

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

1. What does the Hoboken Housing Improvement Initiative Ordinance do?

For current tenants in rent controlled properties, this Ordinance does not change anything. For property owners of rent controlled units a YES vote Will:

- Exempt from the Hoboken Rent Leveling Ordinance, any condominium unit and units in 1-4 family buildings when the current tenant voluntarily leaves.
- Decontrol any unit in a multi-unit rent controlled building greater than 4 units when the current tenant voluntarily leaves.
- Require property owners of multi-unit (greater than 4) buildings to file a Vacancy Decontrol Certificate with the Rent Leveling Office upon the decontrol of a rental unit and provide the new tenant with a copy.
- Allow market rent to be charged each time a new tenant rents a decontrolled unit.

2. If I am a Tenant, what does a “Yes” vote mean to me?

If you are a tenant, a “Yes” vote means that you will continue to remain in your apartment subject to the current rent control laws. You cannot be evicted for any reason that does not already exist under the law. Any future increases in rent will be subject to the limitations that already exist under the Hoboken rent control laws.

3. If I am a property owner, what does a “Yes” vote mean to me?

If you are a property owner, a “Yes” vote means that once a rent controlled tenant voluntarily moves out of a unit in your property, you will be allowed to charge market rent each time a new tenant moves in.

4. As a property owner, will I still have to file registration statements if this Ordinance is approved?

Registration Statements are only required for those units that are rented by current tenants in rent controlled units. For decontrolled units, a Vacancy Decontrol Certificate must be filed with the Rent Leveling Office whenever a new tenant rents a unit in buildings with more than 4 rental units.

5. If I vote “Yes” will I be subject to eviction?

No. If you are a tenant in a rent controlled unit, you may NOT be evicted for any reason other than what currently exists under the law.

6. Are there penalties if my Landlord tries to force me out of my rental unit?

Yes. A landlord MAY NOT harass or intimidate a rent controlled tenant or reduce the tenant's services with the intent to have a tenant vacate his/her rent controlled unit. Violations of this provision subject the landlord to a loss of the benefits of the Ordinance.

7. How will a "Yes" vote improve the City and benefit the citizens of Hoboken?

A "Yes" vote will:

- Improve the services and condition of current rent controlled properties because property owners will have the means to improve and repair their properties;
- Maintain and increase the available rental housing stock in Hoboken because property owners will not be pressured into condo conversion to realize a fair return on their investments; and
- Result in a fairer valuation of properties in Hoboken so condominium and smaller property owners do not bear the brunt of unfair tax assessment.

8. I don't live in a rent controlled apartment. Why should I vote YES?

- Rent controlled units in Hoboken drive up the cost of rent in non-rent controlled units in the City because prices are pushed too low in the regulated rent controlled sector.
- Although rent controls are widely believed to lower rents, data from eighteen cities show that the rents of available apartments in rent-regulated cities are dramatically higher than they are in cities without rent control.
- Rent control tenants tend to hoard their apartments, forcing everyone else to shop only in the uncontrolled market. Thus, rent control is the cause of the widely perceived "housing crisis" in rent-controlled cities.
- The disparity between rent controlled and non-rent controlled apartments is unfair and forces "newcomers" to the City to "subsidize" rent controlled units through the payment of much higher rents.

9. I rent out my Condo. Isn't it exempt from rent control?

No. Condominium owners are subject to the rent control laws.