PASADENA
RENT STABILIZATION DEPARTMENT



Rent Stabilization Department Newsletter — 2026

Your Guide to the Foundational Principles of Rent Stabilization in Pasadena

The Rent Stabilization Department (RSD) was established in December 2023 at the request of the Pasadena Rental Housing Board (PRHB) to implement Article XVIII of the City's Charter, the Pasadena Fair and Equitable Housing Charter Amendment (Article XVIII), which was approved by Pasadena voters in November 2022. The RSD is committed to empowering tenants and landlords by enforcing rent stabilization laws, providing guidance on rights and responsibilities, and engaging the community through outreach and education, fostering a fair and thriving rental housing community in Pasadena.

The RSD is here to help community members understand their rights and responsibilities under Article XVIII. This newsletter highlights key laws that apply to certain rental properties in Pasadena.

Is Your Rental Unit Covered Under Rent Stabilization?

Pasadena's rental housing laws may apply differently depending on the type of rental unit. Some units may be subject to rent stabilization, just cause eviction protections, or both. Most multi-family residential rental units built before February 1, 1995, are covered under rent stabilization.

The following are generally not covered under rent stabilization:

- Multi-family residential rental units built after February 1, 1995
- Condominiums and single-family homes
- Units where the tenant shares a kitchen or bathroom with the owner, if the unit is the owner's primary residence

Community members are encouraged to review whether their rental unit is covered before issuing rent increases, notices, or making changes to a tenancy. For a full list of exemptions, visit ***Bit.ly/PasadenaRSD***.

Scan Me to visit the RSD website

Annual Rental Registration & Fees

Landlords with units covered under Article XVIII are required to register annually through the Pasadena Rental Registry. Registration helps maintain accurate rental housing records and ensures compliance with Pasadena's rental housing laws. Annual registration comes with a rental housing fee, set each year by the PRHB. This fee fully funds the operations of the RSD and cannot be passed on to tenants. The table below shows the registration fee per unit for the previous and upcoming cycle:

Cycle	Fee/Unit	Registration Period
2025	$238.00	Sept 1, 2025 – Oct 31, 2025
2026	$236.54	Sept 1, 2026 – Oct 31, 2026

Landlords should ensure their registration information is accurate and updated when changes occur. Visit ***Bit.ly/RentRegistryPasadena*** to complete or update your registration.

Rental Registration Late Fees

Landlords who do not complete registration by the deadline will be subject to late fees that increase the longer a unit remains unregistered. A seven-day grace period runs through November 7, 2026, after which late fees will commence on November 8, 2026.

Days Late	Percentage	Late Fee Per Unit*
8–45 Days	15%	$35.48
46–90 Days	30%	$70.96
91+ Days	50%	$118.27

**Late fee amounts are calculated based on the 2026–2027 registration fee of $236.54 per unit.*

Did You Know?

In its first year, the RSD registered 21,914 rental units across Pasadena. Curious to learn more about the RSD's accomplishments? Read the full Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report at ***Bit.ly/PasadenaRSD***.

Free Mediation Services

The RSD has partnered with the Loyola Center for Conflict Resolution to offer free, confidential mediation services for tenants and landlords. Professional mediators help both parties resolve disputes, such as repayment schedules, maintenance disagreements, and noise concerns, without going to court. Sessions are voluntary and designed to find workable solutions for everyone involved. To access mediation services, contact the RSD directly. Housing Counselors are available to answer questions and determine eligibility.

Questions? Connect With A Housing Counselor

Our Housing Counselors offer free, confidential guidance to both tenants and landlords on rent stabilization laws, rights, responsibilities, and more.

Please note: Housing Counselors do not provide legal advice.

Contact a Housing Counselor at **Bit.ly/ContactHousingCounselor.**

Contact the Rent Stabilization Department

(626) 744-7999
Bit.ly/PasadenaRSD
199 S. Los Robles Ave., Suite 350
RentStabilization@CityOfPasadena.net

Know Your Rights!

Tenants and landlords have rights and responsibilities under Pasadena's rent stabilization laws. Review our notices and forms on our website at ***Bit.ly/PasadenaRSD***.

Relocation Assistance

When a tenant is displaced due to a no-fault eviction, landlords are required to provide relocation assistance in the form of monetary compensation, comparable housing, and/or assistance from a relocation specialist. This assistance is intended to ease the financial burden of displacement, with amounts varying based on the number of bedrooms and length of tenancy.

