a tiered approach based on timing: For rent increases effective April 1, 2025 or later, landlords may reset rents to what the Annual General Adjustment would have permitted; for pre-April 2025 increases, landlords must continue following the previous policy of a full reset to the last valid monthly rent. In both cases, the landlord must reimburse tenants for payments in excess of the reset amount. Once a landlord has corrected an invalid increase and provided appropriate reimbursement or rent credit, they may serve notice of a new, compliant rent increase. This regulation balances enforcement consistency with clear guidance for landlords, helping prevent future violations while maintaining the Rent Program's commitment to protecting tenants from unlawful rent increases.

Rent Subsidized Tenancies

In 2025, the Rent Program strengthened registration requirements for rent-subsidized tenancies to ensure greater accuracy in registry records and fee collection. Rental units occupied by tenants participating in rent subsidy programs such as Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) are eligible a waiver of the annual program fee. To continue qualifying for the waiver, landlords were required to submit a declaration along with a copy of their 2024 1099-MISC tax form issued by the voucher program's administering agency, such as the Housing Authority of the City of Alameda. As of year-end 2025, staff verified 726 rent-subsidized units eligible for fee waivers, representing approximately $80,000 in fees waived.

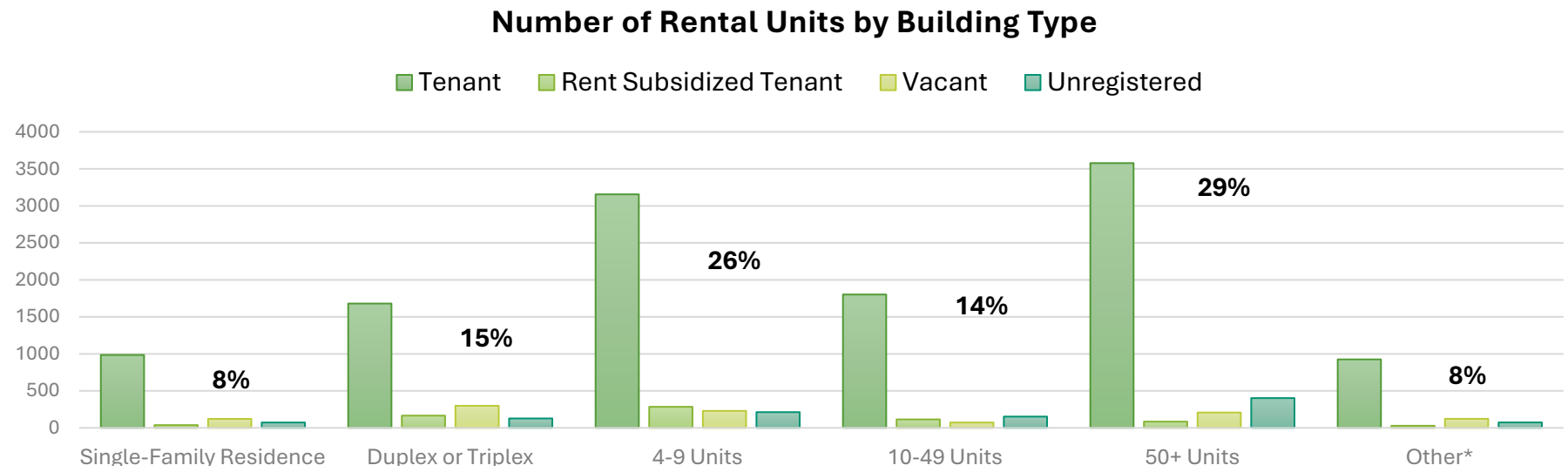
Admiral's Cove

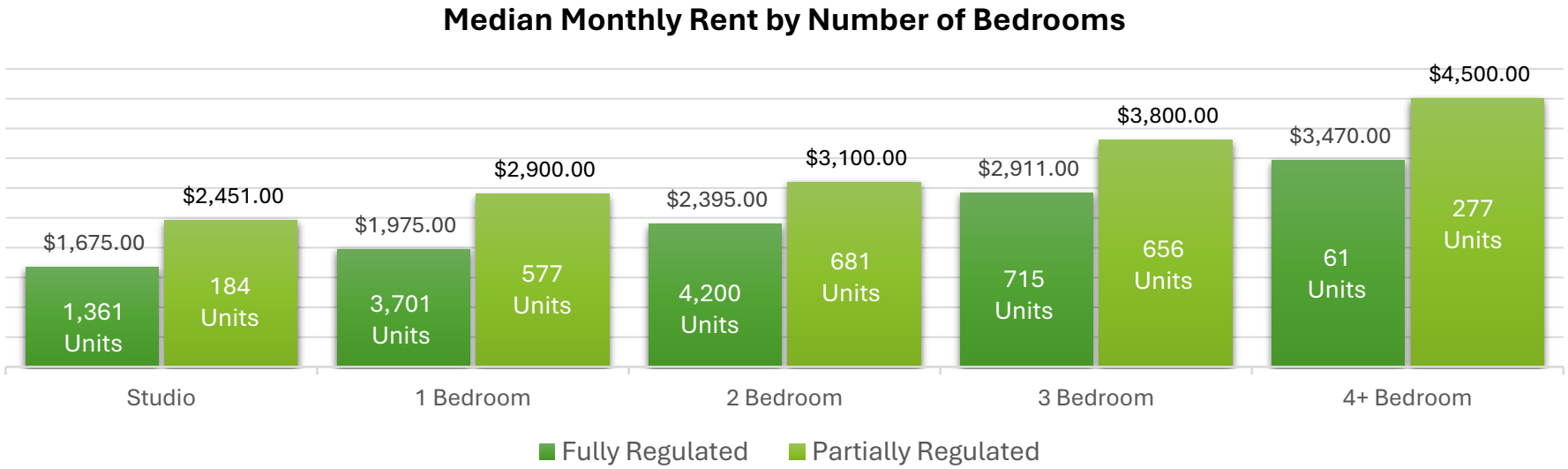
In August 2025, the City of Alameda prevailed at the California Court of Appeal in a landmark case that secured full rent control protections for 150 residential units at Admirals Cove. The ruling affirmed that these units—originally constructed in 1969 as Naval housing and renovated by Carmel Partners in 2019—are subject to Alameda's Rent Control Ordinance. This decision establishes important legal precedent across California, confirming that when institutional housing (including former military or school housing) is converted to public use, municipalities can apply rent control regulations to protect residents from unlawful rent increases. The City Attorney's Office successfully defended the Rent Program's enforcement actions after the developer challenged tenant protection orders, demonstrating the City's commitment to preserving affordable housing and preventing displacement. Staff are currently reviewing the property's registration submissions to ensure the property is in full compliance with the Rent Ordinance and tenants receive proper reimbursement.

16,494 Units Subject to the Rent Ordinance (as of 12/31/2025)

Regulation Type	Rent-Controlled	Just-Cause Protected	Unit Types
Fully Regulated 13,557 Units (82%)	✓	✓	Multi-family units (two or more dwelling units, even if a property owner lives in one of the units) built prior to February 1, 1995
Partially Regulated 2,937 Units (18%)	⊗	✓	Single-family homes, condominiums, townhouses, a permitted accessory dwelling unit on the same lot as a single-family home, privately owned units occupied by a Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) participant, multi-family units built after February 1, 1995
Exempt Units	⊗	⊗	Commercial units, institutional uses such as assisted living facilities, mobile homes, accommodations of 30 days or less, rental units owned by the Housing Authority or a non-profit organization with a rent regulatory agreement in place.

Alameda Rental Market

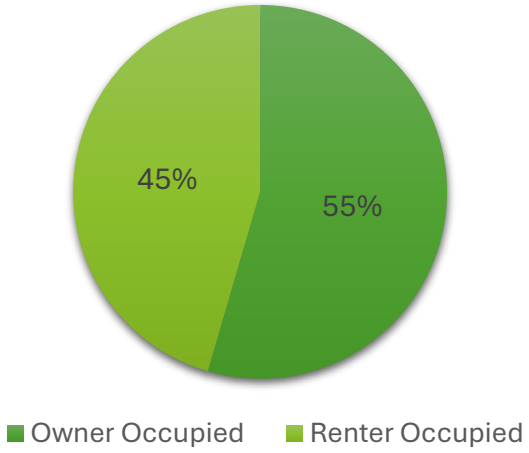




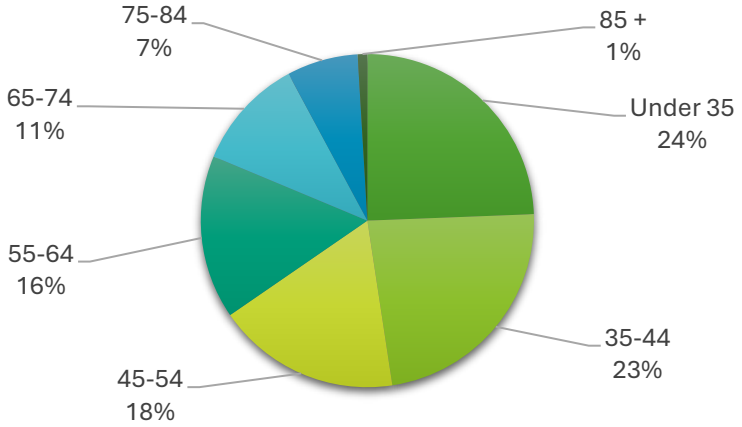
- *Data sourced from rental unit registration with the Alameda Rent Program*
- **Other: Includes condominiums, townhouses, ADU's, and residential units in mixed-use buildings.*
- *Median Monthly Rent chart does not include rent-subsidized tenancies*

Alameda Rental Market

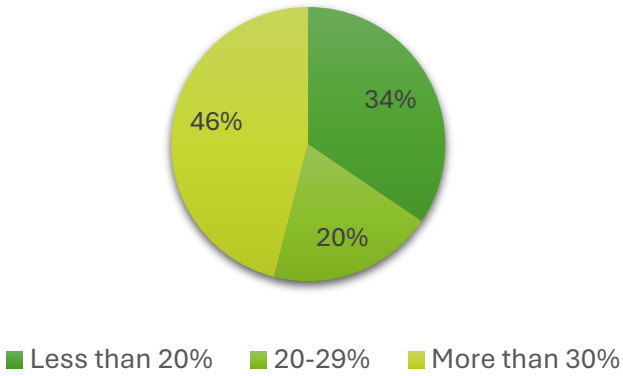
Occupied Housing Units



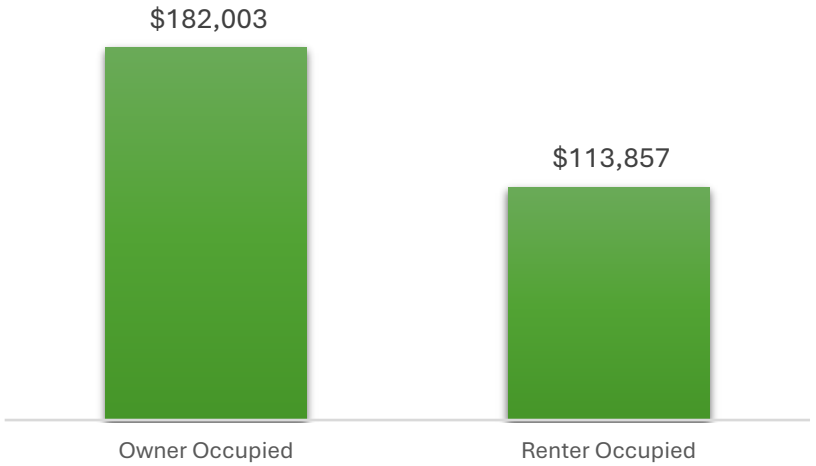
Age of Householder - Renter Occupied



Percentage of Household Income Spent on Rent



Median Household Income

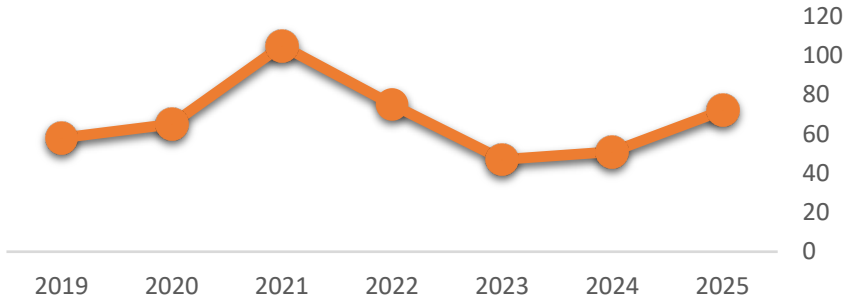


- *Source: U.S. Census 2024 American Community Survey – Five Year Estimates*

Rental Property Owners

The number of multi-unit properties sold in Alameda has fluctuated between 47 and 105 since the passage of the current Rent Ordinance in 2019, averaging about 70 per year. Sales spiked from 65 in 2020 to 105 in 2021 during the pandemic, then dropped amid rising interest rates. Activity has since rebounded, increasing to 72 sales in 2025, the strongest level since 2021.

