



## Don Valley Community Legal Services

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June 23, 2026

To: City Council

**Re: CC42.12 - Follow Up on 2026.EX31.2: Framework for Implementing a Maximum Indoor Temperature By-law**

Don Valley Community Legal Services is a community legal clinic funded by Legal Aid Ontario. Our catchment area includes Wards 14, 15, 16 and 19, and sections of Wards 11 and 12. We serve many diverse communities and our clients are lower-income, racialized, and primarily renters.

We urge City Council to take action to address rising temperatures by establishing a maximum indoor temperature by-law. Extreme heat is a growing issue that affects tenants across Toronto and in the communities we serve.

We see the impacts of heat on our clients, especially as the summer months grow hotter each year. We have assisted clients in dealing with landlords who prohibit the installation of air conditioning units or who do not accommodate tenants with heat related health issues. Too many tenants live in units without air conditioning or without adequate measures in place to help them stay cool. As a result, they often cannot stay in their units during the daytime and are forced to relocate to cooler spaces. For those who have no option but to stay and endure the heat, due to mobility or medical reasons, they face severe heat-related health impacts. We see this especially in our senior clients.

Although the amendments to the *Residential Tenancies Act, 2006* made through Bill 97, *Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act, 2023*, will allow all tenants to install window or portable air conditioning units, tenants still face challenges with accessing air conditioning units and the onus should not fall on them. We encourage the City to implement the by-law as soon as possible. Tenants should not be forced to leave their homes due to extreme heat or struggle to make it through the summer. We cannot delay this further.

We also want to flag that any new bylaw should not impact tenants negatively. Landlords have an obligation to provide a unit fit for habitation and should not pass the cost of doing so down to tenants through rent increases or additional charges. Renters

across the city are already facing high costs of living and the City needs to continue protecting affordable rental units.

We are in agreement with our colleagues from the Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA), the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly (ACE), the Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario (ACTO), other community legal clinics, and tenant advocacy organizations. Every rental unit should have cooling equipment capable of maintaining a temperature set by the bylaw, and that the landlords should be responsible for the safe installation of the approved cooling equipment by a qualified tradesperson.

The City of Toronto recognizes housing is a human right in its Housing Charter. Renters deserve a safe, adequate, affordable, and accessible home. This means ensuring their health is not impacted as temperatures continue to rise.

This by-law will be a critical protection for vulnerable tenants. We cannot wait any longer.

Sincerely,

Michelle Choe, Housing Law Team Lead, Staff Lawyer  
Laura Anonen, Community Development Worker  
**Don Valley Community Legal Services**