



The Corporation of the District of North Vancouver

CORPORATE POLICY

Title	Residential Tenant Relocation Assistance Policy
Section	Development and Community Planning

POLICY

This policy provides guidelines for residential tenant relocation assistance.

This policy is supported by the District's Official Community Plan through the following goals:

- Encourage and enable a diverse mix of housing type, tenure and affordability to accommodate the lifestyles and needs of people at all stages of life; and
- Foster a safe, socially inclusive and supportive community that enhances the health and well-being of all residents.

Council recognizes that housing is essential to the well-being of all District residents. Existing residential buildings, particularly older purpose-built rental buildings, form an important source of housing in the District that tends to be more affordable for residents. Low rental vacancy rates mean that tenants being displaced by redevelopment can find it challenging to obtain alternate comparable and affordable accommodations in a timely manner.

Policy approved on: November 28, 2016

Policy amended on: March 19, 2018 and May 31, 2021

Applicability:

This policy is applicable to rezoning applications that result in the demolition of any building or combination of buildings containing five or more dwelling units occupied by renters as their primary place of residence at the time of submission of a Detailed Planning Application, including rental units in single family homes, strata units operating as rental units, and purpose-built rental units. This policy and the provisions outlined within represent the preferred suggestions for a voluntary commitment by the developer applicant (the "**Developer**") to support renters who may be evicted as part of a redevelopment.

Supports should generally be provided on a dwelling unit basis and should be provided to tenant households regardless of whether the tenancy agreement in place is periodic (month to month) or fixed term (lease). Any compensation provided to tenants by the Developer should not be used in Community Amenity Contribution negotiations. The Residential Tenant Relocation Assistance Policy does not replace or affect in any way the requirements set out in the *Residential Tenancy Act*.

Exemptions:

This policy does not apply to redevelopment that is permitted outright under existing zoning. Furthermore, tenants who move into an existing rental dwelling unit after submission of a Detailed Planning Application are not expected to receive the supports offered to pre-existing tenants and should be notified as such prior to signing their rental agreement.

Provisions:

A. Provisions at the Preliminary Planning Application Stage

At the Preliminary Planning Application stage, the Developer should notify all tenants in writing that plans for redevelopment are being made and that a relocation assistance package is part of these plans. Tenants should be informed that this is not a notice to vacate, but rather an early effort to inform tenants of possible upcoming changes. Early in the process, the Developer should provide tenants with information concerning the District's Residential Tenant Relocation Assistance Policy. Copies of these communication materials should be submitted to municipal planning staff.

B. Provisions at the Detailed Planning Application Stage

At the time of submission of a Detailed Planning Application, the Developer should submit a completed Residential Tenant Relocation Assistance Plan application form, which should include the following components:

1. Current Occupancy Assessment Summary:

Should contain the following information:

- a. Number of occupied and vacant units;
- b. Number of people living in each unit, if the tenant agrees to provide this information;
- c. Type of tenancy for each tenant household (e.g. periodic or fixed term);
- d. Start and, if relevant, end date of tenancy for each tenant household;
- e. Rent for each unit;
- f. Number of bedrooms of each unit; and
- g. Specific tenant household characteristics from the tenant household needs assessment form, should the tenant wish to provide this information, which may include mobility or accessibility features, the need for a pet-friendly unit, proximity to particular amenities such as schools, or number of parking spaces needed.

2. Tenant Assistance Package:

At minimum, the Tenant Assistance Package should include:

- a. Financial Assistance;
 - i. The equivalent of four months' rent (either by cash, free rent up to the maximum length of the notice period, or a combination of both as the tenant prefers) to each tenant household.