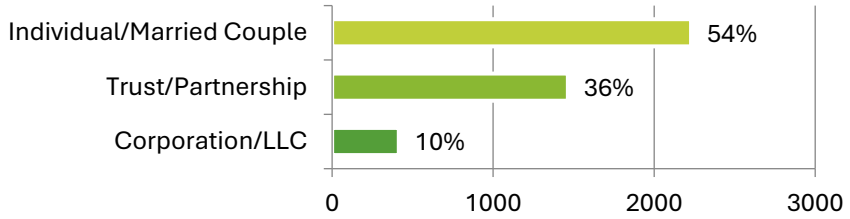
Multi-Unit Property Sales



Source: Alameda County Assessor & the City of Alameda Rent Registry

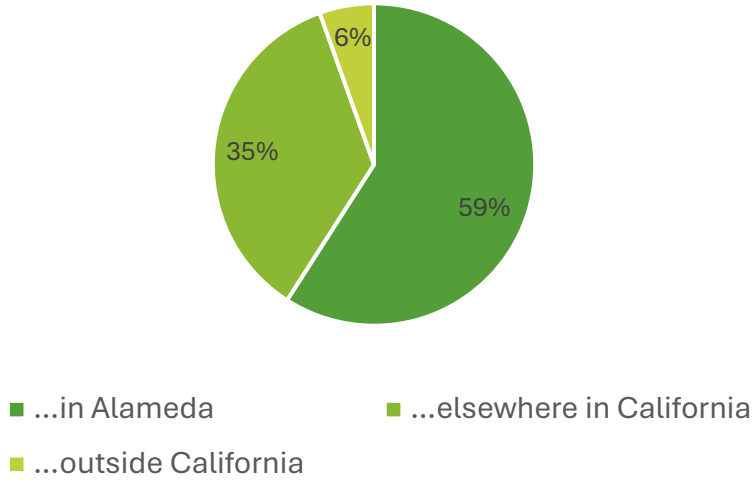


Active Rental Properties Ownership Type

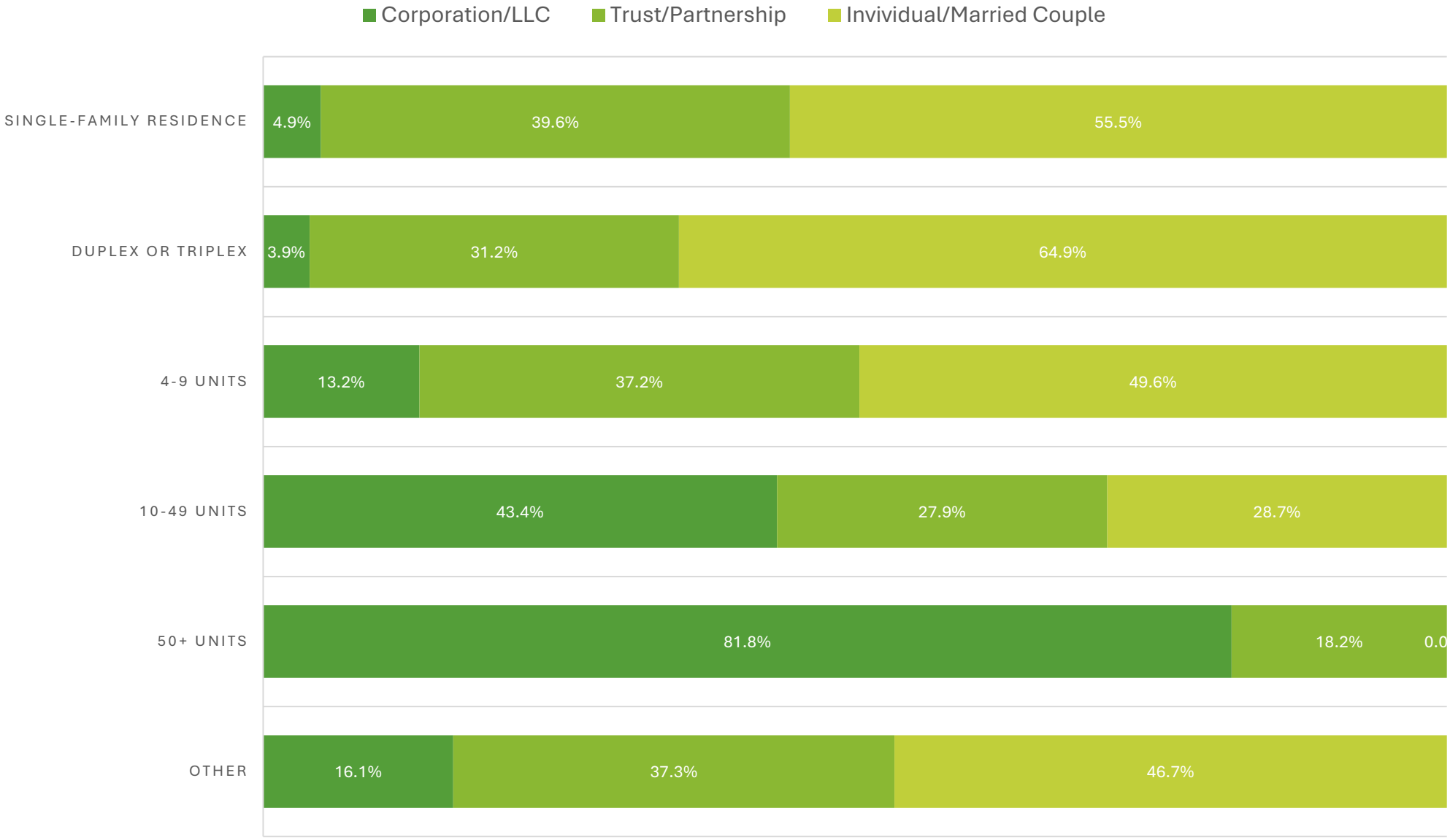


Of the more than 4,000 rental properties in Alameda, more than half are owned by individuals and married couples. About a third are in trusts, and 10% are classified as corporations or LLCs. In many cases, trusts and LLCs have been established by an individual or family for business or estate-planning purposes. More than 50% of Alameda landlords reside in the city.

2025 Rental units owned by landlords with addresses ...



2025 - OWNERSHIP CATEGORY BY RENTAL PROPERTY TYPE (% SHARE)

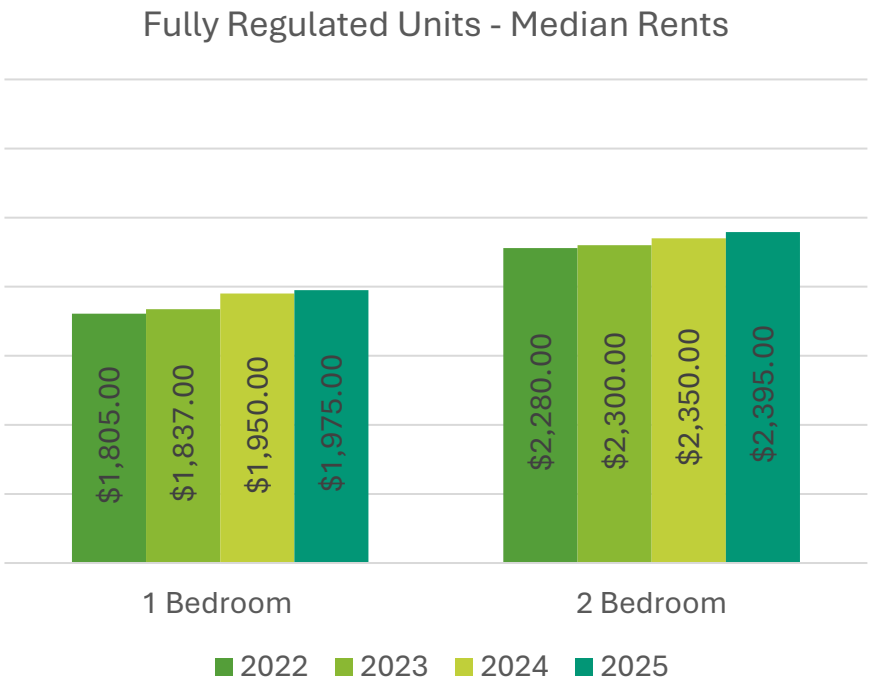


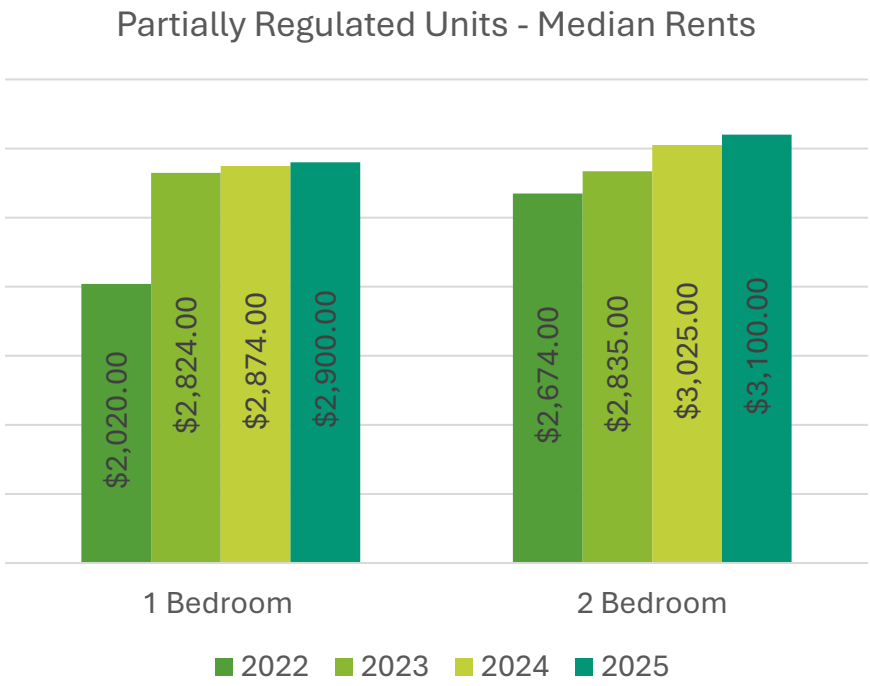
- **Other: Includes condominiums, townhouses, ADU's, and residential units in mixed-use buildings.*

Alameda Rental Market

According to Rent Registry data, median rents for fully regulated units have risen modestly since 2022. One-bedroom rents increased by **9%**, and two-bedroom rents increased by **5%** . These changes remain generally consistent with the Annual General Adjustment (AGA), noting that landlords may lawfully exceed the AGA using "banked" increases and may set rents freely for new tenancies. Fully regulated one- and two-bedroom units together account for **64%** of tenant households in Alameda.

