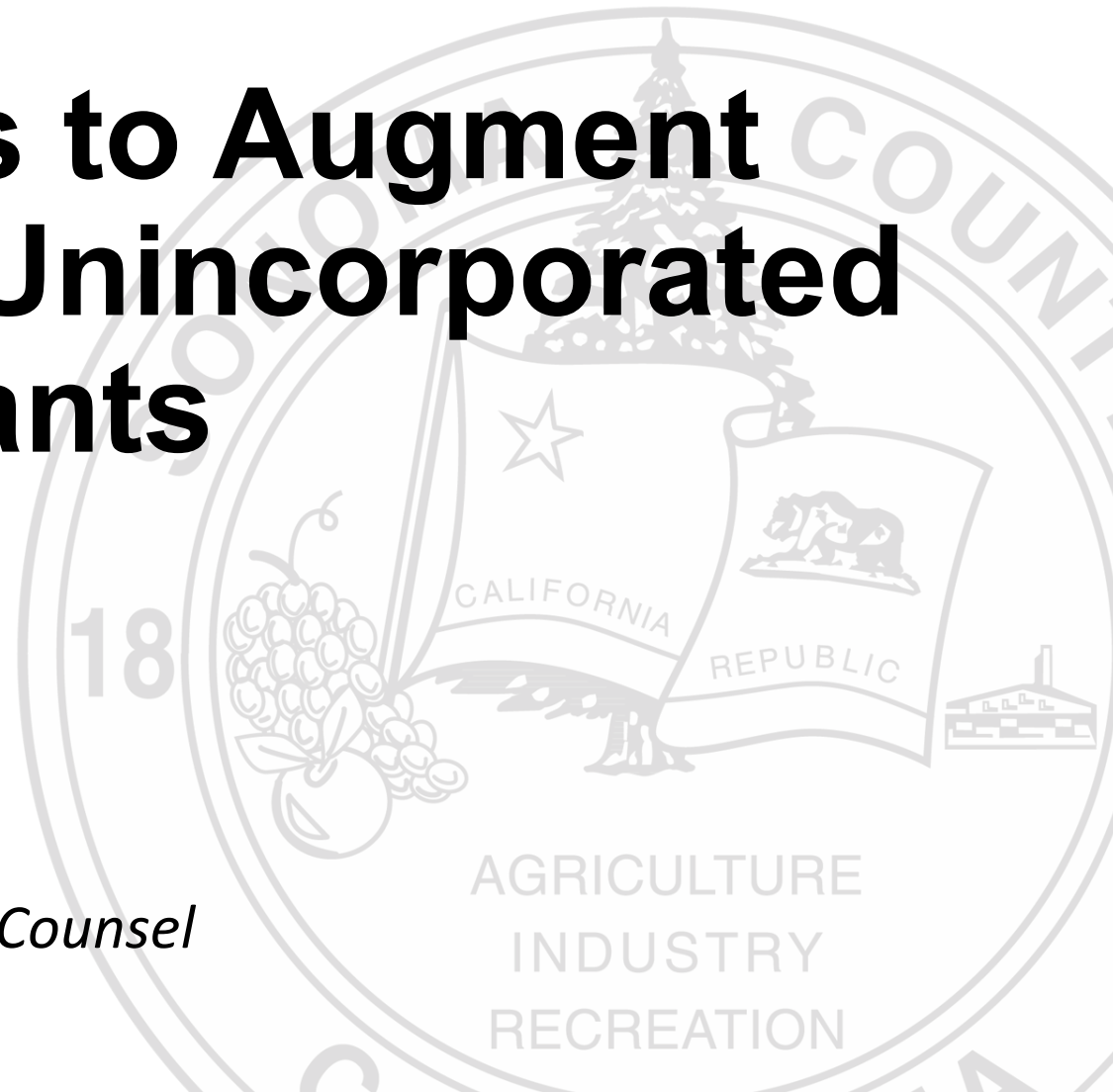


# Revised Options to Augment Protections for Unincorporated Residential Tenants

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# Background

- ▶ The Board of Supervisors heard options to augment renter protections for residential tenants in unincorporated Sonoma County on December 5th, 2023
- ▶ The Board directed staff to conduct community engagement

# Community Engagement

## Approach | Listening Sessions, Key Stakeholder Interviews, & Focus Groups

- ▶ Listening Sessions & Roundtables
- ▶ Key Stakeholder Interviews
- ▶ Focus Groups



# Community Engagement

## Key Themes

- ▶ **Perceptions and relationships vary widely.**
- ▶ **Vulnerable populations face additional barriers.**
- ▶ **Advocates urge protections to prevent abuses and protect the vulnerable.**
- ▶ **Housing providers warn regulation may lead to unintended consequences.**
- ▶ **Social/financial support needed for renters; better education needed for all.**