Base Payment Schedule (Oct 1, 2025 – Sept 30, 2026)

Length of Tenancy	Studio	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4+ BR
0-3 Years	$6,720	$7,525	$9,385	$11,895	$13,245
3-10 Years	$8,960	$10,033	$12,513	$15,860	$17,660
10+ Years	$11,200	$12,542	$15,642	$19,825	$22,075
Special Circumstances Household	$6,720	$7,525	$9,385	$11,895	$13,245

Moving Expense Allowance

- **Eligible tenant household:** $1,620
- **Special circumstances household:** $4,890

A Special Circumstances Household includes at least one member who is 60 or older, qualifies as disabled or terminally ill, or has a minor dependent child.

Payment Timeline

- 50% due within 10 days of serving the notice of termination
- Remaining 50% due no later than 28 days before tenancy expires
- Landlords must file a Notice of Intent to Terminate Tenancy with the PRHB at least 30 days before serving notice to tenants.

Landlords are encouraged to review relocation assistance requirements carefully before issuing a no-fault eviction notice. For the full relocation fact sheet, visit ***Bit.ly/PasadenaRSD***.

Just Cause Eviction Protections

Just cause eviction protections apply to nearly all rental units in Pasadena – including condos and single-family homes. To terminate a tenancy, landlords must have a legally recognized reason and provide a written notice stating one of the eleven valid just cause reasons.

Just Cause Reasons include failure to pay rent, lease violation, nuisance or substantial damage, illegal use of the unit, refusal to sign a substantially identical lease, refusal to allow lawful landlord entry, and an unapproved subtenant in sole possession.

No-Fault Reasons include necessary and substantial repairs, owner or qualified relative move-in, permanent withdrawal from the rental market (Ellis Act), and a government order to vacate or demolish the unit.

For full eviction requirements, visit ***Bit.ly/PasadenaRSD***.

Downward Adjustment of Rent

Tenants in rent-stabilized units have the right to formally request a rent reduction by filing a Petition for Downward Adjustment of Rent with the RSD. There are three grounds to file:

- **Uninhabitable conditions** – the landlord has failed to maintain safe, livable premises
- **Reduced housing services** – amenities or services included in rent have been removed or diminished
- **Unlawful rent increases** – rent was raised above the AGA or in violation of Article XVIII

There is no fee to file. Once submitted, a Hearing Officer is assigned and both parties participate in a settlement conference before any formal hearing takes place. A decision is issued within 60 days of the hearing, with the option to appeal to the PRHB within 30 days. To access the petition form and instructions, visit ***Bit.ly/PasadenaRSD***.

Please review requirements before issuing rent increases, termination notices, or making changes to a tenancy.

Base Rent & Rent Rollback

Every rent-stabilized unit has a base rent – the legal maximum rent a landlord is allowed to charge. For tenancies that began on or before May 17, 2021, the base rent is the rent that was in effect on that date. For tenancies that began after May 17, 2021, the base rent is the initial rent the tenant first paid.

Rent can only increase by the AGA each year. If a landlord raised rent beyond the allowed limit without proper justification, that increase may be considered unlawful and the tenant may be entitled to a rent rollback, meaning the rent is adjusted back down to the legal base rent and potentially a refund of any overpaid amount.

Example: If your base rent was **$2,000** and the Annual General Adjustment was **2.25%**, the allowed increase would be:

- **$2,000 × 2.25% = $45**
- **$2,000 + $45 = $2,045**

Anything charged above that amount may be subject to a rollback.

Tenants can initiate a rollback by submitting a Request for Rent Rollback Form to their landlord. For the form and more information, visit ***Bit.ly/PasadenaRSD***.

MONTHLY 2026 RENT STABILIZATION WORKSHOPS

The RSD hosts free monthly workshops open to all community members, tenants, landlords, and residents alike. Each session covers a different rent stabilization topic, with RSD staff on hand to answer questions. Workshops are held at 199 S. Los Robles Ave., 1st Floor Conference Room and are also available virtually via Zoom at ***Bit.ly/MonthlyRSDWorkshops***.