Partially regulated units, which are not subject to rent control, experienced far larger rent increases. Since 2022, one-bedroom units rose **44%**, while two-bedroom units increased **16%**. The addition of several new market-rate developments—such as Star Harbor and The Launch—adding more than 600 new partially regulated units, may be contributing to these higher observed rent levels.

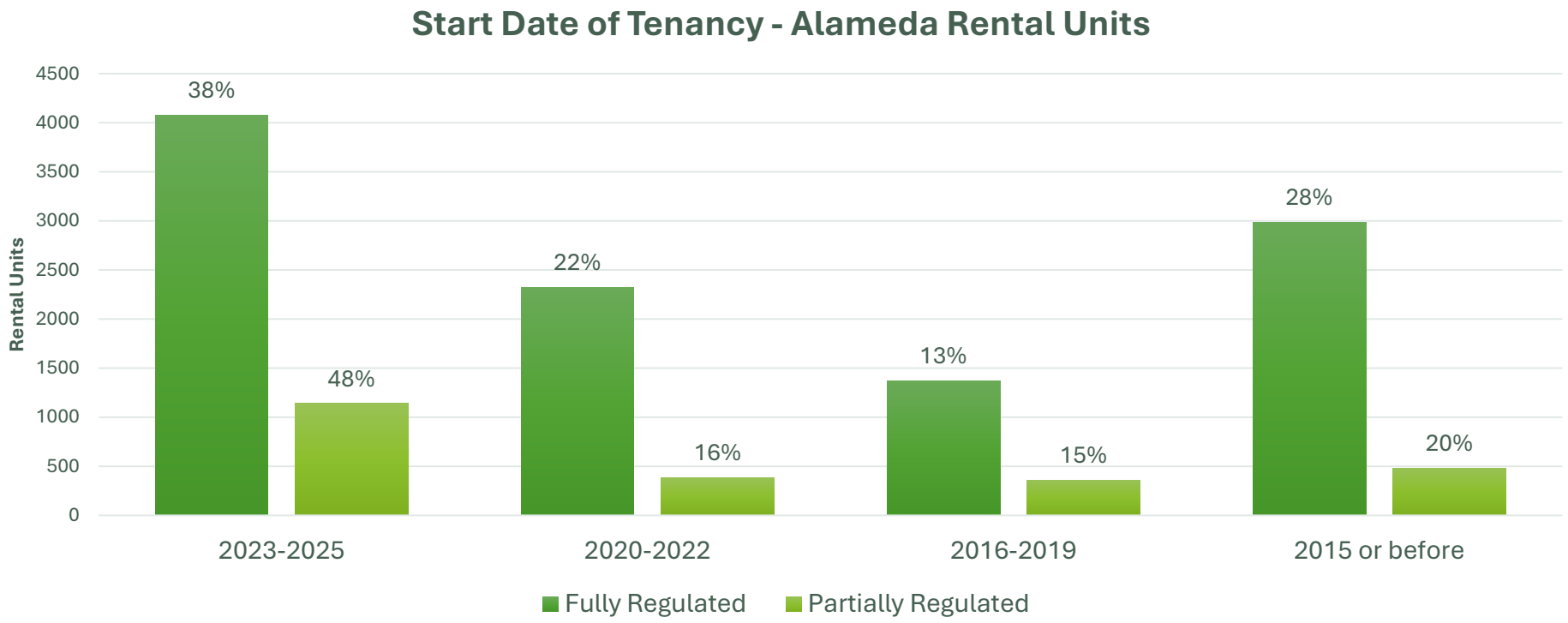




Alameda Rental Market

According to Rent Registry data, as illustrated in the chart below, partially regulated units show more recent turnover than fully regulated. Nearly half (48%) of tenants in partially regulated units began their tenancy since 2022, compared with 38% in fully regulated units. In contrast, fully regulated units have a larger share of long-term households, with 28% of tenants having moved in before 2016, compared to 20% in partially regulated units.





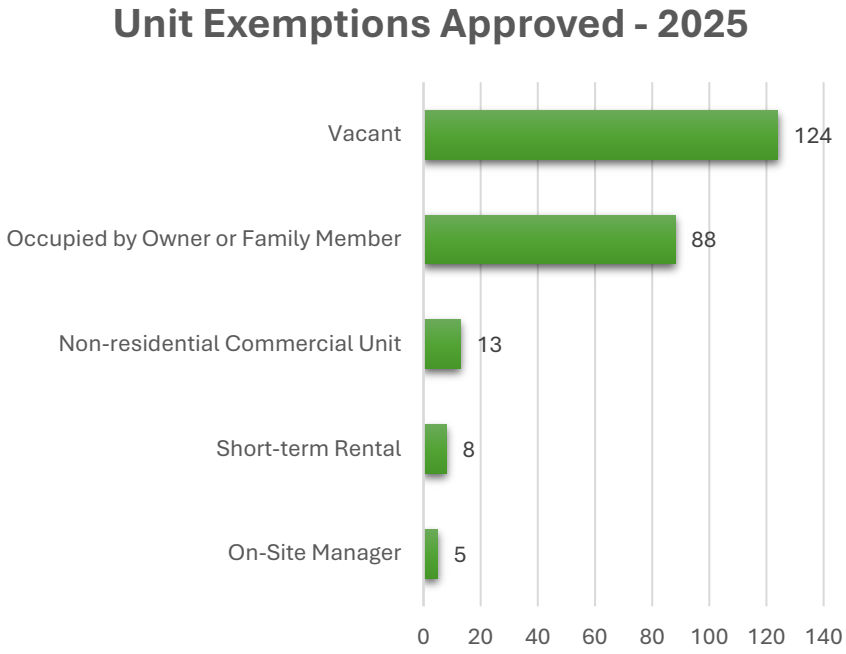
Rental Unit Registration

In January 2020, the online Rent Registry was launched to allow owners and property managers to submit rental unit information to meet the Rent Ordinance's registration requirements. A landlord who has failed to register a rental unit is not eligible to increase the rent and may be subject to an enforcement action, leading to fines and penalties

Tenant Occupied Units (includes Rent-Subsidized Tenants)				
Calendar Year	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**
Single-Family Homes (includes ADU's)	983	1,035	1,026	1,022
Condos/Townhouses	504	510	506	490
Multi-Unit (includes mixed-use buildings)	10,489	11,352	11,582	11,595
Total	**11,976**	**12,897**	**13,114**	**13,114**

The number of tenant-occupied units is affected by landlords registering previously unregistered properties, as well as when units are added or removed from the rental market. By the end of 2025, we estimate more than **97%** of Alameda's rental units have submitted at least initial registration.

In 2025, landlords submitted **283 requests** to exempt an individual rental unit from the annual program fee, of which 238 were approved. A unit may be approved for an exemption because it is occupied by the owner, a family member who pays no rent, or an on-site property manager who pays reduced rent; it is a non-residential, commercial unit; is rented short-term to guests for 30 days or less; or will remain vacant for the entire fiscal year.



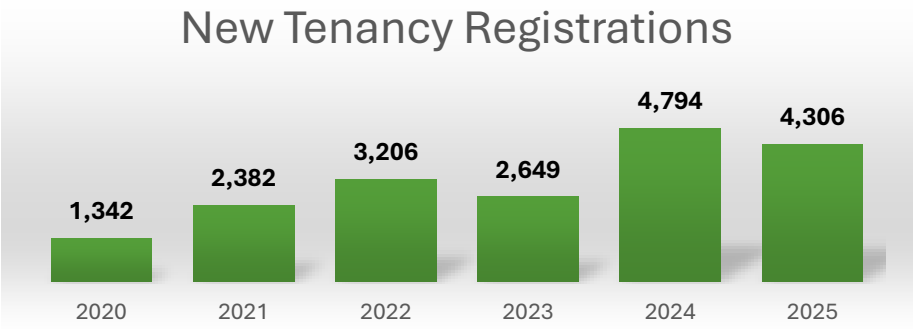
Out of the roughly 16,000 rental units, landlords declared **124 would remain vacant** for a full 12 months. Another 96 submissions in calendar year 2025 declared that an **entire property** was exempt from the Rent Ordinance. Many of these were requests to remove a single-family home from the registry after the owner certified it had not actually been used as a rental.

Annual Registration FY25-26

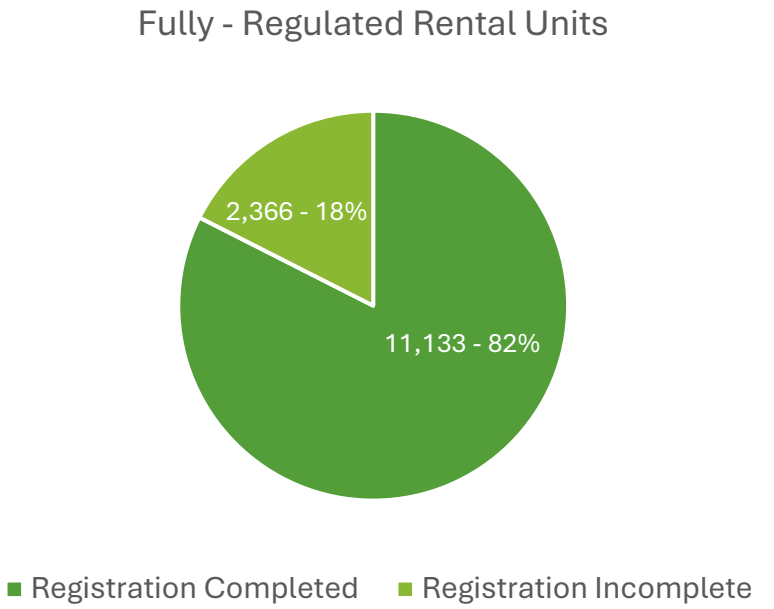
Now in the second full year of the annual registration requirement, the Rent Program continues to implement the expanded registration process for all fully regulated rental units. This marks a continuation of the shift that began last year, when landlords were first required to submit an annual registration statement.

Many landlords had previously expressed confusion over annual information letters on Maximum Allowable Rent (MAR), particularly when restrictions on banked rent increases prevented rents from being raised immediately to the MAR. To improve clarity and support compliance with the Rent Ordinance, the program began requiring updated current rent information, including the date of last increase and updates to previous registration.

With the implementation of an annual registration requirement, the program has seen a significant uptick in new tenancy registrations. Increased reporting and updated tenancy information allow the Rent Program to maintain a more accurate, comprehensive portrait of Alameda's Rental Market



Nearly 1,500 (80%) fully regulated properties submitted registration electronically via the Rent Registry portal, while staff processed more than 300 (20%) registration statements via paper form.



As of January 1, 2026, **83%** of fully regulated properties had submitted registration statements. More than 60% of the 13,499 fully regulated rental units in the city had outdated information (i.e. unregistered tenancies, out-of-date rents) that landlords updated in 2025.

Based on the updated registration information, the Rent Program sent annual informational mailings to 7,512 tenants and 1,545 landlords of fully regulated properties.

Annual Program Fee

Landlords are responsible for an annual program fee charged for each rental unit, with a reduced amount for partially regulated units. The landlord may pass half the fee on to the tenant in 12 equal installments. The City of Alameda covers the entire fee for privately owned units where the rent is subsidized by a voucher program, such as Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8).

With the exception of this waiver for rent-subsidized units, the Rent Program is funded entirely by fee revenue with no additional draw on the City's General Fund. Fees are adjusted annually based on the regional Consumer Price Index, ensuring increases remain tied to real economic conditions rather than discretionary budget decisions. Since this process was implemented in 2022, the average annual increase has been 3.6%. During this time, through careful fiscal management, the Rent Program has managed to increase services—adding staff dedicated to registration support, resolution of invalid rent increases, and expanded mediation services—without requiring any additional fee adjustments.