# Revised List of Protection Augmentation Options

# Types of Properties, Type of Shared Use, Commencement of Tenancy

		Existing Protections	Expansion Options
1	Age of Property	Rolling 15 years	1a. No exemption from Just Cause based on age of property 1b. Exemption from Just Cause for 5 or 10 years after new construction
2	Type of Structure	Owner-occupied duplex, individually owned Single Family Residence (SFR's) exempt	2a. No Exemptions based on type of structure 2b. Exempt only individually owned SFR's exempt
3	Type of Occupation	Properties with facilities shared with owner exempt	3a. No exemptions based on owner usage 3b. Rental of 2 or less bedrooms exempt, 3+ bedrooms rented covered by Just Cause (Boarding houses covered)
4	Special Purpose Rentals	Dorms, income-restricted housing (public or privately owned), nursing facilities, etc. exempt	4a. No exceptions for special purpose rentals 4b. Public housing not exempt from Just Cause 4c. Income-restricted housing of any ownership type not exempt from Just Cause
5	Establishment of Tenancy	Just Cause at 1 year or 2 years in certain multi-user leases	5a. Protections attach at day 1 5b. Protections attach at 6 months

# Proper For-Cause Termination of Tenancy

		Existing Protections	Expansion Options
6	Non-Payment of Rent	Non-payment of Rent = Basis of Eviction	6a. Nonpayment of one month or less does not qualify as Just Cause
7	Breach of Material Lease Term	Breach = Basis of Eviction	7a. Notice/opportunity to cure material breach of lease term required before qualifies as Just Cause
8	Damage/Waste of Property & Causing Nuisance	Damage/Waste = Basis of Eviction and Causing Nuisance = Basis of Eviction	8a. Notice/opportunity to cure damage/waste before qualifies as Just Cause 8b. Notice/opportunity to cure causing nuisance before qualifies as Just Cause
9	Non-Approved Sublet	Unauthorized Sublet = Basis of Eviction	9a. Limit sublet as basis for eviction unless attempted sublet is unreasonable

# Proper No-Cause Termination of Tenancy

		Existing Protections	Expansion Options
10	Owner Move In	Owner Move In - Basis of Eviction	10a. Provide additional notice to vulnerable tenants
11	Removal from Rental Market	Removal from Rental Market = Basis of Eviction	11a. Establishes Ellis Act procedures (must adopt rent control ordinance concurrently)
12	Renovation or Repair	Substantial Renovation = Basis of Eviction if threshold met, limited right to return	12a. Do not allow renovation/repair as a basis to terminate (require lease to remain, relocate tenant if repairs legally required. Extend right of return after repair to include rent caps 12b. Only allow renovation as basis for eviction if repairs are necessary for health and safety (no elective renovations)



# Additional Related Expansions

		Existing Protections	Expansion Options
13	Relocation Benefits	One month's rent for No Fault Eviction	13a. Provide additional relocation benefits, greater than one month, multiplier of fair market value and/or premium for vulnerable populations
14	Prepositioned Emergency Response Eviction Limitations	None	14a. Create emergency eviction protections activated by local emergency declaration (may be countywide)
15	Rent Registry	None	15a. Mandate Submission of Landlord data (County funded administration of registry) 15b. Mandate submission of landlord data (adopt fee for submission; subject to legal limitations on fee adoption)



# **Suggested Options to Augment Protections for Unincorporated Sonoma County Renters**

# Staff Recommendations

		Existing Protections	Expansion Options
4	Special Purpose Rentals	Dorms, income-restricted housing (public or privately owned), nursing facilities, etc. exempt	4b. Public housing not exempt from Just Cause 4c. Income-restricted housing of any ownership type not exempt from Just Cause
5	Establishment of Tenancy	Just Cause at 1 year or 2 years in certain multi-user leases	5a. Protections attach at day 1
14	Prepositioned Emergency Response Eviction Limitations	None	14a. Create emergency eviction protections activated by local emergency declaration (may be countywide)
15	Rent Registry	None	15a. Mandate Submission of Landlord data (County funded administration of registry)

# Rent Registry

- ▶ Serves as a centralized database or record-keeping system for rental properties with owner details, occupancy status, rental rates, lease terms, and property inspection history.

## Advantages & Possibilities

- ▶ Increased Compliance w/ Rental Regulations
- ▶ Enhanced Transparency & Accountability
- ▶ Improved Tenant Protection
- ▶ Market Monitoring & Policy Evaluation

## Challenges & Limitations

- ▶ Administrative Burdens
- ▶ Enforcement Mechanisms
- ▶ Unintended Consequences

# Recommended Actions:

A) Review revised options to augment renter protections for residential tenants in unincorporated Sonoma County;

B) Identify augmented options to be drafted into an Ordinance and provide direction to staff on next steps including timing.

