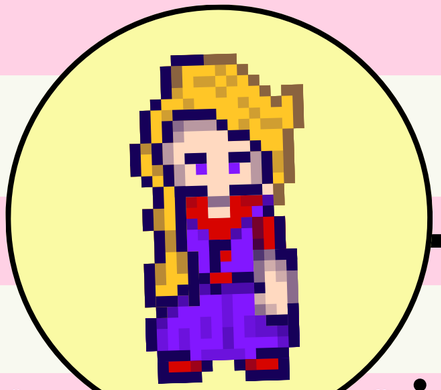
surviving california's compliance maze

Adapting to Laws You Didn't Help Write



by: kari negri

SKY PROPERTIES, Inc.

legal disclaimer:

This webinar is intended for general informational purposes only and should not be taken as legal advice. Every situation is different, and laws, rules, and regulations may change before, during, or after this session. For guidance specific to your circumstances, please consult a licensed legal or tax professional.

The views and opinions expressed in this webinar are solely those of the presenter.

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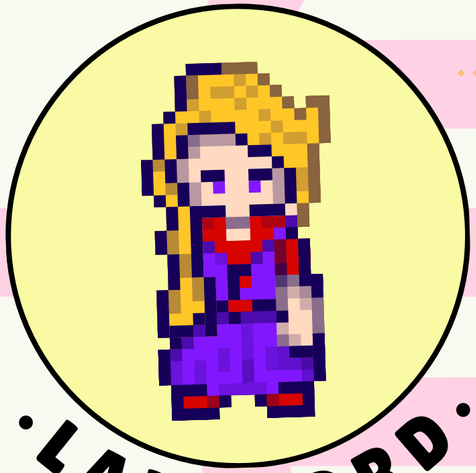
the challenge



VS

- State Laws in Motion
- Local Ordinances
- Notice Requirements
- Fair Housing Scrutiny
- Aggressive Enforcements

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level one

NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

The Timekeeper

DAMAGE: Low

ABILITIES: Precision in timing and language for entry, rent increases, and lease terminations

COIN COST IF TANGLED:

ESTIMATED EXPENSE: $2,000–$7,500 (invalid notices, delayed actions, tenant disputes)

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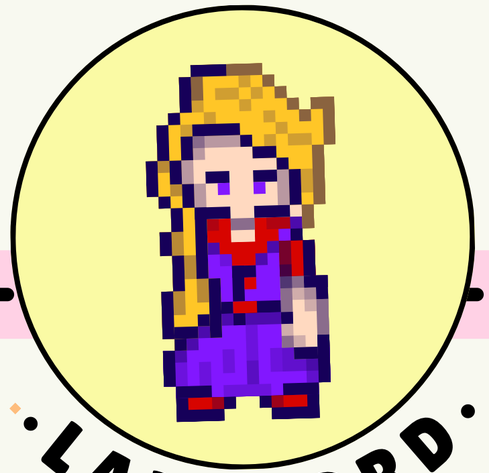
NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

The Timekeeper

VS



LANDLORD

TRAPS:

- Delivering notices late or with incorrect language
- Giving less than a 24-hour entry notice
- Invalid rent increase or termination notices
- Ownership/lease name mismatch, creating technical defects
- Submitting rent increase notices with full tenant details (privacy risk)

BATTLE TACTIC:

- Use standardized templates reviewed for accuracy
- Calendar-driven reminders and automated tracking
- Redact tenant identifiers when submitting notices to city agencies
- Keep originals securely logged in your recordkeeping system

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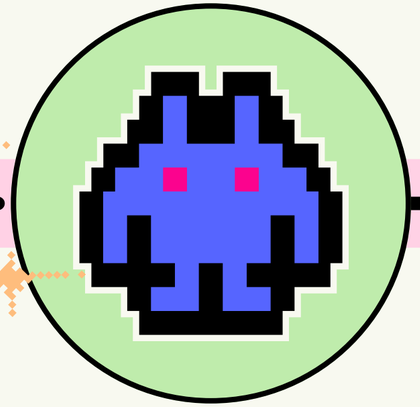
level two



LOCAL ORDINANCES

The Boundary Trickster

DAMAGE: Medium

ABILITIES: City-specific rules layered on state law; changes block by block

COIN COST IF TANGLED:

ESTIMATED EXPENSE: $5,000–$15,000 (fines, relocation fees, ordinance violations)

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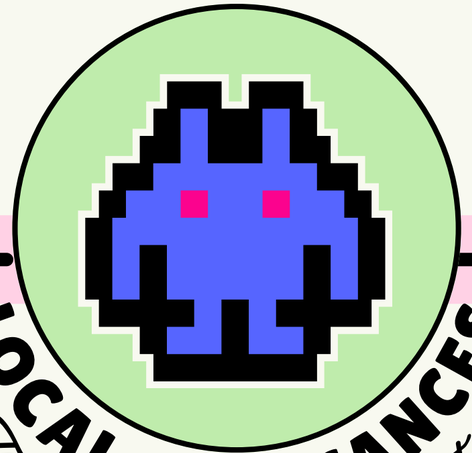
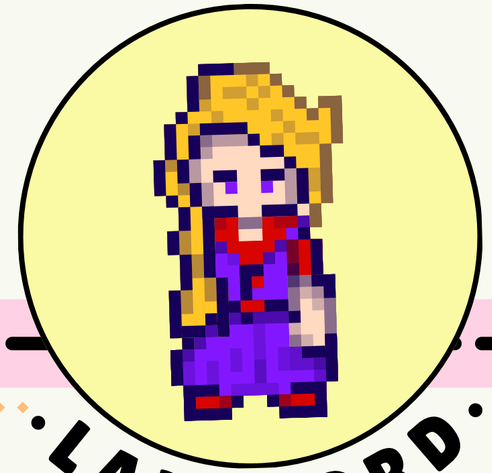


LOCAL ORDINANCES

The Boundary Trickster

VS



LANDLORD

TRAPS:

- Overlooking relocation fees or rent caps unique to each city
- Applying state rules without checking local add-ons
- Failing to register exempt units → property flagged as “unregistered.”
- Missing city-specific disclosure updates (e.g., internet service rules)

BATTLE TACTIC:

- Jurisdiction-specific leases
- City-by-city compliance checklists
- Partnering with local experts
- Register all units first, then claim exemptions; maintain an Exemption Checklist.

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level three

STATE LAWS IN MOTION

The Shapeshifter

DAMAGE: High

ABILITIES: Constantly evolving rent control, habitability standards, and tenant protections

COIN COST IF TANGLED:

ESTIMATED EXPENSE: $10,000–$25,000 (legal fees, penalties, tenant claims)

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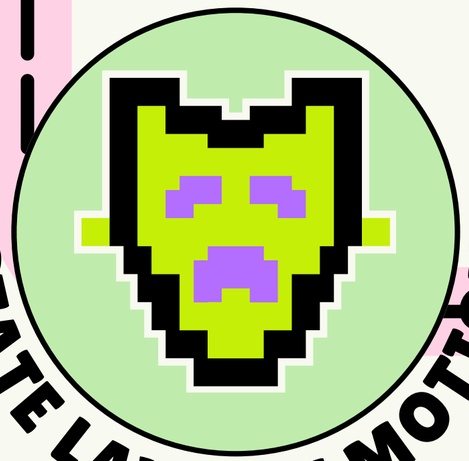
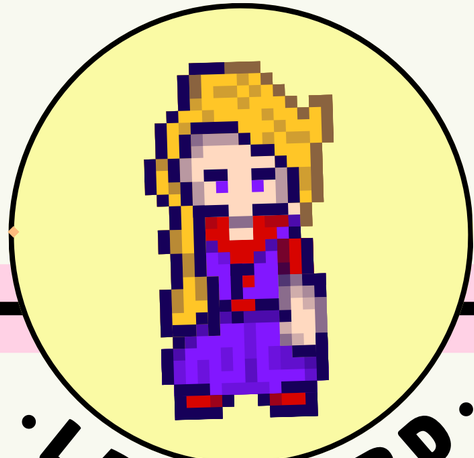


STATE LAWS IN MOTION

The Shapeshifter

VS



LANDLORD

TRAPS:

- Using outdated lease templates that ignore new rent control rules
- Missing habitability updates (mold, pest, utility disclosures)
- Assuming last year's compliance still applies today
- Overlooking disaster-related rent suspension (e.g., rent stops when tenants are evacuated)
- Missing new maintenance requirements (e.g., refrigerator/stove compliance)

BATTLE TACTIC:

- Regular compliance audits
- Updated, lawyer-reviewed lease agreements
- Continuous monitoring of state law changes
- Document disaster-related obligations and habitability standards

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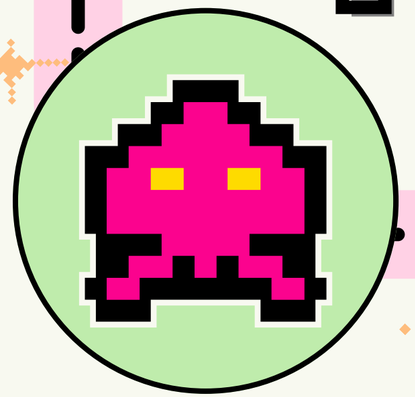
level four



FAIR HOUSING SCRUTINY

The Watcher

DAMAGE: Very High

ABILITIES: Flags biased screening, catches careless ad language, turns casual remarks into risks, launches surprise investigations

COIN COST IF TANGLED:

ESTIMATED EXPENSE: $10,000–$25,000 (legal fees, penalties, tenant claims)

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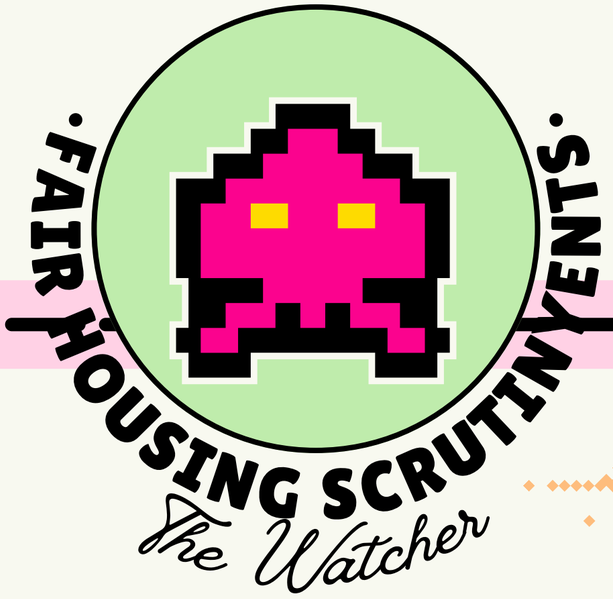

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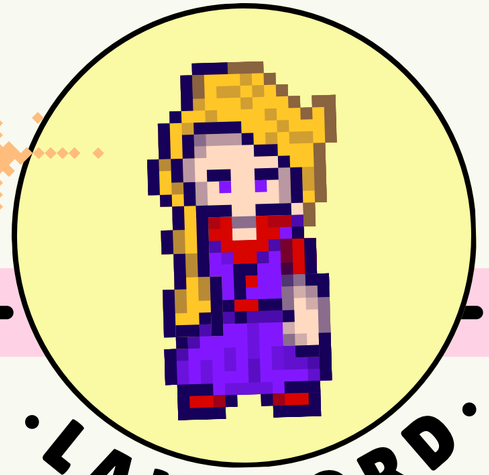

TRAPS:

- Screening criteria that unintentionally discriminate
- Careless advertising language (“ideal for singles”)
- Offhand remarks interpreted as bias
- Harassment or intimidation conduct prohibited under Civil Code §1940.2

BATTLE TACTIC:

- Annual fair housing training
- Consistent, professional communication standards
- Neutral, inclusive advertising language
- Provide a qualifications checklist before processing applications
- Document all tenant interactions to demonstrate good faith

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level five

AGGRESSIVE ENFORCEMENT

The Enforcer

DAMAGE: Boss-Level

ABILITIES: City attorneys pursue violations aggressively, exploit weak records, tenant groups file rapid claims, and penalize slow responses to inquiries

COIN COST IF TANGLED:

ESTIMATED EXPENSE: $25,000–$100,000+ (litigation, city attorney actions, prolonged disputes)