Regulation Type	Per-Unit Fee FY2025-26
Fully Regulated Units	$170
Partially Regulated Units	$114
Rent-Subsidized Units	$0

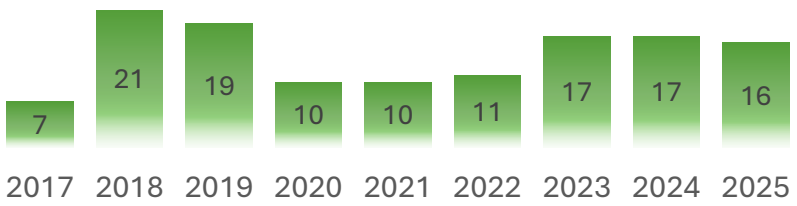


Public Records Requests

Landlords, tenants, and members of the public may request non-exempt rent registry information under the California Public Records Act. Per State law, tenant names and contact information are considered "confidential" and are exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

In 2025, the Rent Program received and responded to 16 requests for public records.

PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS BY YEAR



Community Engagement

Informational Workshops

The Rent Program hosts two monthly general informational workshops for both landlords and tenants: one each month held in-person at City Hall West in the afternoons and one in the evenings remotely via Zoom. A total of 24 workshops were hosted in calendar year 2025 with 38 attendees.

Fair Housing Conference

In April 2025 the Alameda City Attorney's Office hosted its fifth annual Fair Housing Conference at City Hall. Eighty guests attended the event. Topics included the City Attorney's Office Mediation Program, fair housing laws, immigrant tenant protections, illegal retaliation, utilities billing, and evictions. Speakers included representatives of the Alameda County District Attorney's Office, ACCE, Bay Area Legal Aid, ECHO Fair Housing and staff from the City of Alameda.





Rent Registry User Guide

To further support landlords in navigating the Rent Registry, in 2024 program staff launched a dedicated YouTube channel featuring a series of step-by-step video tutorials. These videos provide guidance on key processes, including submission of annual registration, making program fee payments, registering new tenancies, requesting exemptions, filing rent increases, managing multiple properties within the portal, and updating contact information. The YouTube channel garnered 231 views in 2025.

https://www.youtube.com/@AlamedaRentProgram

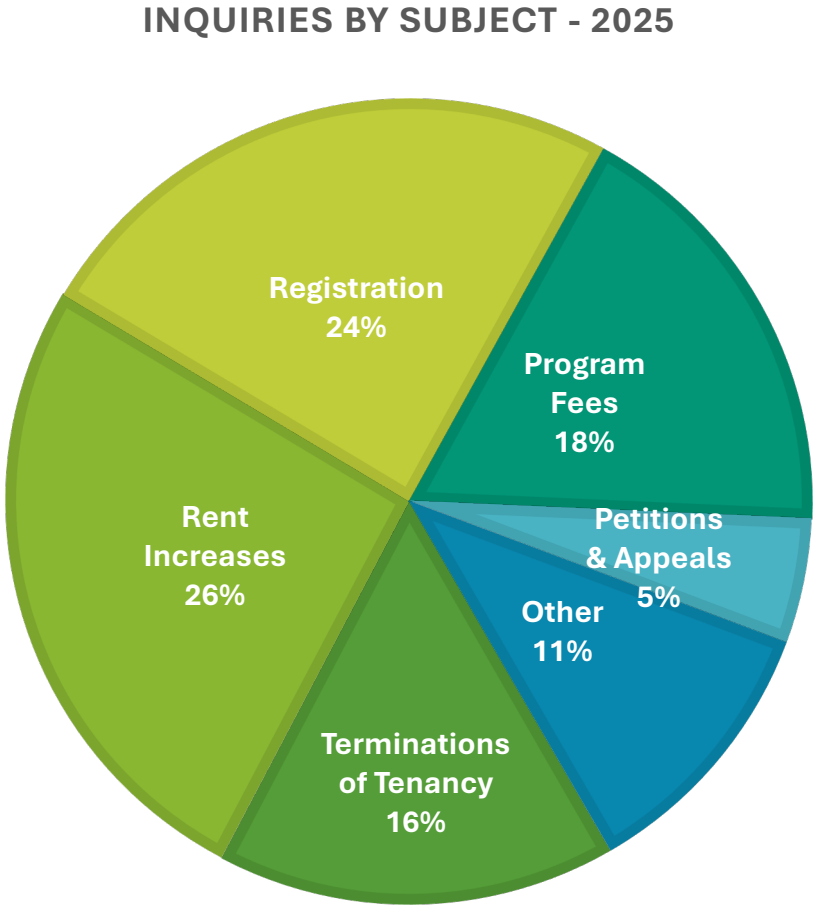
Community Engagement

Together, City Attorney's Office staff from the Rent Program and Prosecution and Public Rights Unit responded to **10,403 phone calls, emails, and walk-in inquiries** from the public about housing rights and rental regulations over the course of 2025.

The Rent Program website logged a program record **53,851 total sessions** in 2025.



Rent Program staff logs all correspondence received from landlords, tenants, and other stakeholders, categorizing each inquiry by topic. This tracking process enables staff to analyze trends in inquiries, such as questions related to registration, program fees, rent increases, and termination of tenancy. The chart below provides a breakdown of inquiries by type, highlighting the most common topics addressed by staff.



Rent Increase Regulations

Annual General Adjustment

Fully Regulated units are subject to a cap on the annual amount of rent increase. Each year, the rent may only increase by the Annual General Adjustment (AGA), calculated at 70% of the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index for the 12-month period ending April of each year; provided, however, in no event will the Annual General Adjustment be more than 5% nor less than 1%.

Year	AGA	Effective Dates
2025	1.0%	9/1/2025 – 8/31/2026
2024	2.7%	9/1/2024 – 8/31/2025
2023	2.9%	9/1/2023 – 8/31/2024
2022	3.5%	9/1/2022 – 8/31/2023
2021	2.7%	9/1/2021 – 8/31/2022
2020	1.0%	9/1/2020 – 8/31/2021
2019	2.8%	9/1/2019 – 8/31/2020

A landlord may increase rent by the AGA only if the landlord has complied with all provisions of the Rent Ordinance, including payment of all program fees owed for the property and registration of all rental units. In 2025, Landlords reported **4,198** cases of rent increased by the AGA or less.



Annual Notification for Regulated Rental Units

In October 2025, the Rent Program distributed notifications to landlords and tenants of fully regulated rental units in the City of Alameda, with information gathered by the annual registration requirement. These letters provide the Apparent Lawful Rent Ceiling, which reflects the current rent with an AGA increase, based on the last reported current rent and date of increase. Additionally, landlords and tenants were informed of the maximum allowable banked rent increase, if eligible.

A total **7,512** tenants received individual letters outlining their unit's rent ceiling, while **1,545** landlords were notified of rent ceilings for all registered tenant-occupied units at their properties.

Rent Increase Regulations

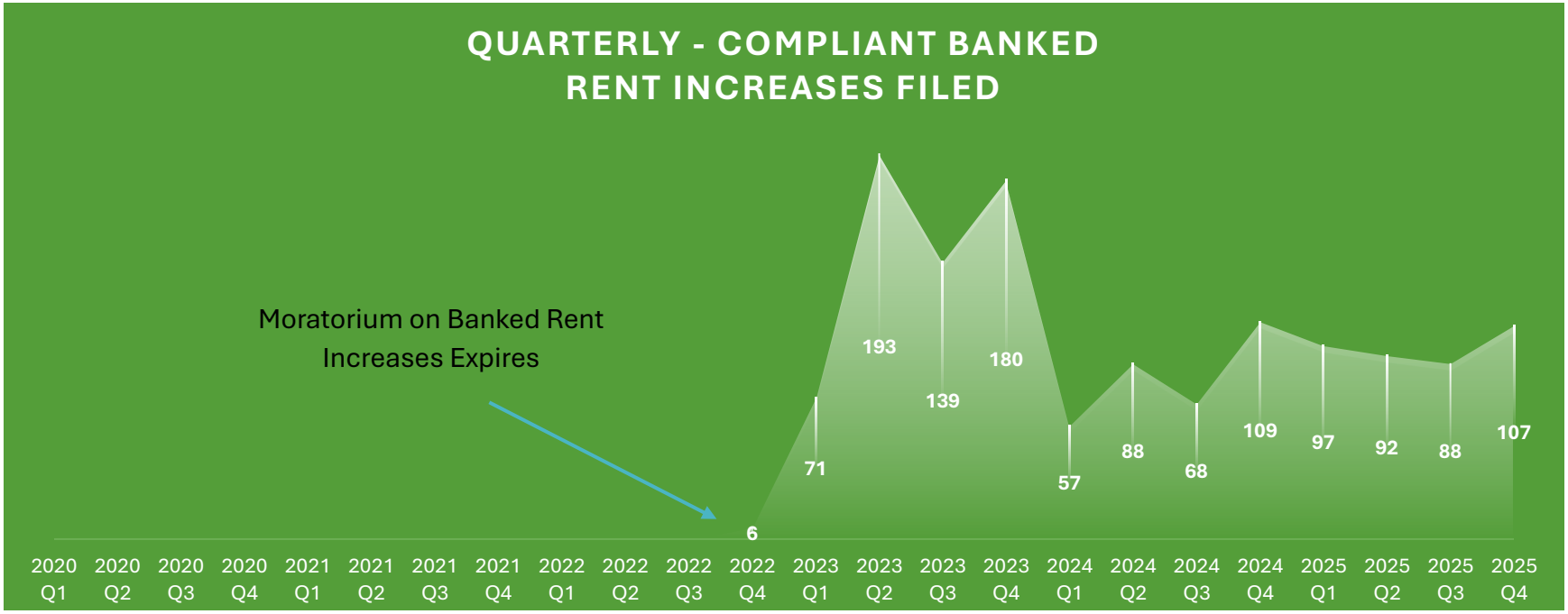
"Banked" Rent Increases

The ordinance allows landlords who choose not to raise the rent for a full 12 months or choose to raise the rent by less than the full AGA, to "bank" those unused amounts. These unused portions can be carried over and added to a subsequent year's AGA; however, such increases are subject to numerous restrictions.

In 2025, 457 banked rent increases were submitted. Of those, 73 were denied for non-compliance, and 384 were approved. 48 of the approved units received their 2nd banked rent increase. The registry tracks this because landlords are limited to three banked rent increases per tenancy.

Common reasons staff denies a submission for non-compliance may include:

- Total increase exceeds the **AGA + 3%**
- A banked increase imposed **within 24 months** of a prior banked increase
- Banked AGA applied after a **property sale**
- Failure to provide **required forms** to tenants
- Failure to file the rent increase notice and proof of service with the Rent Program **within 3 days**



Petitions & Hearings

A landlords or tenant may file a petition for a rent-adjustment hearing or to appeal a determination by the Rent Program Administrator, or to challenge the issuance of an administrative citation. Petitions and appeals are heard by hearing officers who issue binding decisions, subject to judicial review. The petitioning party always has the burden of proof.

Landlord Petitions

A landlord may petition for an upward adjustment to the Maximum Allowable Rent if the landlord believes an increase is necessary to provide a fair rate of return.

Tenant Petitions

A tenant may request a reduction in the rent if they can show:

- There has been a reduction in housing services, living space, or amenities, such as loss of parking or the availability of laundry facilities on site.
- There has been a substantial deterioration of the rental unit.
- The landlord has failed to comply with housing, health, and safety codes or the City's rent regulations.

