



CITY OF AUSTIN

Neighborhood Housing and Community Development

1000 East 11th Street, Suite 200 | Austin, Texas 78702

Phone: 512.974.3100

URGENT! Read this information right away!

Date: _____

To the Tenant Household at _____ (property address),

the owner of the above property has applied for a permit from the City of Austin to (select one)

demolish renovate the property. Because of this work, tenants will be required to move from the housing units on the property. Under the City's Tenant Notification and Relocation Assistance Ordinance, the owner of your building is required to notify you of the owner's intent to file an application with the City for a _____ permit.

PLEASE NOTE: This notice does NOT terminate your lease or require you to move at this time. This is only notice of the owner's intent to file an application with the City. The property owner must provide you with a separate written notice before requiring you to move, and must comply with the terms of your lease.

Under the Tenant Notification and Relocation Assistance Ordinance, the property owner cannot demolish your unit until 120 days have passed from the date of this letter. **However, this notice does NOT change the terms of your lease. Your current lease is still active and will determine what day you are required to move out. This notice does NOT allow you to stop paying rent; doing so could lead to eviction from your housing.**

Please read this material carefully. This packet explains your rights and responsibilities as a tenant and includes information about what you should do next.

For questions about your lease, contact:

Property Manager and/or Owner: _____

Contact Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

For questions about your rights as a tenant, contact:

Austin Tenants' Council: (512) 474-1961

www.housing-rights.org



For questions about your rights under the City of Austin's Tenant Notification and Relocation Assistance Ordinance, contact:

City of Austin Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Office
(512) 974-3100

Tenant Notification Information

The Austin Tenant Notification and Relocation Assistance Ordinance applies when residential tenants are displaced due to demolition of a multifamily building of 5 or more occupied units, or rezoning or redevelopment of a mobile home park. The owner of your building or mobile home park has applied to the City to do one of these activities at your housing development and is required to provide this notice to you.

This letter is your notice that an application has been filed with the City of Austin for work to be done at your housing development that may result in you having to move. Your housing unit cannot be demolished until 120 days (4 months) have passed from the date of this notice. However, your lease will determine when you are required to move out.

 **Please note that this is NOT a notice terminating your lease or requiring you to move at this time.** 

Next Steps

1. Check your lease to see what is required for move-out – especially to see if you must give advance notice of your move-out date.
2. Start looking for new housing so that you can move by the end of the notice period, or the end of your lease, whichever comes first.
3. Make sure you have the required documents to apply for new housing (ID, proof of income, etc.).
4. Make sure you are current on your rent and other fees so that your security deposit can be returned. More information on security deposits and other tenant rights is found on page 3 of this packet.
5. Once you have found a new home, provide your current landlord with a forwarding address so you can receive your security deposit.
6. Contact Austin Energy for information on connection fees and deposits at your new home (see page 3 for information on how to do this).

Basic Information on Tenants' Rights in Texas

- **Lease Terms**

Your current lease is still in place until you and your landlord negotiate otherwise. Your landlord must abide by the terms of your current lease through the end of the lease term. You must continue to pay rent through the end of your lease. Keep in mind that you can always be evicted if you fail to pay your rent on time, threaten the safety of the landlord, or intentionally damage the property. You may be able to negotiate an early release from your lease or an extension on a month-to-month basis. If you choose to do that, it is extremely important that you have those arrangements in writing and signed by both parties. Contact Austin Tenants' Council for additional help in negotiating and documenting those types of lease changes or agreements.

- **Repairs and Retaliation**

If you are current on rent, you have a right to repairs that are a threat to your health and safety, through the end of your lease. You do not have a right to withhold rent because the landlord fails to make repairs when the condition needing repair does not threaten your health and safety. If you try this method, the landlord may file suit against you. Under Texas law, your landlord cannot retaliate against you for requesting repairs that affect your health and safety. Contact Austin Tenants' Council for more information about how to request repairs or if you feel you've been retaliated against.

- **Security Deposit**

If you are current on rent at the end of your lease, you have a right to the full return of your security deposit minus lawful deductions. By law, your landlord must return the security deposit within 30 days of the end of your lease. You should check your rental agreement to see if it requires you to give the landlord advance notice that you are moving. Make sure to give your current landlord a forwarding address in order to receive your security deposit.

If you have questions, need help accessing your rights, or are experiencing problems in your housing, please contact the **Austin Tenants' Council (ATC) at (512) 474-1961**.

Utility Connection Fees and Deposits

Contact **Austin Energy at (512) 494-9400** when you are ready to move in to your new home to find out about options for utility deposits and other initiation fees.

If You Have a Child in School

Many school districts, including Austin ISD, allow a student to continue attending the same school if they move to a new attendance zone during the school year. Students may also be able to finish out the semester at their original school if they move out of the school district during the semester. Families can submit transfer forms if the students wish to stay at that school longer. Contact your school district's **Office of Student Services** to find out how to keep your child in the same school after your move.

City of Austin Programs for Renters

The programs below may be helpful for low-income renters. To find out more, or to apply for these programs, contact the phone number or website listed with each program description.

- **Utilities: Austin Energy – Financial Support Plus 1**

This program provides emergency financial aid to utility customers who are having a temporary problem paying their utility bills. The funds are distributed by local social service agencies.

For the list of participating agencies and how to apply, visit

<http://austinenergy.com/wps/portal/ae/residential/your-bill/customer-assistance-programs/financial-support-plus1>.

- **Renter's Rights: Austin Tenants' Council – Renter's Rights Assistance Program**

If you are a renter and need assistance with landlord issues, the Renters' Rights Assistance Program (RRAP) provides direct counseling and mediation to low-income renters on tenant-landlord issues.

For more information on the RRAP Program, please contact the Austin Tenants' Council at (512) 474-1961.

- **Food: WIC**

WIC is a supplemental nutrition program for pregnant women, new mothers, and young children. Participants learn about nutrition and how to stay healthy, and receive benefits to purchase healthy foods.

For an appointment with WIC, call (512) 972-4942 or visit www.austintexas.gov/wic for more information.

- **Food and Household Expenses: SNAP and TANF**

SNAP helps people who make less than \$1,600 per month (or more if there are other people in your household) buy groceries. TANF can help families who have only a few hundred dollars per month pay for basic needs like food, clothing, housing, utilities, or laundry.

To find out more about these programs, go to <https://yourtexasbenefits.hhsc.texas.gov/>.

- **Other Programs**

Call 2-1-1 or visit www.AuntBertha.com for more programs in the Austin area.