

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ST.  
PETERSBURG AMENDING CHAPTER 20 OF  
THE CITY CODE TO ADD A SECTION ON  
REQUIRED NOTICE OF RIGHTS IN HOUSING;  
PROVIDING A SCHEDULE OF VIOLATIONS  
AND PENALTIES; AND PROVIDING AN  
EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Florida law allows oral agreements for residential tenancies, which may leave many tenants unaware of their rights under Florida law; and

WHEREAS, though Florida law prohibits discrimination and retaliation by a Landlord and provides minimum standards for habitable residential dwelling units, many tenants are fearful to report landlords for substandard dwelling conditions or unjust treatment because they are unaware of this law or fear retaliation; and

WHEREAS, though Florida law provides a tenant the right to challenge many actions by a landlord, many do not assert this right because they are unaware of the law or that free legal services may be available to them; and

WHEREAS, when low-income or vulnerable renters lose housing do to their lack of knowledge concerning the law or their rights, local governments are often left with increased burdens due to homelessness, poverty, inequality, and declining health.

**THE CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA DOES ORDAIN:**

**SECTION ONE.** Chapter 20 of the St. Petersburg City Code is hereby amended to add a new Section 20-340 to read as follows:

**Section 20-340. Required Disclosures in Housing**

(a) For the purposes of Chapter 20, Article VII of the St. Petersburg City Code, “Notice of Rights” shall mean a printed, paper copy of the rights and services available to Renters in the City, in the form as approved and adopted by resolution of the City Council. For purposes of this section, if a Renter has consented to receiving and signing documents via electronic means, then the Notice of Rights may be provided to the Renter in electronic form instead of as a printed, paper copy.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person, including but not limited to; any owner, lessor, sublessor, assignor, manager, real estate broker, condominium association, homeowners' association, cooperative association, or any representative of any of the foregoing to allow a

Renter to occupy a Rental Unit under said person's control or authority, without first providing the Renter with a copy of the Notice of Rights.

(c) The City Council shall prescribe the required contents of the Notice of Rights by resolution, but it shall generally include information on the Renter's rights under federal, state, and local law, as well as contact information for organizations that are available to assist Renters in a variety of matters.

(d) There shall be a rebuttable presumption that a Landlord has complied with this section if the Landlord can produce an affidavit, signed by the Renter, stating that the Renter has received the notice required by this section of City Code.

(e) Violations of this subsection of the St. Petersburg City Code shall be punishable by a fine of \$300 for a first offense and any subsequent offenses.

(f) This section does not create any private causes of action and may only be enforced as set forth herein.

**SECTION TWO.** The provisions of this ordinance shall be deemed to be severable. If any provision of this ordinance is deemed unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, such determination shall not affect the validity of any other provision of this ordinance.

**SECTION THREE.** In the event this ordinance is not vetoed by the Mayor in accordance with the City Charter, it shall become effective on September 1, 2020. In the event this ordinance is vetoed by the Mayor in accordance with the City Charter, it shall not become effective unless and until the City Council overrides the veto in accordance with the City Charter, in which case it shall become effective ninety (90) days after the day on which a successful vote to override the veto is taken.

First reading conducted on 12<sup>th</sup> day of March 2020.

Adopted by St. Petersburg City Council on second and final reading on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of May 2020.

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Ed Montanari, Chair-Councilmember  
Presiding Officer of the City Council

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chan Srinivasa, City Clerk

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