Joint Hearings

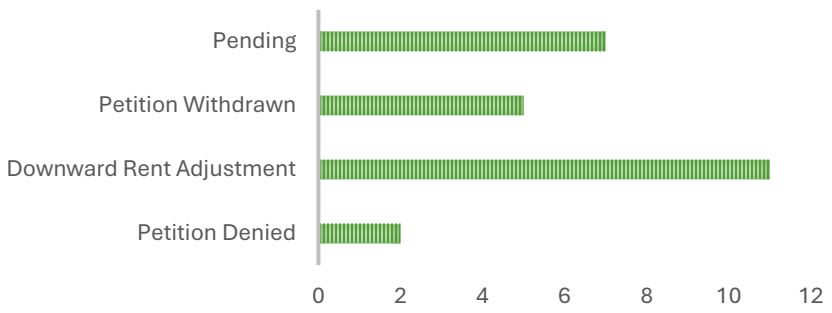
A joint hearing may be conducted in a consolidated proceeding in which multiple tenants at the same property filed petitions on uniform grounds.

2025 Petition Submissions

Landlord Petitions - requesting an upward rent adjustment	0
Tenant Petitions - requesting a downward rent adjustment	25
Appeals of rent program determinations or administrative citations	5
TOTAL:	30

Downward Rent Adjustments

Of the 25 tenant petitions filed in 2025, hearing officers determined that a rent adjustment was warranted in 11 cases, ordering a total of $76,511.42 in retroactive reimbursements to tenants – an average of $6,956 per case. Of the remaining 14, two were denied by hearing officers for failing to satisfy the grounds for reduction, five were withdrawn, and seven are still pending documentation completion by the petitioner.



Staff Review of Rents

Rent Program staff conduct reviews of registration information and rent increase notices based on requests from tenants and landlords or when the registration process indicates a violation may have occurred. Staff works with landlords to correct registration errors. When a rent violation is identified, staff directs the landlord to reset the rent and refund any overpayment to the tenant. If the tenant received an invalid notice that is not yet effective, staff directs the landlord to rescind the notice.

$502,863
Total paid to tenants owed a refund after a rent violation

212
Tenants recieved refunds

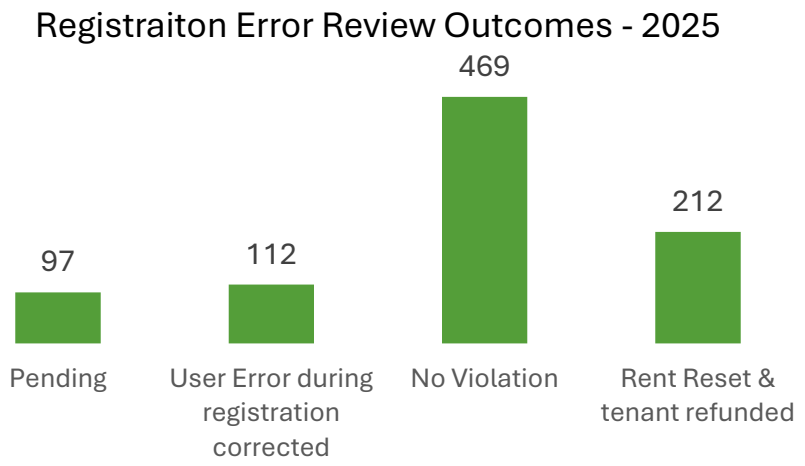
$2,372
Average refund

Registration Errors and Invalid Rent Increases

During calendar year 2025, program staff reviewed 890 cases in which registration information submitted by the landlord indicated at least one of the following:

- A rent increase exceeding the Annual General Adjustment (AGA)
- Reported current rent exceeds the Maximum Allowable Rent (MAR)
- A rent increase within one year of move-in
- A rent increase with an effective date after April 22, 2020, and before June 1, 2022, in violation of the COVID-19 urgency ordinance
- Reported base rent exceeding the current rent

Cases that remained open at the end of 2025 will be marked for enforcement action if staff have confirmed a violation and the landlord fails to address the error.

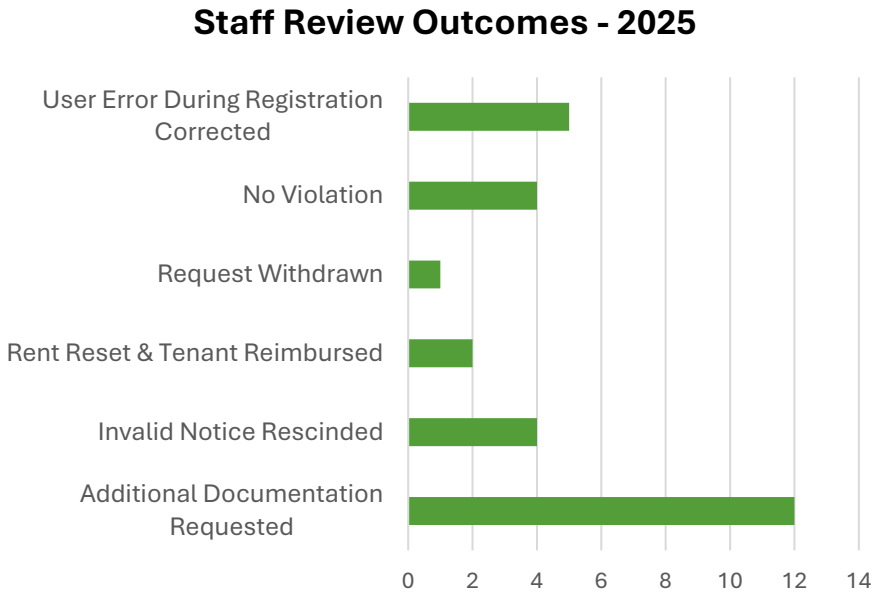


Staff Review of Rents

Tenants may request that Rent Program staff review previous or pending rent increases to determine if they complied with the City's regulations. Tenants may also contest the base rent (and/or the housing services included with the base rent) that the landlord reported when registering the unit. In addition, landlords or tenants may request a review of the Rent Program's calculation of the Maximum Allowable Rent for a unit.



Staff Review Submissions 2025	
Landlord-Initiated Requests	0
Tenant-Initiated Requests	28
Total:	**28**



Terminations of Tenancy

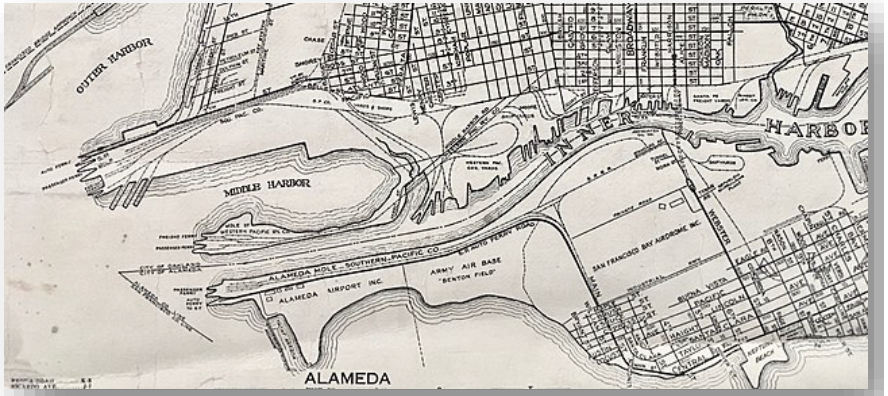
The Rent Ordinance prevents landlords from terminating a tenancy except for certain allowable grounds:

For Cause Grounds
No relocation payment is required, and no reporting is required with the Rent Program

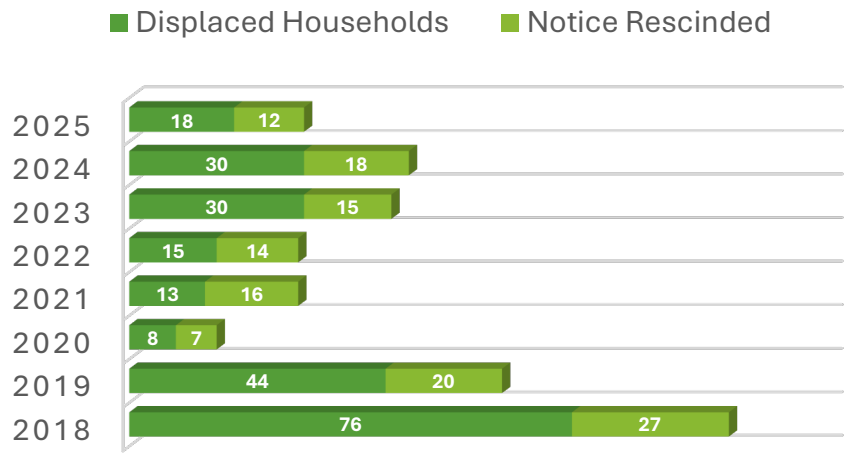
- Non-payment of Rent
- Breach of the lease
- Failure to give access
- Nuisance

No Fault Grounds
Relocation payment is required, and restrictions are placed on the rent and/or occupancy/use of the rental unit

- Owner Move-In
- Permanent withdrawal from the rental market
- Demolition
- Compliance with a government order



TERMINATION OF TENANCY SUBMISSIONS BY YEAR

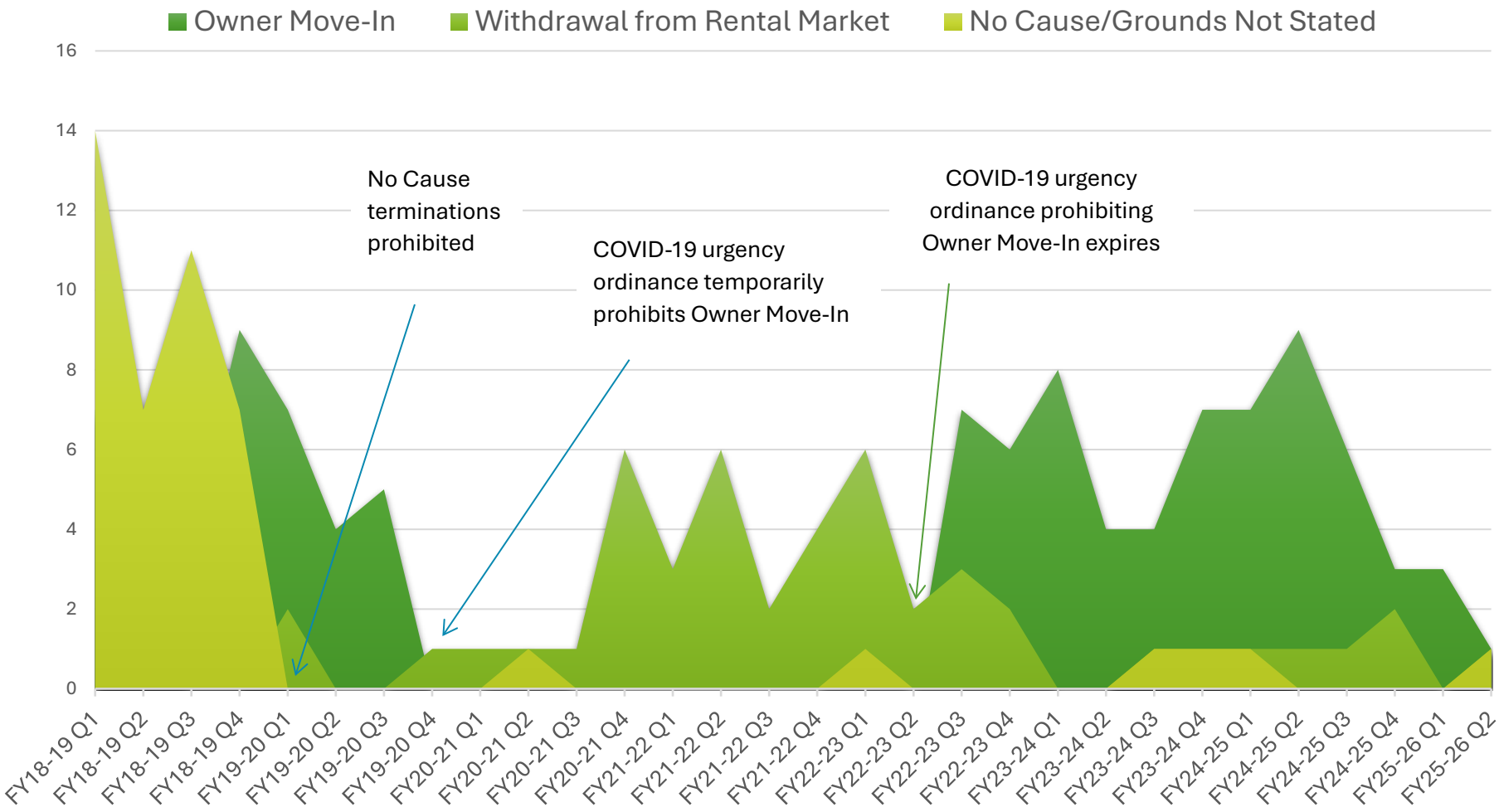


The Rent Program received a total of 30 submissions in 2025 for no-fault terminations of tenancy. Of these, 12 notices were rescinded, primarily due to deficiencies in the notice. The remaining 18 submissions represent a 76 percent reduction in displaced households from the peak in 2018, prior to passage of a "just cause" ordinance in June 2019 that removed "No Cause" as one of the allowable no-fault grounds.