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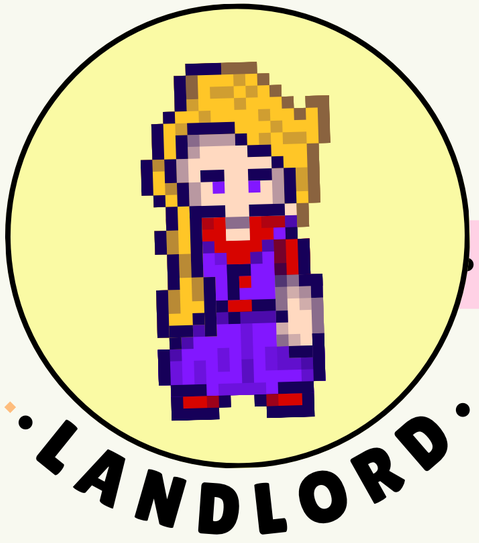
VS



TRAPS:

- Poor documentation of tenant communication and repairs
- Inconsistent handling of complaints or disputes, and judges dismissing cases for small errors
- Failing to respond quickly to city attorney inquiries
- Skipping or underestimating mandatory mediation before hearings
- Failure to do regular maintenance

BATTLE TACTIC:

- Airtight documentation systems
- Clear escalation protocols
- Professional oversight from property management experts
- Treat mediation as a proactive settlement step to reduce exposure
- Use maintenance checklists with photos and timestamps

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Small Mistake = Big Consequences



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How will you survive?



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hero skills:

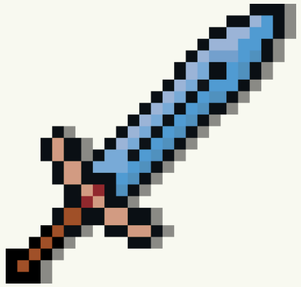
Core Protection

Best Practice: Build defenses before the enemy strikes. These upgrades reduce damage across all battles.



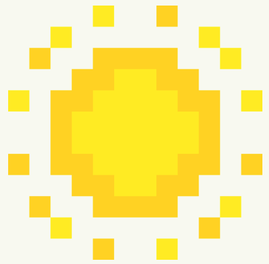
Lease Armor

Jurisdiction-specific leases are reviewed annually; include habitability clauses, disclosure updates, and ordinance add-ons.



Communication Blade

Train staff to use consistent, professional language; log all tenant interactions for audit readiness.



Compliance Radar

Subscribe to city/state ordinance alerts; assign a “compliance captain” to track changes monthly.



Recordkeeping Shield

Digital logs of repairs, tenant communication, and notices; quarterly audits to ensure completeness.

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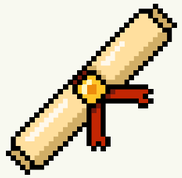
advocacy buff:

Apartment Association Power-Up

Best Practice: Join an Apartment Association such as AAGLA to equip your hero with collective strength.



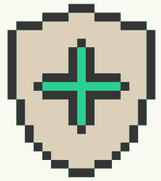
Ordinance Alerts Scroll

Timely updates on city and state compliance changes



Template & Form Chest

Ready-to-use notices, leases, and compliance documents



Legal Defense Shield

Access to attorneys for compliance review and guidance



Peer Guild Bonus

Networking, shared best practices, and training events



Training Potion Access

Workshops, webinars, and fair housing refreshers provided by the association



Cost–to–Save Mechanic

Membership fees = a small investment that prevents costly compliance errors later

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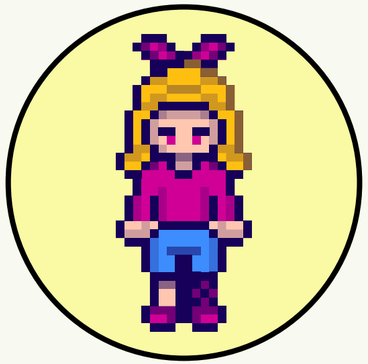
hero classes:

Your Staff's Roles

Best Practice: Assign clear “hero roles” so compliance isn’t just one person’s burden, it’s a full party quest.



Compliance Captain
a.k.a Property Manager

Tracks laws and ordinances monthly; ensures leases and notices align with current rules.



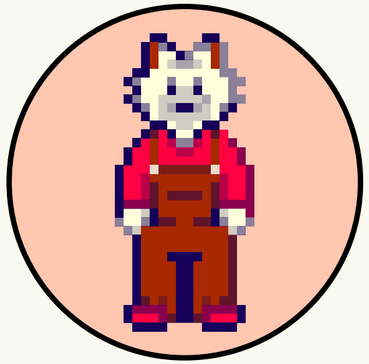
Documentation Knight
a.k.a Administrative Assistant

Maintains airtight records of tenant communication, repairs, and notices; organizes digital files.