- ii. A residency bonus in the form of an additional \$35 per month for each month the tenant has resided in the rental unit or complex.
- iii. Assistance with moving expenses in the form of a flat rate payout of \$1,000 for studio and 1-bedroom units, \$1,250 for 2-bedroom units, and \$1,500 for 3-bedroom or larger units (Developers should adjust these amounts upwards annually based on an appropriate consumer index).

b. Relocation Assistance;

- i. An experienced Tenant Relocation Coordinator should be hired or appointed by the Developer to assist those tenants who wish assistance in finding new rental accommodation (the “Tenant Relocation Coordinator”).
- ii. The Tenant Relocation Coordinator should provide a list of at least three available, comparably priced rental dwelling units to each tenant household that have the same number of bedrooms as the current unit, are located within the District unless otherwise specified by the tenant household, and/or meet other needs or preferences specified by the tenant if possible. The Tenant Relocation Coordinator is also expected to help tenants secure units, including by providing references and by setting up viewing times for potential units, where desired. In the event of a dispute between the tenant and the Tenant Relocation Coordinator, the Developer should make available and pay for a mediator.
- iii. The recommended maximum rent for the available replacement rental units found by the Tenant Relocation Coordinator should be no more than the greater of:
 - 10% above the tenant’s current rent; or
 - 10% above the most recently published CMHC median rent level, by number of bedrooms, for Metro Vancouver

except in cases where the tenant has requested that the Tenant Relocation Coordinator provide a list of more expensive available rental units. When no comparably priced rental units are available, then available units closest to the comparable price should be provided

- iv. In cases where temporary housing is a possibility, then the Developer should provide interim housing options on site, if feasible, during the construction of the new building(s) for tenants who wish to return to the new units.
- v. In cases involving vulnerable tenants (e.g. seniors, persons with disabilities, tenants with low income, mental health issues, etc.), Developers are encouraged to connect the tenant to, or provide the tenant with information on, or otherwise facilitate, additional support to tenants, such as help accessing BC Housing rent supplement assistance (e.g. Shelter Aid for Elderly Residents (SAFER)), where appropriate, and partnering with health organizations and other non-profit services.

c. Timing of Compensation

If the tenant moves out prior to approval of the rezoning application, financial compensation is to be provided to the tenant by the Developer immediately following final adoption of the rezoning bylaw(s). For all other tenants, financial compensation is to be provided to the tenant no later than the date they move out whether or not a demolition permit has been obtained or an eviction notice has been served.

d. Notice to Vacate

The Developer should offer to provide to all remaining tenants in possession of rental units a minimum of six months' notice to vacate, after a Demolition Permit is issued by the District.

e. First Right to Rent

The Developer should offer evicted tenants the first right to rent in any new purpose-built rental units. In cases where rental units are replaced with below-market rental units, returning tenants must meet any applicable eligibility requirements. For tenants exercising the right to rent new purpose-built rental units at the development, compensation for moving expenses to reflect Section 2.a.iii should be provided at both the move out stage and when the tenant returns to the building.

- f. Evicted tenants who wish to purchase a strata unit or a "rent to own" in the new development should be offered a right of first refusal with a 5% purchase price discount.

3. Tenant Communications Plan:

The Developer should provide to the District an outline of how tenants will be involved and notified of input opportunities throughout the rezoning process. This communications plan will be included in the staff report for Council. Developers should provide updates to residents as the rezoning process progresses, including when the application for rezoning is considered at Council meetings, Council workshops, public information meetings, and Public Hearings. These notifications should be provided directly to tenants and where possible, posted in conspicuous places within the building(s). Information on tenant resources, including the Residential Tenancy Branch webpage, this Residential Tenant Relocation Assistance Policy, and resources available through the Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre, should also be made available to tenants. The Developer should provide copies of all written correspondence and notifications to municipal planning staff.

4. Tenant Relocation Coordinator:

The Developer should direct the Tenant Relocation Coordinator to aid tenants in finding alternative rental units, as specified in this policy, and to implement any Tenant Assistance Package offered to the tenants. The Tenant Relocation Coordinator should have regular hours during which they are available to the tenants by phone and email, and those hours should be convenient to the tenants and where possible, posted in conspicuous places on-site. Reasonable measures should be taken to ensure that any tenants with language barriers are provided pertinent information in their preferred language.

C. Provisions After Rezoning Approval

If the rezoning bylaw is adopted by Council, the Tenant Assistance Package that the Developer has voluntarily committed to the District to offer to the tenants will be secured by the District by way of a section 219 covenant granted by the Developer, or by such other means as may be required by the Municipal Solicitor. The agreed upon Tenant Relocation Package should be delivered in writing to each tenant's residential address by the Tenant Relocation Coordinator.

Authority to Act:

Administration of this policy is delegated to the Community Planning Department.