During most of 2020, 2021, and 2022, landlords were prevented from taking action to terminate tenancy based on Owner Move-In due to tenant protections adopted by City Council in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The end of the Declaration of Local Emergency meant that landlords could resume serving notice of an Owner Move-In as of November 18, 2022.

Landlords terminated 13 tenancies based on Owner Move-In in 2025, and **62** have been filed since the end of the moratorium.

Quartely No-Fault Terminations of Tenancy FY18-19 to FY25-26



Terminations of Tenancy

Relocation Payments

Tenants are owed a relocation assistance payment when they are not at-fault for the termination of tenancy.

Payment amounts were established by City Council resolution and based on two months' rent at the federal government's estimate of the regional Fair Market Rent for a unit with the same number of bedrooms, as well as estimates of other costs displaced tenants may face such as moving expenses and taxes. In addition, certain tenant households are entitled to a larger payment, namely those that have a tenant who a) is a senior adult, b) is a person with a disability, or c) has at least one child under the age of 18 residing in the household.

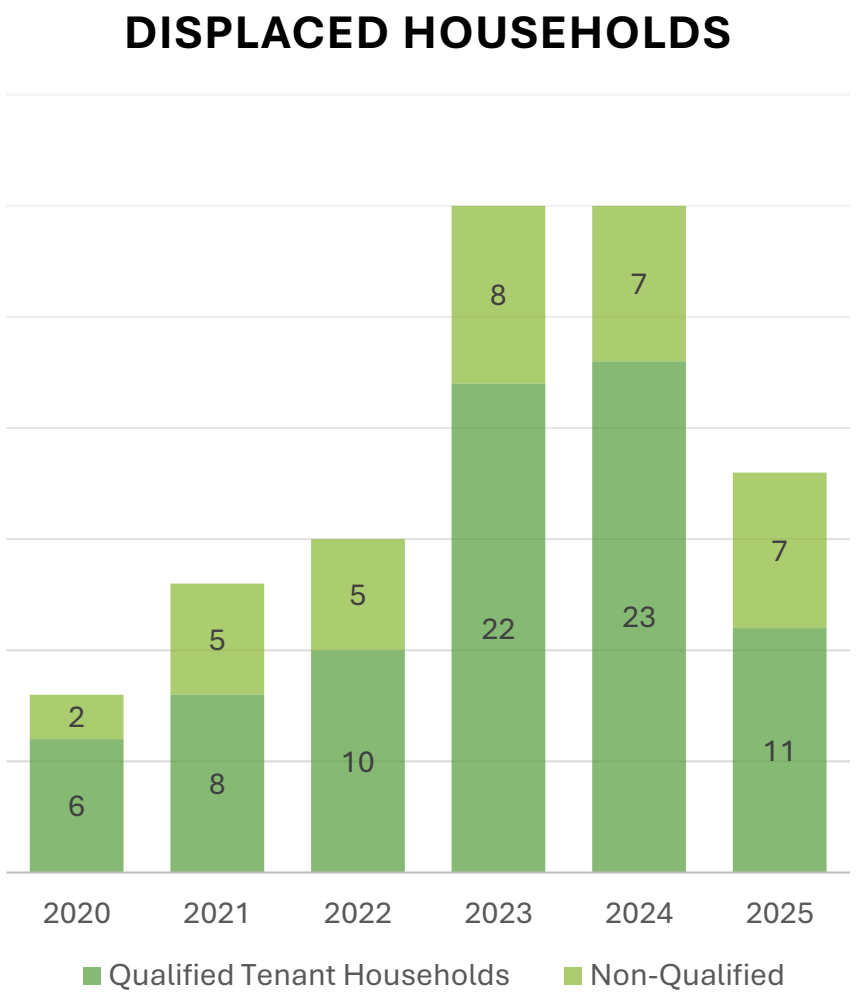
By City Council resolution, relocation payment amounts are updated annually based on a component of the Consumer Price Index. Amounts effective as of July 1, 2025:

Permanent Relocation Payment Schedule

Rental Units	Base Amount	Qualified Tenant Household Amount
Studio	$6,604	$8,534
1 Bedroom	$7,417	$9,756
2 Bedrooms	$8,568	$11,448
3 Bedrooms	$10,759	$14,767
4+ Bedrooms	$12,572	$17,489

Qualified Tenant Households

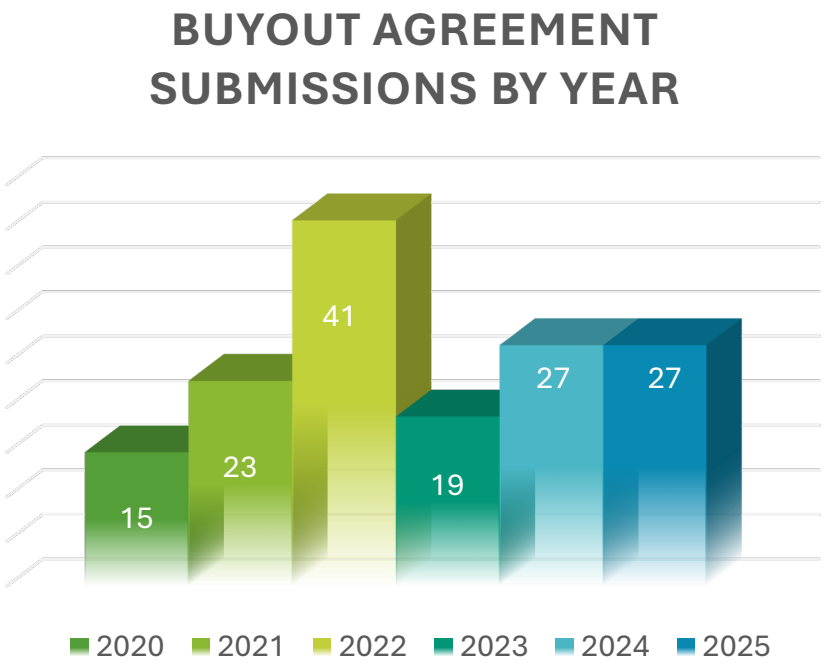
A majority of households who have to relocate due to a "no fault" termination of tenancy met these qualifications. In 2025, **63% of displaced tenant households** included at least one member who was a senior, a child, or a person with a disability.

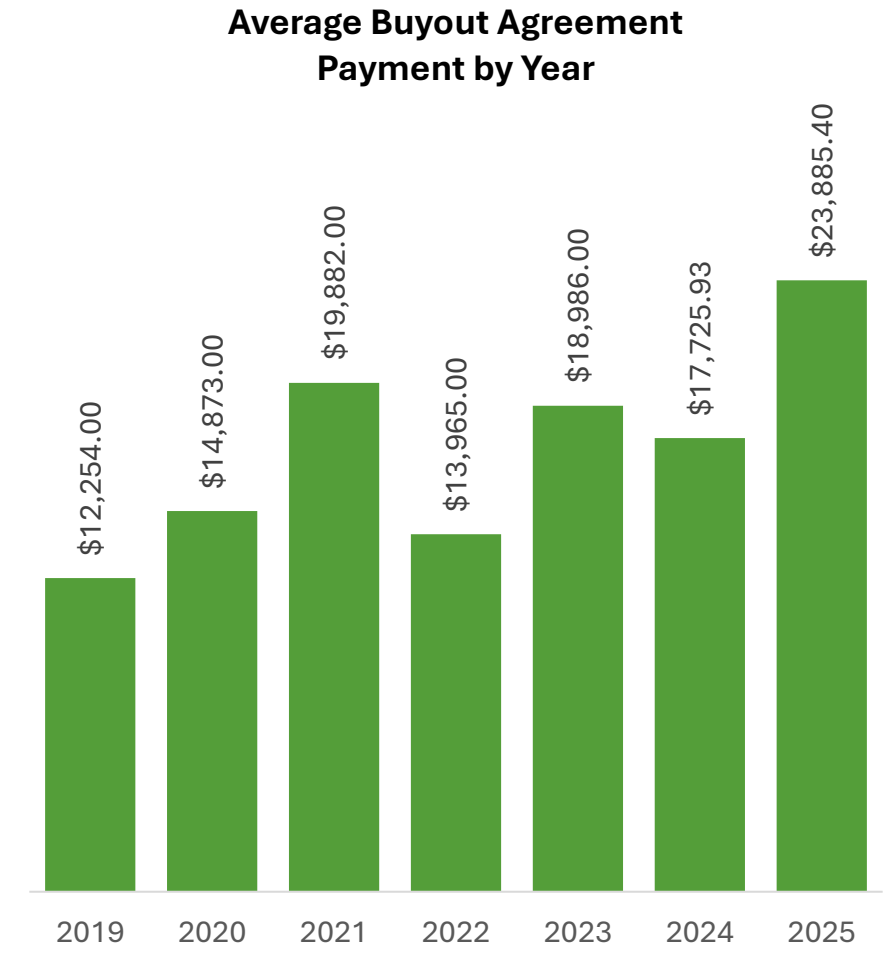


Buyout Agreements

A buyout agreement is a written agreement between a landlord and a tenant, by which a tenant agrees to vacate a rental unit, usually in return for money. The Rent Ordinance affords certain protections to tenants who are offered buyout agreements, including the ability to rescind an agreement up to 30 days after signing.

Buyout agreements must be filed with the Rent Program. Staff review submissions to ensure that tenants have been advised of their rights. An agreement that does not satisfy all requirements of the Rent Ordinance is not valid, and the tenant may rescind an invalid agreement at any time; however, the parties may still decide to proceed with the agreement.





The average payment for the 27 submissions in 2025 was $23,885.40. For comparison's sake, this amount is **$14,450 more than the average relocation payment** required by the Rent Ordinance if those same tenants had instead been served with a no-fault termination of tenancy *(see pg. 25-27)*.

