

**VERNON HOUSING COMMISSION
OCCUPANT RELOCATION PROCEDURES**

Adopted March 9, 2022

Revised March 8, 2023

Revised March 13, 2024

Pursuant to Vernon Municipal Code Section 2.40.060.B. and the Vernon Rental Housing Policy (VRHP), the Vernon Housing Commission (VHC) hereby adopts the following procedure to address any lease/authorized occupant's need/desire to be re-located, either temporarily or permanently.

Recitals

- A. The VHC is committed to managing its housing stock according to “best practices” for private, residential housing. The VRHP requires that all procedures be “neutral, fair, and reasonable.”
- B. Every lessee/authorized occupant is entitled to a habitable rental unit.
- C. This Relocation Procedure is intended to apply to the following situations:
 - 1. Temporary Relocation – City Initiated: If, through no fault of a Lessee, Authorized Occupant, and/or Guest, a rental unit becomes temporarily uninhabitable, as determined by the City, the Lessee and any Authorized Occupants shall be entitled, at the Lessee's option, to be re-located to housing accommodations comparable to the rental unit in good condition for so long as the rental unit is uninhabitable.
 - 2. Permanent Relocation – City Initiated: If, through no fault of a Lessee, Authorized Occupant, and/or Guest, a rental unit becomes temporarily uninhabitable, as determined by the City, any lessee of a City of Vernon owned housing unit may request a permanent relocation to any other City-owned unit on a priority basis.
 - 3. Permanent Relocation – Lessee Initiated: Any lessee of a City of Vernon owned housing unit who has occupied his/her then-current unit for a minimum of one year may request a permanent transfer/relocation to any other City-owned unit upon availability.
- D. The VHC desires to adopt procedures with respect to the relocation of Lessees and Authorized Occupants that are “neutral, fair, and reasonable.” The VHC recognizes that unless it uniformly applies a relocation procedure to all lessees, it will not be treating all lessees neutrally and fairly.

Procedures

A. Temporary Relocations

1. When Temporary Relocation is Authorized. Temporary relocation shall be authorized, at City expense, only if a rental unit is uninhabitable or if it is determined that in light of required repairs to a rental unit, temporary relocation will facilitate more expedient and cost-effective repairs, even when the cost of temporary relocation is taken into account. Whether relocation should be authorized shall be determined on an objective basis in light of best practices for a private landlord, and shall be determined by disinterested City staff and/or consultants who have expertise with respect to the subject repair(s).
 - a. Required Relocation. If the City determines that a rental unit is uninhabitable, relocation shall be required until such time as the rental unit is returned to a habitable condition. Habitability shall be determined in light of the rental unit's current condition and in light of the effect any needed repairs may have on the habitability of the rental unit during the course of repairs.
 - b. Optional Relocation. If a rental unit is otherwise habitable, a Lessee shall have an option either to accept relocation or to decline relocation, at the Lessee's sole discretion, even if the total cost to repair to the rental unit shall be higher in light of the non-relocation.
2. Types of Alternative Housing. The type of alternative housing to which a Lessee and an Authorized Occupant is entitled shall be determined by the expected length of time alternative housing is required. If a temporary relocation is expected to last no more than 30 days, the relocation shall be presumed to be "short-term." If a temporary relocation is expected to last for more than 30 days, the relocation shall be presumed to be "long-term." Any presumption created by this procedure may be overcome if, as determined by the City, and based on the facts and circumstances of any particular case, an alternative categorization is appropriate.
 - a. Temporary Short-term Relocation. If temporary short-term relocation is authorized, the alternative housing shall be in the form of a qualifying hotel or other short-term housing option, as provided for in the Expense Reimbursement Policy (ERP), discussed below.
 - b. Temporary Long-term Relocation. If temporary long-term relocation is authorized, the alternative housing shall be in the form of a comparably furnished apartment with a comparable number of bedrooms and bathrooms as the subject rental unit.
3. Reimbursable Relocation Expenses. If temporary relocation is authorized, the City shall bear all reasonable costs associated with the relocation, including the cost of alternative housing, the reasonable cost, if any, of moving personal possessions from and to the rental unit to the temporary housing, and any reasonable increase in food costs, if any, necessitated by the relocation. To the extent the City's ERP then in effect covers a subject expense, the ERP shall

govern the type of expense that may be covered and the amount of coverage. To the extent the ERP does not cover a subject expense, an expense may be covered only if it is actually incurred, is reasonable as determined by the City, and only for the actual amount of the expense.

4. Rent Abatement as an Alternative. If a Lessee who is otherwise entitled to temporary relocation instead chooses to re-locate on his or her own, the Lessee shall be entitled to rent abatement for the length of time temporary relocation would have otherwise been authorized.
5. Approval Required by City Attorney or Outside Counsel. If the amount of expected reimbursable relocation expenses is in excess of \$5,000, prior approval of the expenditure from the City Attorney or outside counsel to the VHC shall be required.

B. Permanent Relocations

City Initiated Permanent Relocations

1. If a temporary long-term relocation becomes necessary as set forth in this procedure, the lessee, at the lessee's sole option, may request a permanent relocation to a then vacant City-owned housing unit in lieu of a temporary long-term relocation.
2. A lessee shall have 10 days from the date of receiving notice of the need for a temporary long-term relocation to elect a permanent relocation. A permanent relocation may be elected only if a housing unit is vacant at the time of the election and the vacant unit can be occupied within 30 days of the election.
3. If a lessee elects a permanent relocation, the lessee shall have priority over all other existing or potential new lessees to select a vacant housing unit.
4. Any lessee permanently relocating to a different unit will immediately pay the then established market rent for the unit to which the lessee has relocated. This will require a review and determination of the lessee's credit worthiness to lease such unit.

Lessee Initiated Permanent Relocations

1. All permanent relocation requests initiated by a lessee must be submitted in writing by filling out a Unit Transfer Request Form.
2. A lessee must have occupied his/her then-current unit for a minimum of one year prior to submitting a Unit Transfer Request Form.
3. A maximum of one Unit Transfer Request Form per lessee address will be accepted upon release of available units for which a lottery shall be conducted

at a Vernon Housing Commission meeting and shall be valid until a lottery is held. A new Unit Transfer Request Form must be submitted for each lottery.

4. Unit Transfer Request Forms are valid only for the unit specified and for the unit's upcoming lottery and shall be entered into the lottery following the provisions in Section 3 of the New Tenant Lease Procedures.
5. Those indicating interest in transferring to the available unit shall be entered into a lottery following the provisions of the New Tenant Lease Procedures. If that lessee either does not want to occupy the vacant unit, or does not qualify for the vacant unit, then the vacant unit shall be offered to the next lessee from the lottery results. If the vacant unit has been offered to all lessees with applicable Unit Transfer Requests, and none of the lessees either wants to occupy the vacant unit or qualifies for the vacant unit, then the vacancy shall be offered to those on the New Tenant Lease lottery selection.
6. The transferring tenant shall immediately pay full market rent for the new unit in addition to a security deposit equal to one month's rent for the new unit. If the transferring tenant has an existing security payment deposited with the City, that security amount will be applied towards the new unit security deposit and, if applicable, the tenant shall be required to pay any additional amount in order to make the total security deposit equal to one month's rent for the new unit. This will require a review and determination of the lessee's credit worthiness to lease such unit.