

Charter

Tenant-Landlord Commission

Adopted by the County Board April 25, 2019; updated April, 15 2021

Section 1 – Introduction: The Tenant-Landlord Commission (TLC) was established in 1974 as an advisory body to the County Board of Arlington County, Virginia.

Section 2 – Mission: The Mission of the TLC is to promulgate fair and equitable relationships between landlords and tenants in residential spaces in Arlington County.

Section 3 – Governing Documents:

- The Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act (VRLTA)
- Arlington’s Affordable Housing Master Plan (AHMP) (approved September 19, 2015)
- Arlington County’s Relocation Guidelines (approved May 22, 2018)

Section 4 – Functions and Scope:

1. Tenant/Landlord Rights and Responsibilities – Provide information to tenants, landlords, and the public concerning the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords.
2. County Board Advice – Advise the County Board on problems, policies, and programs in the areas of tenant-landlord relations and rental housing.
3. Laws, Regulations, and Policy – Examine and evaluate current housing, health, and other regulations and laws as they may relate to the problems of tenants and landlords; offer suggested amendments to Arlington’s policies and regulations which would aid tenants and landlords; propose legislation for enactment by the General Assembly which would enable Arlington to deal with the problems of tenants and landlords on the local level or would benefit Arlington County residents.
4. Grievances – Encourage tenants and landlords to resolve their grievances; gather facts relevant to understanding the grievances; conciliate and provide advice on grievances whenever possible; seek new methods of bringing tenants and landlords together.
5. Relocation Plans – Assess and recommend approval of proposed relocation plans for County assisted or site plan projects. Advise the County Board on updates or revisions to the Relocation Guidelines.

6. Annual Work Plan – Develop an annual work plan that reflects the goals of the County’s Affordable Housing Master Plan which promotes the goals of Supply, Access, and Sustainability with specific reference to proposed policies that impact tenants and landlords.
7. Fair Housing – Establish relationship with the Office of Human Rights to be apprised of situations involving fair housing issues on a regular basis.
8. Collaboration – Coordinate and/or collaborate with other Commissions on matters involving overlapping scope, where appropriate, including the Citizens Advisory Commission on Housing, Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee, and Human Rights Commission.

Section 5 – Membership: The Tenant-Landlord Commission shall be comprised of eleven (11) members appointed by the County Board. These members are drawn from:

- Four (4) members representing tenant interests;
- Four (4) members representing landlord interests;
- Three (3) members representing public interests or at-large

Members may be appointed for up to two (2) three (3)-year terms. The County Board will appoint and maintain a roster of members. All members serve at the pleasure of the Board.

The TLC members are expected to serve a liaison function to tenants and interested parties in Arlington. A member of the Commission who fails to attend three (3) Tenant-Landlord Commission meeting in a single year without providing advance notice to the Chair or staff may be asked to resign his or her remaining term on the Commission. The Advisory Group Chair, after consultation with the County Board liaison, shall notify the member if such an action is warranted.

Chair and Vice Chair Designations: The Chair and Vice Chair of the TLC are designated annually by the County Board. The TLC will make a recommendation to the County Board as to who will serve as their Chair and Vice Chair. If no Vice Chair has been designated and the Chair is absent from a Commission meeting, or if a Vice Chair has been designated, but both the Chair and the Vice Chair are absent from a Commission meeting, a quorum of the Commission members may appoint a temporary, acting Vice Chair to lead that meeting.

Section 6 – Staff Liaison: The County Manager shall appoint a staff member of the Housing Division to serve as liaison to the Commission. The staff provides technical assistance and support services such as provision of meeting space, notice of meetings, minutes/notes, interpretation of

State and local policies, and project status. Staff also may prepare reports and responses as requested and attend meetings and hearings when applicable.

Section 7 – Meetings: The Commission shall meet the second Wednesday monthly or at such other times as the Chair and any three (3) of the members shall request.

All meetings will comply with Virginia Open Meeting requirements and the Freedom of Information Act. All meetings of the full Commission will be advertised on the County-maintained website of the Commission, with meeting time and location, and are open to the public. All materials distributed to the Commission members, meeting agendas, and meeting minutes will be made available to the public in a timely manner through publication on the Commission website.

The Advisory Group Handbook provides additional information on the conduct of meetings as well as communication protocols that should guide all members in their work as Commissioners.

Section 8 – Subcommittees: The Chair may organize subcommittees to facilitate the business of the TLC when appropriate. Each subcommittee will have a defined scope, membership, and designation as either standing or ad hoc.

Section 9 – Reporting to the County Board: The TLC will provide recommendations to the County Board on policy issues affecting tenants and landlords including relocation plans proposed for replacement, demolition or rehabilitation of rental properties where residents are affected and other housing conditions that affect the safety, health, and welfare of tenants. The commission will at a minimum submit an annual report to the County Board on Arlington’s needs, trends, problems and achievements in the area of tenant-landlord relations, after consultation with the Board Liaison. The TLC may, from time to time, be asked to provide comment at a regular Board meeting or Board work session. In addition, testimony from the TLC on budget and spending priorities is encouraged.

Section 10 – Update of this Charter: From time to time, the TLC shall review this charter to ensure that it meets current needs. Any requests for changes must be processed through the County Board Liaison.