Monitoring of Units

Following No Fault Terminations of Tenancy

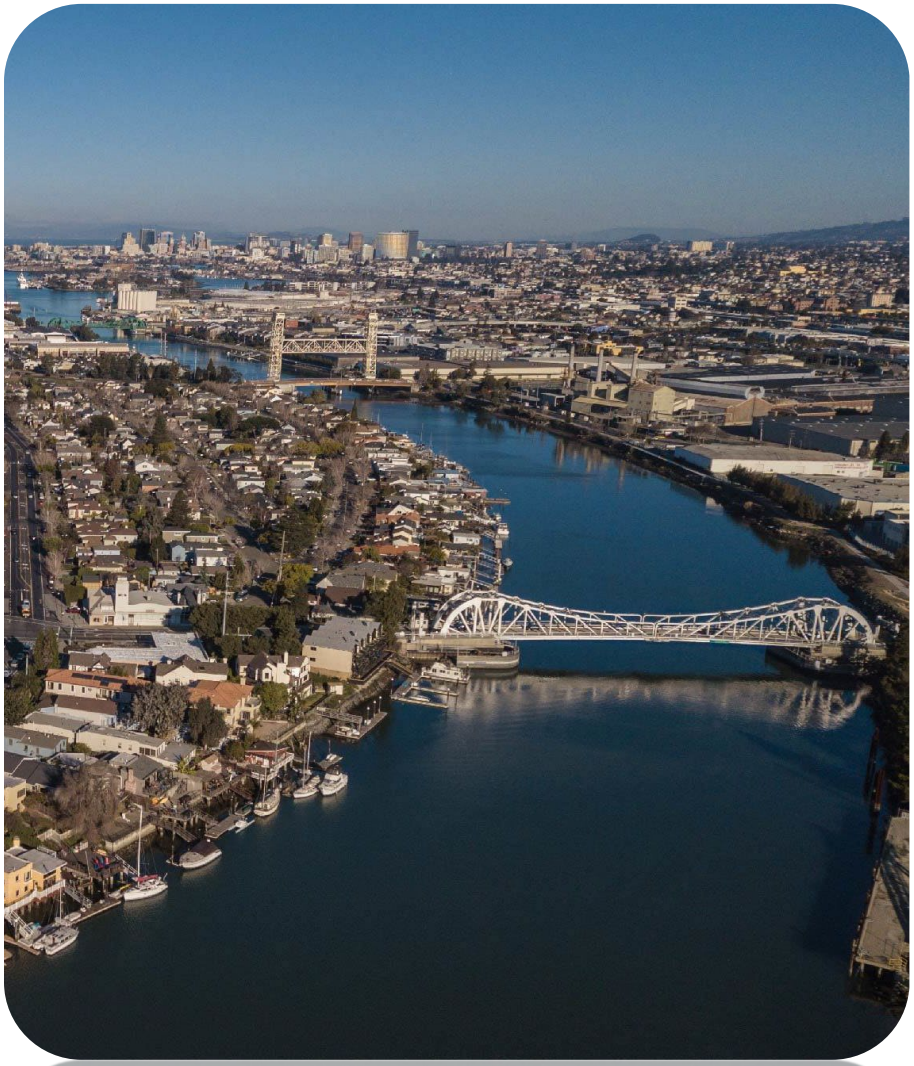
Certain restrictions are imposed on landlords following a "no fault" terminations of tenancy. These restrictions apply regardless of a change in ownership. On an annual basis, staff initiate monitoring of the unit to verify compliance with the restrictions, including:

- The residency requirements are met following terminations based on owner move-in
- That the unit is not being rented following withdrawal of the unit from the rental market
- When a tenant finds new housing based on an invalid notice that does not state grounds for termination, the rent for a new tenant is not more than 5% of the prior rent.

The majority of units that program staff monitored in 2025 continue to have restrictions in place and will undergo new rounds of monitoring in 2026.

Units Monitored in 2025

	Grounds not Stated	Owner Move-In	Withdrawal from the Rental Market	TOTAL
Met Compliance	0	0	4	4
Monitoring Ongoing	0	34	9	43
TOTAL:	**0**	**34**	**13**	**47**



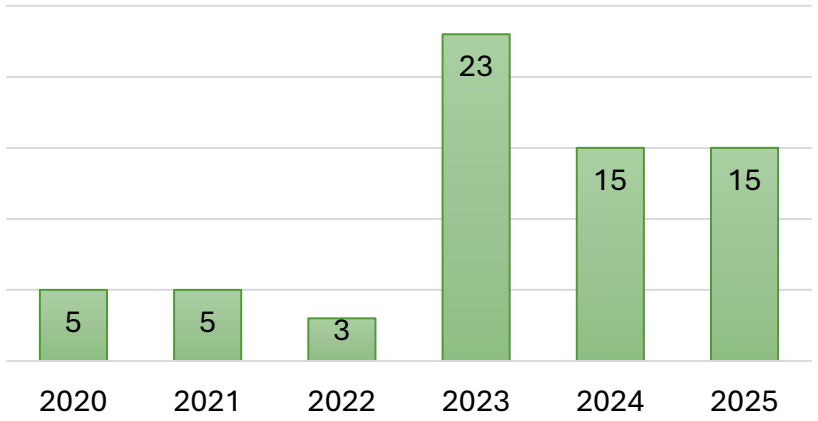
Temporary Relocations

Temporary relocation payments are owed when the tenant has temporarily vacated the rental unit (a) in compliance with a governmental agency's order to vacate; (b) due to health or safety conditions later verified by a governmental agency; or (c) as part of an approved Capital Improvement Plan.

For the first 60 days after the tenant vacates the rental unit, the landlord must make payments based on per diem rates set by the City Council to reflect local lodging, meal, laundry, and pet boarding expenses. A tenant continues to pay rent to the landlord while receiving these payments. Should repairs take longer than 60 days, a different, monthly payment standard applies. These payments continue until the tenant either re-occupies the rental unit or finds alternative, permanent housing. Those who elect to find new housing are also owed a permanent relocation payment in the amount outlined in the table on page 24.

Temporary Relocation Payment Schedule		
Per Diem Description	Amount	Term(s)
Hotel or Motel	$251	Per day per household
Meal Expenses	$73	Per day per person
Laundry	$1	Per day per household
Pets: Dog	$74	Per day per animal
Pets: Cat	$40	Per day per animal

Households Receiving Temporary Relocation Paymemts



In 2025, the Rent Program oversaw temporary relocation payments owed to 15 tenant households that were displaced due to governmental orders to vacate and/or health and safety conditions.

Of the 15 cases, seven households found alternative permanent housing, four accepted comparable vacant units, and three households re-occupied their units after repairs were completed. Tenants received total payments ranging from $1,615 to $24,926.

Temporary Relocation Tenant Assistance Program

In 2025, the program provided emergency temporary relocation assistance to **seven tenants**, disbursing a total of **$15,225**. This financial support helped tenants secure temporary housing during their displacement, reinforcing the City's commitment to housing stability and tenant protections. Landlords must reimburse the City for these payments made on their behalf.

Housing Education & Mediation

At the direction of City Council in November 2021, the City Attorney's Office established a mediation program to assist both landlords and tenants with housing needs. The Prosecution and Public Rights Unit (PPRU) works to resolve consumer protection, labor, and fair housing issues through education, mediation, and public outreach. In coordination with Rent Program staff, the Prosecution Unit responds to direct contact it receives related to housing matters. In most cases, issues can be resolved with phone calls and referrals. When appropriate, the Unit enforces these laws to protect the public from unlawful practices.

Formal written complaints recieved

- Housing: 58
- Consumer: 34

Case Resolutions

- Housing: 60
- Consumer: 34

Case Highlights – Litigation

- The Public Rights Unit filed a civil enforcement lawsuit against a property owner who unlawfully harassed tenants, ultimately driving them out of their unit. The owner has also engaged in repeated frivolous legal actions against these tenants and others, prompting the need for formal intervention.

- PPRU initiated a court action to enforce relocation benefit requirements for tenants displaced after a house fire. The lawsuit seeks to ensure that the property owner fulfills all obligations under relocation assistance laws. This case is currently pending before the court.

- PPRU also filed suit against a chronically problematic landlord for failing to pay a $20,000 back-rent award and for ongoing harassment of tenants. A tentative settlement is now in progress, which would secure full payment of the amounts owed to both the tenants and the Rent Program.

Housing Education & Mediation

Case Highlights – Mediation

As departments within the City Attorney's Office, the Rent Program and Prosecution and Public Rights Unit (PPRU) work in close collaboration to educate the public about housing laws and resolve specific cases. When a landlord-tenant dispute falls outside the Rent Ordinance's regulations, it may be a candidate for mediation through PPRU's program. The following are examples of cases where mediation proved successful in 2025:

- The Program conducted a detailed RUBS (Ratio Utility Billing System) investigation at a large multi-unit property. Staff worked closely with both management and tenants to verify billing practices, identify potential violations, and ensure that all utility charges align with legal requirements. The goal is to bring the property owner into full compliance with applicable housing and consumer laws.

- The City Attorney's Office received complaints from former tenants at a large apartment complex regarding unreturned security deposits and improper damage charges. These issues led to collection actions and credit impacts for multiple tenants. Further investigation revealed that a prior management company had caused the problems. Through negotiations with the owners' attorneys, the Program secured a settlement in which all outstanding debts were forgiven, and pending credit claims were withdrawn.



Capital Improvement Plans

The Rent Program in 2024 implemented the first major update to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Policy since it was implemented in 2016. The purpose of the policy is to maintain the quality of the City's rental housing stock, ensure that landlords receive a just and reasonable return on their capital expenditures, and limit the displacement of tenants. By filing an application, landlords may recover the cost of eligible improvements over time by passing them on to the tenants in the form of a pass through.



Submissions

The Rent Program saw a notable increase in interest in the CIP program following implementation of the new policy. Sixteen CIP applications have been submitted since the new policy went into effect in 2024, while under the previous policy a total of only 14 were submitted in eight years. **Five of the seven applications submitted in 2025 received approval** for a total of **$264,829 in qualifying work** at properties ranging in size from three to nine units. Submitted projects included, but were not limited to, new roofs, exterior painting and siding, substantial electrical and plumbing upgrades, and the installation of fire & earthquake safety systems. Tenants benefitting from these improvements received monthly passthroughs of no more than 5% of their rent.

Ordinance 3361

In accordance with Ordinance 3361 adopted by City Council in December 2023, the new CIP Policy's highlights include:

- Projects must meet minimum cost thresholds of at least $10,000 total and $1,000 per unit.
- Properties with 25 or more rental units are not eligible for a CIP but may include capital improvement expenses in a Fair Return Petition.
- Properties with five to 24 units may recover only a percentage of the total cost of improvements other than seismic retrofitting and lead remediation.
- The maximum monthly CIP pass through amount is capped at no more than 5% of a tenant's current rent at the time of approval.
- When combined with other lawful rent increases permitted by the Rent Ordinance, the CIP pass through cannot result in a total increase of more than 8%.
- A low-income hardship exemption is available for qualifying tenants.
- If any tenants must be displaced, even temporarily, the landlord must (i) submit a plan to the Rent Program for approval prior to work commencing and (ii) make temporary relocation payments to the tenant.
- Landlords may no longer permanently terminate a tenancy in conjunction with a CIP

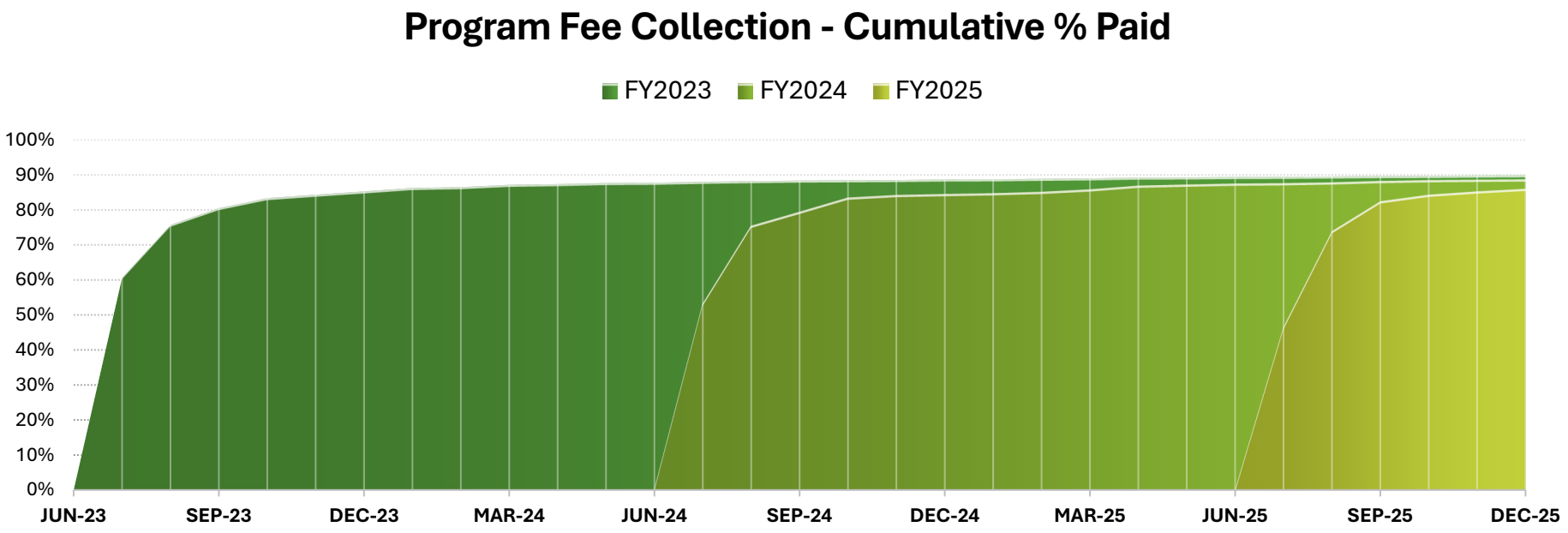
Enforcement for Violations

Rent Program operational staff works closely with city attorneys in every step of the education and enforcement process. When program staff determines there has been a violation of the Rent Ordinance, they notify the violator and provide information on the necessary steps for redress. When program staff is unable to resolve the issue with the violator, they work in collaboration with city attorneys to take appropriate enforcement action.