Communication Mage
a.k.a Leasing Agents

Crafts neutral, professional tenant communication; ensures ads and screening criteria are bias-free.



Maintenance Ranger
a.k.a Maintenance Supervisor

Documents repairs with photos + timestamps; ensures habitability standards are met.

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best practice checklist

Best Practice: Treat these routines like gear maintenance. Keeping your armor polished and your weapons sharp ensures you're always battle-ready.

DAILY QUEST

- Log all tenant communication (calls, emails, texts)
- Document maintenance requests with photos + timestamps
- Use inclusive, neutral language in all ads and notices
- Track ordinance alerts or updates from city/state

WEEKLY BUFF

- Review open maintenance tickets for completion + documentation
- Spot-check communication logs for consistency
- Verify notices delivered on time and with correct language
- Hold a short staff huddle on compliance reminders

MONTHLY PREP

- Audit lease templates for ordinance/state law changes
- Run a compliance mini-check (rent caps, relocation fees, habitability standards)
- Update training modules or refreshers for staff
- Review escalation protocols for disputes and enforcement inquiries

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quest path:

Audit-Proof Operation

Best Practice: Treat audits like preventive boss fights. Win them early to avoid the final boss (enforcement).

STEP 1:
GAP SCAN

Annual compliance audits; review leases, notices, and documentation against current laws.

STEP 2:
SYSTEM UPGRADE

Implement standardized templates, digital recordkeeping, and escalation protocols.

STEP 3:
TRAINING POTION

Annual fair housing + compliance training; quarterly refreshers for staff.

STEP 4:
ALLY SUMMON

Partner with property management experts for legal review, ordinance monitoring, and enforcement defense.

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hero ally:

Best Practice: Position SKY as your hero ally who equips landlords with all the weapons and shields they need.

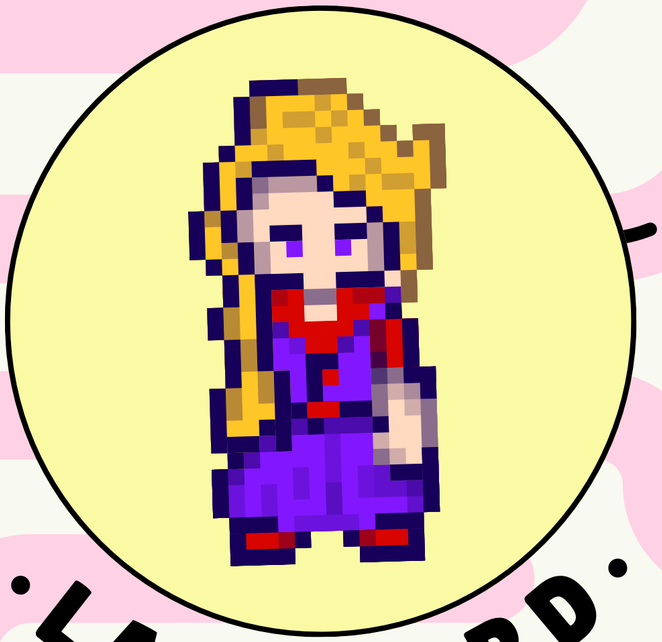
XP Bonus: 29 Years of Expertise → Veteran in California's compliance maze

Skill: Risk Anticipation → Track rent caps, relocation fees, and habitability updates before they hit.

Gear: Audit-Ready Systems → Digital documentation, compliance dashboards, and standardized communication.

Buff: Tenant Trust → Professional, consistent engagement that reduces disputes.

Ultimate Move: Peace of Mind → SKY equips owners with the tools to survive every compliance battle.



LANDLORD

YOU WIN!

You defeated the Compliance Boss!
Here's your loot...

- **+ Reputation Points** → Stronger community trust and brand credibility
- **+ Tenant Satisfaction** → Higher renewals, fewer disputes, better reviews
- **+ NOI Growth** → Reduced penalties, stable rent collection, stronger cash flow
- **+ Legal Immunity Buff** → Lower risk of lawsuits and enforcement actions
- **+ Peace of Mind** → Confidence that your systems are battle-ready

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thank you!

If you have any additional questions, you can reach out to me at info@skyprop.la or visit our website by scanning the QR code below:

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