



## Decision Letter

# CD23.7a

### Tenant Issues Committee

<b>Meeting No.</b>	6	<b>Contact</b>	Dela Ting, Committee Administrator
<b>Meeting Date</b>	Friday, October 13, 2017	<b>Phone</b>	416-392-4666
<b>Start Time</b>	1:30 PM	<b>E-mail</b>	exc@toronto.ca
<b>Location</b>	Committee Room 2, City Hall	<b>Chair</b>	Councillor Josh Matlow

TD6.2	ACTION	Amended		Ward:All
-------	--------	---------	--	----------

### Tenant Defence Fund Review

#### Committee Decision

The Tenant Issues Committee recommends to Community Development and Recreation Committee that:

1. City Council authorize the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, to increase the value of the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations Tenant Hotline program contract by \$25,000, from \$180,800 to \$205,800, to support the agency's ability to respond to increased call volume for the term January 1 to December 31, 2018.
2. City Council authorize the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, to increase funding for the Tenant Support Grant Program by \$50,000, from \$50,000 to \$100,000 annually beginning January 1, 2018, to support additional applications to the Landlord Tenant Board, including for maintenance and repairs affecting private market rental buildings.
3. City Council authorize the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, to broaden the scope of the Outreach and Organizing program to better support tenant groups to develop internal capacity and improve resiliency.
4. City Council amend Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 797, Tenant Support Grant Program to implement the changes set out in Attachment C to this report subject to such technical and stylistic amendments as required by the City Solicitor and the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration.
5. City Council amend Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 797, Tenant Support Grant Program to reflect the recommendations and changes set out in Attachment C to this report and authorize the City Solicitor and General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, to re-structure, consolidate and simplify all existing requirements to improve the readability of the Bylaw.
6. City Council reiterate its previous positions on tenant issues, as set out in Attachment B to this report, to the Province of Ontario's Ministry of Housing and Ministry of the Attorney

General.

7. City Council request the Government of Ontario to amend Section 126 of the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006, to:

1. provide public notice upon the completion of the term of a rent increase associated with an Above Guideline Rent Increase (AGI);
2. require landlords to provide a commensurate rent reduction upon the completion of the term of a rent increase associated with an Above Guideline Rent Increase (AGI);
3. eliminate a Landlord's ability to levy an Above the Guideline Rent Increase for costs prescribed in Subsection (1)1 of the Act relating to municipal taxes;
4. eliminate eligibility of capital expenditures for the purpose of an Above the Guideline Rent Increase under the categories prescribed in Subsection (7) a, b, and c of the Act that constitute repair and maintenance of the property;
5. require Landlords to save 10 percent of rental income for a maintenance account to be accessed for capital expenditures related to the categories prescribed in Subsection (7) a, b, and c of the Act; and
6. provide that no rent increases be permitted related to the enactment of the provisions contained in Recommendations 7.3, 7.4, and 7.5 above.

8. the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration report directly to Council on November 7, 2017, with a formal submission containing the criteria set out in Recommendation 7 above, to be submitted to the Government of Ontario's current Above Guideline Rent Increases (AGI) review.

### **Origin**

(September 27, 2017) Report from the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration

### **Summary**

The Tenant Defence Fund (TDF) was created in 2000 in response to the creation of the Provincial Tenant Protection Act, 1997. The Tenant Defence Fund provides grants and outreach for tenants to access legal representation to fight above guideline rent increases. The Tenant Defence Fund is complemented by a Tenant Hotline that provides telephone information services for private market tenants in Toronto.

Shelter, Support and Housing Administration initiated a review of the Tenant Defence Fund given there have been few changes to the Tenant Defence Fund since 2000, new tenant legislation, and a changing rental market.

The review of the Tenant Defence Fund found that the program is administratively challenging and its limited scope hinders it from addressing the broad range of issues that tenants face. As well, new changes to Provincial legislation and the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) hearing process are anticipated to change tenants' need to acquire legal representation to dispute landlord applications and make tenant applications at the Landlord and Tenant Board.

This report summarizes key findings from the review of the Tenant Defence Fund and recommends program enhancements, including:

- A modest funding increase for the Tenant Hotline to respond to increased call volume;
- Amending Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 797, Tenant Support Grant Program to:
  - expand the scope of the program to include tenant applications to address building-wide maintenance issues; and
  - reduce the signature requirement required by applicants to qualify for a grant; and
- Increasing funding for the Tenant Support Grant Program to meet increased service levels resulting from a broader scope.

### **Background Information**

(September 27, 2017) Report and Attachments A and B from the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration on Tenant Defence Fund Review

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2017/td/bgrd/backgroundfile-107342.pdf>

(October 11, 2017) REVISED Attachment C - Proposed Amendments to Municipal Code Chapter 797, Tenant Support Grant Program

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2017/td/bgrd/backgroundfile-107343.pdf>

### **Speakers**

Dan McIntyre

Helen Chilas, 1501 Woodbine Tenants Group