Failure to Pay Program Fees

Generally, by the close of each fiscal year, fees have been collected for more than 90% of rental properties, as the chart below illustrates.

For the remaining 10%, the Rent Program has focused enforcement efforts on a handful of landlords with the largest unpaid balances, ranging from $1,600 to $35,000, who owe multiple years' fees for multiple rental properties. To date, almost $50,000 has been collected through outreach to these landlords. When necessary, the Rent Program issues administrative citations with substantial fines to nonresponsive landlords and, in one case, has worked with the Prosecution and Public Rights Unit to file a civil action. That case remains pending. For landlords with smaller unpaid balances, the Rent Program is working with the City's Finance Department to establish a collections process. No landlord may increase the rent for a unit while the property's fees remain unpaid.



Enforcement for Violations

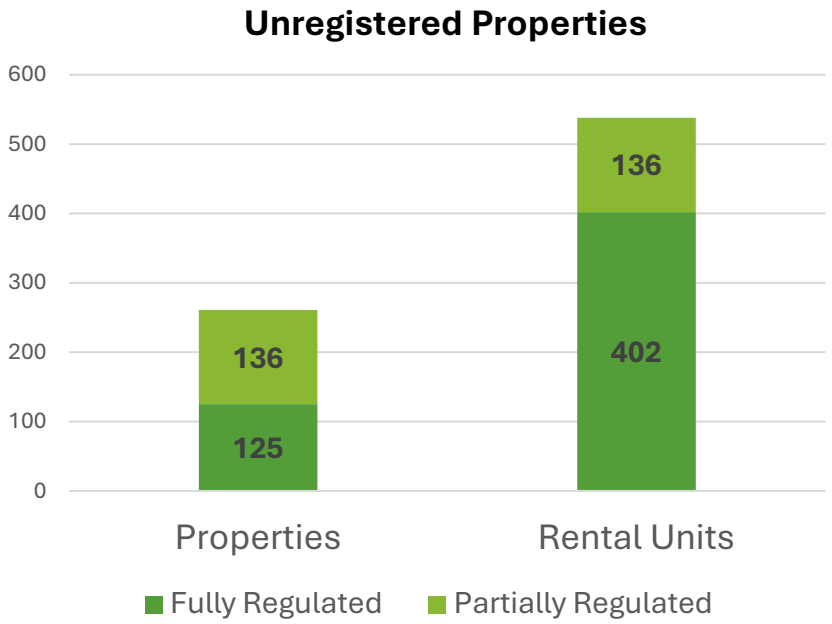
Failure to Submit Initial Registration

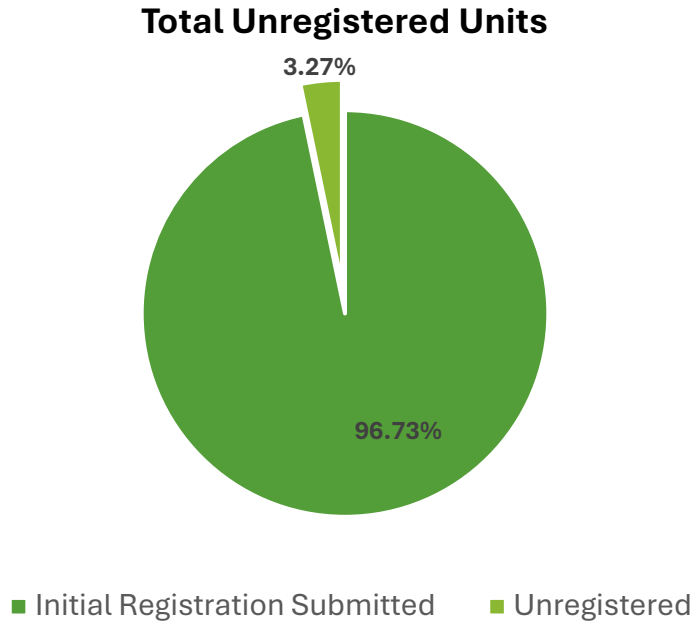
Since the implementation of the annual registration requirement in 2024, the number of unregistered rental units has declined steadily – from an estimated 755 units in 2023 to 651 in 2024, and 538 as of December 2025. This represents a 29% reduction over two years, driven by ongoing staff outreach and the processing of 46 late registration submissions in 2025 alone.

As of year-end, 261 properties accounting for an estimated 538 rental units had not yet submitted an initial registration. Of these, 125 are fully regulated properties (comprising 402 rental units) and 136 are partially regulated properties (comprising 136 rental units). Many of the partially regulated properties are single-family homes identified as potential rentals (based on owner mailing address) that may not, in fact, be actively rented — and whose owners have not yet submitted an exemption form.

Staff continues to work proactively with landlords to achieve full registration compliance.







Enforcement for Violations

Non-Compliance Notices

In February 2025, 748 units were flagged for potential invalid rent increases based on registration data. In March 2025, the Rent Program issued letters to both landlords and tenants notifying them of potential violations of the Rent Ordinance's limits on rent increases. These letters warned landlords of the possibility of fines and penalties for failure to address the violations.

In September 2025, the Rent Program issued 1,245 Non-Compliance Notices for properties that failed to submit an annual registration statement and/or failed to submit payment of program fees.

Administrative Citations

The Rent Ordinance provides that the City may issue administrative citations and fines to any landlord or the landlord's agent for violations of the Rent Ordinance. In 2025, the Rent Program issued citations to eight individuals, representing 126 separate violations across 24 rental properties, resulting in a total of $59,000 in fines.



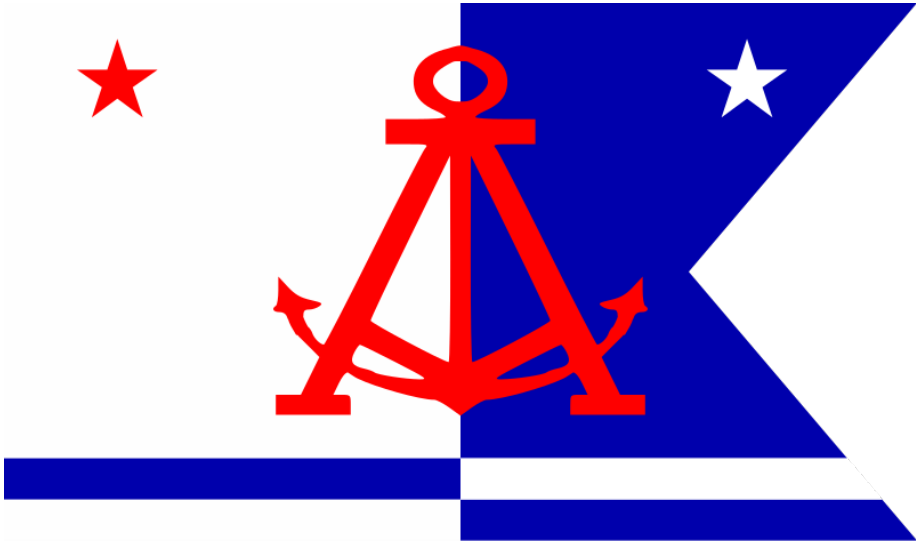
Summary of Citations Issued

- **53 counts** – Failure to register rental units and failure to pay program fees. Multiple rounds of citations issued. Total fines: $39,750.
- **23 counts** – Failure to register and non-payment of program fees. Total fines: $5,750.
- **20 counts** – Failure to register and non-payment of program fees. Total fines: $5,000.
- **16 counts** – Failure to register and non-payment of program fees. Total fines: $4,000.
- **8 counts** – Failure to make required temporary relocation payments and failure to reimburse the Temporary Tenant Relocation Assistance Fund. Landlord and master tenant cited. Total fines: $2,000.
- **5 counts** – Invalid rent increases, unpaid program fees, and failure to comply with AB1482 state rent control caps. Multiple rounds of citations issued. Total fines: $3,250.
- **1 count** – Failure to make Rent Differential Payments to a tenant displaced for more than 60 days due to habitability issues. Total fines: $250.

Looking Forward

Rent Program priorities and goals for 2026:

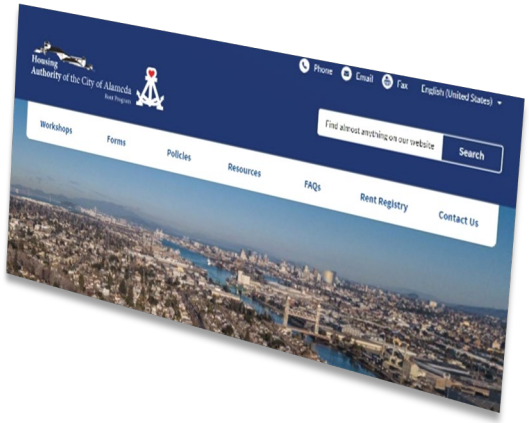
- **Propose Rent Ordinance Amendments** – Recommend updates to City Council to enhance administration of the program, provide clearer direction to tenants and landlords, and clarify policy.
- **RUBS Policy** – Conduct stakeholder outreach and research potential policy changes in neighboring jurisdiction to address tenant complains and transparency concerns regarding third-party utility billing.
- **Enforce Compliance Through Citations and Fines** – Continue to issue administrative citations and fines to property owners who have failed to register units, pay required fees, and/or address invalid rent increases across multiple properties.
- **Rent Registry Search Tool** – Initiate discussions with vendor about possibility of developing a public-facing search function that enables landlords and tenants to verify whether a rental property is registered, and fees have been paid.
- **Expand Rent Program Digital Resources** – Enhance the Rent Program YouTube page by adding more instructional videos and workshop recordings to improve public access to program information.
- **Transition to a City Department Webpage** – Convert the Rent Program website into a City Department page for better integration with other municipal services and improved accessibility.
- **Housing Education Clinic Program** – Launching a new clinic program designed to provide the public with accessible, direct guidance from staff on rent regulation, housing rights, and legal resources.



Where to Find More Info

Online Resources:

www.alamedarentprogram.org



Informational Workshops

To register for an upcoming workshop or view video of a previously recorded workshop, visit:

www.alamedarentprogram.org/Workshops-Clinics



Contact Us

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