Upcoming 2026 workshops:

- **July 14:** Just Cause Protections
- **August 11:** Rent Rollback and Rent Increases
- **September 8:** Annual Rental Registration
- **October 13:** Security Deposits

Rent Increases & the Annual General Adjustment (AGA)

For rent-stabilized units, the Annual General Adjustment (AGA) sets the maximum allowable rent increase each year. The AGA for both cycles is outlined below:

Cycle	AGA	Effective
2025 - 2026	2.25%	Oct 1, 2025 - Sept 30, 2026
2026 - 2027	2.50%	Oct 1, 2026 - Sept 30, 2027

Before increasing rent, landlords must ensure:

- The unit is registered in the Pasadena Rental Registry
- At least 12 months have passed since the last rent increase
- The landlord is in compliance with Article XVIII and applicable housing, building, health, and safety regulations

Rent increase notices must be provided in writing at least 30 days in advance and must include a Notice of the Existence of the Charter and a statement informing tenants of their right to petition any increase that exceeds the AGA. No rent increase may take effect until all notice requirements are met.

Landlords seeking an increase above the AGA may file a petition for an upward adjustment through the RSD's Hearings Division. For more information, visit ***Bit.ly/PasadenaRSD***.

2.50%

The AGA applies to rent-stabilized units covered under Charter Article XVIII for the period of October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027. During this period, landlords may increase rent for existing tenancies in rent-stabilized units by up to 2.50%.

Don't miss important updates on rent stabilization laws, workshops, and resources. Join the RSD mailing list at **Bit.ly/RSDMailingList** to stay informed.

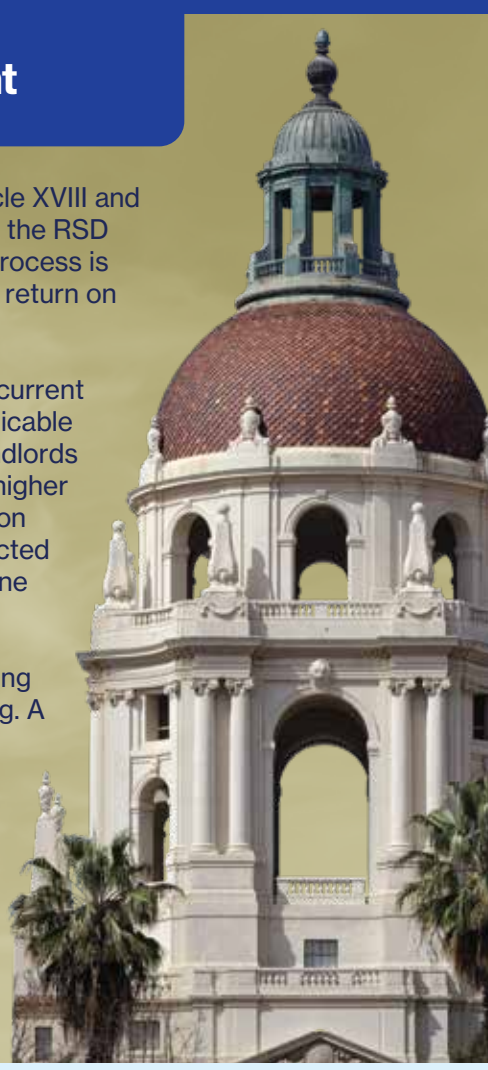
Upward Adjustment of Rent

Landlords who are in compliance with Article XVIII and PRHB regulations have the right to petition the RSD for a rent increase beyond the AGA. This process is designed to ensure landlords receive a fair return on their investment.

To be eligible, the rental property must be current on registration and in compliance with applicable California health and safety standards. Landlords who believe their operating costs justify a higher increase must complete the required petition forms and financial worksheets, notify affected tenants, and submit through the RSD's online portal.

Once filed, the process includes a prehearing settlement conference and a formal hearing. A decision is issued within 60 days of the hearing, with the option to appeal to the PRHB within 30 days. Tenants have the right to respond to the petition and may claim undue hardship if the proposed increase would significantly impact their household.

To access petition forms and instructions, visit ***Bit.ly/PasadenaRSD***.



Security Deposit Reminder

Under Article XVIII, landlords are required to pay annual interest on all security deposits held for at least one year. The interest rate for January 1 – December 31, 2026, is **0.12%**, as set by the Pasadena Rental Housing Board. Payment to tenants is due by **January 31, 2027.**

We're Here To Help

Our mission is to empower tenants and landlords, ensure fair rental practices, and foster a thriving rental housing community through education, enforcement, and collaboration.