
City Council

Notice of Motion

MM36.13	ACTION			Ward: All
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Fixing Service Gaps in RentSafeTO - by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Paul Ainslie

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Planning and Housing Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Paul Ainslie, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to:
 - a. ensure Municipal Licensing and Standards staff are sufficiently trained to deal with pest management issues and consider collaborating with other City Divisions and Agencies (i.e. Shelter, Support and Housing Administration and Toronto Community Housing Corporation) that have experience with pest control, in their pest management guidelines;
 - b. ensure a positive customer experience by implementing a formal process for notifying residents when service requests have been opened and subsequently closed; and
 - c. ensure the City's position is well supported in all case matters, all pertinent evidence should be retained and well organized within IBMS (or other equivalent storage system) and easily accessible for future inquiries including potential court proceedings and/or audit.
2. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to report back to the Planning and Housing Committee in the first quarter of 2022 on the status of implementation for the recommendations outlined above.
3. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to provide a report and recommendations to the Planning and Housing Committee in the first quarter of 2022 on the municipal and/or provincial legislative amendments required to grant By-law Officers Investigative Entry powers.

Summary

A resident in Toronto Centre has been engaged with 311 and RentSafeTO for several years regarding pest management complaints in their apartment building. During this time, there was

constant and repeated pest infestation which was never fully resolved, despite efforts by Municipal Licensing and Standards staff in working with the landlord to manage the problem. The local Councillor attended a visit with Municipal Licensing and Standards staff to personally inspect the claims of poor pest management and was able to speak with several tenants who brought forward their own complaints and confirmed the experience of the originating complainant.

After multiple attempts to resolve the complaints and multiple attempts to escalate the complaint unsuccessfully, the local Councillor supported staff's advice to seek an internal audit of Municipal Licensing and Standards' handling of the complaint, including investigation and enforcement.

The internal auditor concluded that staff did follow the process but still found several areas for service improvements. In a nutshell, the process was followed but the process was flawed. The recommendations in this Motion were contained in the internal auditor's report and will allow City Council the opportunity to further refine the recently adopted RentSafeTO program by fixing the service gaps.

With these and other similar RentSafeTO issues, some of the process and policy corrections go beyond the legislative authority Toronto currently has, including regulatory changes that need to be amended by the Provincial Government which includes giving By-law enforcement officers the right-of-entry for investigation and enforcement purposes.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM36.13

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-171171.pdf>)