



## Legislation Text

---

**File #: 180653., Version: 4**

---

### **Renters' Rights and Responsibilities (B)**

On April 2, 2019, the Subcommittee discussed this item and directed staff to proceed with the below motion (the staff response follows each part of the motion):

- 1) Motion: Send information about cities with arbitration/mediation programs. Staff response: On April 3, 2019, the City Attorney sent an email to the Subcommittee members (a copy of the email is in the back-up) with the requested information. If the Commission desires to move forward with such a program, the “action officer” described in part 7 below could administer such a program, provided the Commission adopted program guidelines and budgeted funds to contract with mediators to hear the disputes;
  
- 2) Motion: Reach out to landlord and tenant organizations to gather what a tenant bill of rights and responsibilities would look like, to be given out when a lease is signed. Staff Response: Staff met with interested organizations and they support the creation of an updated brochure that is delivered at lease signing. Some ideas for the brochure included, creating one brochure that contains links to Chapter 83, Florida Statutes, the “Rental Housing Code” and the “Renters Rights” rather than separate handouts for each; a link to a website with detailed information on renter’s rights, landlord assistance programs and how to contact the Action Officer, if such a position is created. The Subcommittee’s placard idea was also discussed and owner’s representatives were opposed to a mandatory placard on the back of the front door, but did support an informational refrigerator magnet.
  
- 3) Motion: Work with landlord/tenant organizations to craft an education program. Staff response: Staff met with interested organizations and Gainesville-Alachua County Association of Realtors and others were willing to assist by creating videos (on topics such as fire prevention, being a good neighbor, treating your tenants fairly, good housekeeping practices, how to process claims with the court or how to work through a mediation program) that could be linked on the website discussed in 2 above.
  
- 4) Motion: Draft a tenant occupancy attestation to be included in a lease. Staff response: An occupancy affidavit to be signed by the tenant will be developed if the Commission moves forward with a Rental Housing Code Ordinance, as it was included as a requirement under the draft regulatory framework;
  
- 5) Motion: Draft a recommendation for income source and immigration status to be added to City Code and provide Alachua, Broward and other counties ordinances. Staff response: On April 12, 2019, the City Equal Opportunity Director sent an email with attached memorandum to the Subcommittee members (a copy of the

email and memorandum is in the back-up);

6) Motion: Find an entity to administer the landlord mitigation fund. Staff response: The landlord mitigation fund is a current referral dated March 7, 2019 on the Action Item List pending before the City Commission, it has been included as an increment in the FY2019/2020 Budget discussions and was scheduled for discussion as part of Item 170632 titled “Approaches to Reduce Homelessness” at the Joint City Commission/County Commission meeting on May 6, it is listed in the Recommendation as “Motion 3. Landlord Incentive Program.” Based on preliminary staff discussions, it appears the Gainesville Housing Authority may be willing to take the lead on discussions of creating such a fund. Staff notes this same topic is listed on the Rental Housing Subcommittee Referral List as Item No. 180798 titled “Landlords Incentives Plan.” The Commission may wish to eliminate these duplicative referrals; and

7) Motion: bring back budget and outline of how an action officer would help landlord/tenants navigate processes. Staff response: City Management and the City Equal Opportunity Director have discussed an Action Officer position to be housed in the EO Department that would assist with, among other duties, disseminating landlord/tenant information (e.g., the non-regulatory aspects of any City program that is created.) Further work is needed to develop a job description and budget increment for such a position. A preliminary budget estimate is \$51,911.50 for 1 FTE for an Action Officer (inclusive of salary and benefits.)

To be determined based on Commission direction.

Discuss this item.