

Fair Rent Commission

Adopted by the Legislative Council 17 May 2023

§ 20-##. Establishment; membership.

A. Pursuant to and in conformity with sections 7-148b through 7-148f of the General Statutes, there is hereby established a commission known as the Fair Rent Commission for the Town of Newtown. Said Commission shall consist of five members appointed by the First Selectman, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, which Commission may, but is not required to, include at least one tenant and one landlord. The term of office shall be two years. The Charter provisions on minority representation shall be observed.

§ 20-##. Powers and duties.

Said commission shall have such powers, duties and responsibilities as are provided pursuant to sections 7-148b through 7-148f, inclusive, of the General Statutes, including, but not limited to, make studies and investigations, to conduct hearings and receive complaints relative to rental charges on housing accommodations, except those rented on a seasonal basis (meaning housing accommodations rented for a period or periods aggregating not more than 120 days in any one calendar year), to ensure that rental charges are not harsh and unconscionable, thus creating a fair and equal process for the tenant and landlord; and

In determining whether a rental charge is so excessive, with due regard to all the circumstances, as to be harsh and unconscionable, the Fair Rent Commission shall consider such of the following thirteen (13) circumstances as are applicable to the type of accommodation in question:

- (1) The rents charged for the same number of rooms and other housing accommodations in the same and in other areas of the municipality;
- (2) The sanitary conditions existing in the housing accommodations in question;
- (3) The number of bathtubs and showers, flush water closets, kitchen sinks and lavatory basins available to the occupants thereof;
- (4) Services, furniture, furnishings and equipment supplied therein;
- (5) The size and number of bedrooms contained therein;
- (6) Repairs necessary to make such accommodations reasonably livable for the occupants accommodated therein;
- (7) The amount of taxes and overhead expenses, including debt services, thereof;
- (8) Whether the accommodations are in compliance with the ordinances of the city and the general statutes relating to health and safety;
- (9) The income of the petitioner and the availability of accommodations;
- (10) The availability of utilities;
- (11) Damages done to the property by the tenant caused by other than ordinary wear and tear;
- (12) The amount and frequency of increases in the rental charges;
- (13) Whether, and the extent to which, the income from an increase rental charge has been or will be reinvested in improvements to the accommodation.

§ 20-##. Meetings and reports; rules and regulations.

The Commission shall meet as required or at a minimum annually, and at such other times as the Commission may determine. A Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary shall be chosen, and the Commission is empowered to adopt rules and regulations for putting into effect the provisions of this article, which rules and regulations shall not be inconsistent with the provisions thereof or sections 7-148b through 7-148f of the General Statutes. Such rules and regulations shall be filed with the Town Clerk.

The Commission shall annually prepare and transmit to the Legislative Council and to the Board of Selectmen a report of its activities.

§ 20-##. Fines/Escrow.

The Fair Rent Commission shall have the powers to collect fines and collect funds to be held in escrow consistent with state statutes.

§ 20-##. Receipt and disbursement of funds.

All funds received by the Fair Rent Commission from any source shall be placed in the custody of the Financial Director of the Town of Newtown to be held, administered and disbursed by the Financial Director as part of and through the General Fund of the Town of Newtown, subject to any limitations on the use of the funds and in accordance with any statutory requirements concerning funds, including escrow funds, received by the Fair Rent Commission.

§ 20-##. Member compensation; expenses.

Members of the Commission shall serve without pay.