

New Rental Property Requirements and What They Mean for Residential Landlords in Pittsburgh



Kevin F. McKeegan
kfm@muslaw.com

After several years of working to implement a rental registration program, last month, Pittsburgh City Council unanimously approved a new rental registration ordinance with several rules for landlords and property owners, including routine property inspections and a requirement that landlords share contact information with the city in case of problems.

Though many attorneys and businesses in the local real estate industry have been anticipating changes like these for a while now, landlords should familiarize themselves with the new ordinance and its rules in order to understand how it affects their properties and record keeping, as well as the lives of their tenants.



Derek J. Markle
djm@muslaw.com

What this ordinance means for landlords and property owners

On Wednesday, September 20, Pittsburgh City Council unanimously approved the preliminary framework for a rental property registry that is applicable to residential premises offered for lease in the City. Property owners who operate Airbnb or other short-term leasing platforms are also subject to the ordinance.

The ordinance is designed to better hold landlords accountable by requiring:

- regular inspections of each unit; and
- a point of contact to direct complaints about the property.

It is important to understand that the new ordinance will introduce penalties for landlords who do not comply with all inspection, registration, and permit requirements. To avoid any repercussions, landlords must apply for a rental permit annually, and their properties will be subject to inspection every three years. Units must meet inspection standards laid out in the International Property Maintenance Code. If a premises fails to meet the code's standards, landlords will receive a notice with listed corrective actions to improve property conditions.

Preparation and record keeping

Landlords should begin developing an organized system for recording the dates and details of their property registrations, inspections, and permit approval processes. If you use a property manager for your rental property, you should work alongside the property manager to schedule all inspections and update property inspection dates, findings and approval notices accordingly.

New ordinance timing and fees

Fees associated with the new rental requirements are expected to be set during the City Council's upcoming budget negotiations. Officials aim to begin enforcing the requirements in early 2024, though we expect to see several updates before the end of the year, as local property owners may challenge the new rules in court before they are officially approved.

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Our firm's Real Estate & Lending team members are happy to provide further updates and answer any questions you may have about the new rental requirements and their significance. You can direct questions to Derek J. Markle at djm@muslaw.com or any other Meyer, Unkovic & Scott attorney with whom you have worked.

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