

St. Petersburg Tenants Union Demands

City Budget - *Fund the People, Not the Police*

Right to Counsel: Establish a program in which tenants facing eviction would be [granted the right](#) to an attorney. The service would be universally available to residents of all income levels. No means testing!

Public Housing: Establish a city-owned and operated [public housing enterprise](#) with an explicit goal of zero homelessness and guaranteed housing for all residents. This could begin as an expansion of the city's efforts at the publicly-owned and operated [Jamestown Apartments](#).

City Investment in Residential Property: Stop providing homes and land acquired through the [Affordable Housing Lot Disposition Program](#) to private investors, corporations & developers. Immediately forgive all liens & outstanding code violations on homesteaded property owned by working-class families. Expand the disposition program to expropriate rental properties run by corporate landlords via eminent domain. Absorb all current and future city-owned residential property into the city's public housing enterprise. All city investment into housing must ensure public ownership and a permanent return for the community. No more [corporate handouts](#)!

Expansion of Office of Tenant Advocate: Establish an exclusive, [city-run department](#) to serve the needs of tenants. Service would include information on rights, referrals for social services and receipt of complaints to be published as part of a landlord database.

Landlord Database: Establish a publicly-accessible, regularly updated [electronic database](#) of all rental properties & landlords in the city, with information on code violations and complaints submitted to the Office of Tenant Advocate.

CALL: Redirect any increase into the [police budget](#) to the [CALL program](#) and set a timeline in which to separate the program from the purview of the police department entirely.

Public Transit: Guarantee universal access to [free public transit](#) on PSTA for city residents. Ensure that real estate developers are paying their fair share in impact fees which fund pedestrian & bicycle infrastructure.

Universal Basic Income: Establish a [universal basic income](#) pilot program.

Elimination of Food Deserts: Establish a city-owned and operated [grocery store enterprise](#) to provide permanent community access to food in proximity to [Tangerine Plaza](#), Coquina Key and the Skyway Marina District.

Other Policy Demands - *Our Lives Are More Important Than Profits!*

Emergency Declaration/Rent Control: Declare a [housing state of emergency](#), allowing for voters to decide on the issue of [rent control](#) through a city-wide referendum as prescribed under [state law](#).

Required Rehousing for Rent Hikes: Require landlords to rehouse tenants [forced to move](#) due to a rent increase of 3% or more. Landlords who refuse to comply will be responsible for all associated costs incurred by city/social services.

Required Rehousing for Landlord Negligence: Pass an ordinance requiring landlords to rehouse tenants who are [forced to vacate](#) properties deemed a collapse, health, windstorm or fire hazard by building officials. Landlords who refuse to comply will be responsible for all associated costs incurred by city/social services.

Notice of Intent to Develop, Required Rehousing: Extend the *Notice of Intent to Develop* in *Sec. 16.70.010.14* of the city code from 90 days to 180 days. Close the loophole which excludes notice requirements for properties with less than 4 dwelling units. Developers will be required to rehouse tenants displaced due to development/renovations, or be responsible for all associated costs incurred by city/social services.

Required Notice Prior to Sale: Require landlords to provide at least 60 days notice prior to or simultaneously with change in ownership of all rental properties. Must include notice of rights under new ownership, including those pertaining to transfer of security deposit laid out in *FSS 83.49(7)*.

Required Notice of Foreclosure: Require landlords to provide [notice of rights](#) under Florida's *Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act (FSS 83.5615)* within 24 hours of a complaint for foreclosure on the property, and again within 24 hours of a final judgment.

Six-Months Notice of Rent Increase: Require landlords to give [180 days notice](#) for any rent increase to tenants on both month-to-month & annual lease agreements.

60 Day Notice of Termination: Require landlords to give month-to-month tenants [60 days notice of non-renewal](#), the maximum time allowed under state law. Current ordinance (*Sec. 20-350*) only requires 21 days. Eliminate unnecessary enforcement mechanism (subsection "d") which penalizes tenants up to \$500 for violations.

Income Discrimination: [Close the loopholes](#) in *Sec. 20-330* of the Code of Ordinances which allow landlords to continue to discriminate against voucher holders under certain circumstances, such as when a required HUD inspection takes more than 5 business days, or a landlord alleges an insurance increase. Eliminate language which allows landlords to use an income standard based on a tenants income *before* a voucher or government assistance is factored in. Ordinance should be generally made to mirror the one recently passed by the [Pinellas county commission](#).

Tenant-Controlled SPHA Board of Commissioners: Require that *all* future members appointed to the St. Pete Housing Authority Board of Commissioners are current SPHA tenants or voucher recipients.

Ban the Box: Pass an ordinance prohibiting a landlord from requiring a tenant to [disclose eviction history](#), as well as criminal history.

Tenants Repairs: Pass an ordinance allowing tenants [to make repairs](#) to their homes when a landlord refuses, and allow the cost of those repairs to be deducted from rent.

Property Maintenance & Energy Efficiency Inspections: [Establish a system](#) of annual permitting, inspections, minimum energy efficiency, life safety and property maintenance standards for all residential rental units within the city.

Require Air-Conditioning in All Rental Units: Pass an ordinance establishing a [local amendment](#) to the [Florida Building Code](#) requiring living spaces to [contain air conditioning](#) capable of maintaining a maximum indoor temperature of 78°F when outdoor temperatures exceed 85°F.

Prohibit Self-Help Evictions: Make it a criminal ordinance violation for a landlord to enter a unit, remove belongings, change locks or disable utilities/electricity in order to evict a tenant [without a court order](#). Zero tolerance: landlords and property managers caught in the act will be arrested on the spot!

“Progress” doesn’t mean prosperity for some while others struggle to survive. Even if just one person is forced to go without shelter, food, healthcare or any other basic need it means that the system is failing. We refuse to accept an undemocratic status quo in which our human rights are consistently denied and the wealth built by our labor is stolen to enrich the ruling elite.



ALL POWER TO THE TENANTS!

StPetersburgTenantsUnion.org