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# COLTA Newsletter

The Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland  
Established by the City of Takoma Park to adjudicate and mediate complaints for violation of the city's  
Landlord-Tenant Relations law and to rule on petitions for rent increases above the rent stabilization  
allowance. (6.24.020 TP Code). Staff Contacts-

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## COLTA Annual Report

In July, COLTA Chairperson Smith, Vice-Chairperson Hill and LL-T staff person Wilds presented the 2008-09 annual report to the City Council. Council accepted the report and acknowledged the city's continuing appreciation for the Commission's service. Questions raised by the Council during the July appearance including Commission subpoena powers, a concern about improper landlord entry and enforcing Commission Orders were addressed in a 10/15/09 missive from the Ass't City Att'y and discussed in the October followup Council appearance by Chairperson Smith, Ex. Dir. Sigman and LL-T staff person Wilds.



## Special points of interest:

- \* COLTA Annual Report
- \* COLTA Decisions
- \* Do You Know???
- \* From the Chair
- \* A Word From Moses

## COLTA Decisions

09-3T-Saunders v. Tenacity NH Ave., LLC et al (Smith, Munger, Hill) - Tenant was awarded monetary damages and rent rebate for her defective tenancy claim.

09-6TA- Hampshire Towers T/Ass'n v. Tenacity NH Ave., LLC et al (Wasser, Wakelyn, Wohl)- Tenant Ass'n was awarded monetary damages/rent rebate for their defective tenancy complaint but their improper NTV claim was denied.

09-5T-Flores v. Shonumi (Clennon, F-Doyle, Liebreich)-Tenant awarded security deposit + interest and damages.

09-6TA-Birchwood T Ass'n. v. Patner-(Wakelyn, Wasser, Smith)- 4 of 5 of the Tenant Ass'n.'s defective tenancy complaints were denied.

09-8TA-Hampshire Towers T. Ass'n. v. Tenacity NH Ave., LLC et al-(Wasser, Wakelyn, Wohl)-T. Ass'n.'s improper NTV complaint was denied. T. Ass'n.'s defective tenancy complaint was granted and monetary damages awarded.

09-9T-Saunders v. Tenacity NH Ave. LLC et al-(Liebreich, Wohl, Wakelyn)-Tenant's defective tenancy complaint was denied.

09-10,11,12,14T-San Nicholas et al v. 8708 Bradford Rd., LLC et al-(Canales, Munger, Liebreich)-Tenants defective tenancy/illegal rent complaint were granted. And monetary damages awarded.

09-17T-Battle v. Giakoumatos-(Smith, Clennon, Price)-Tenant's security deposit refund complaint was denied.

09-18T-Henson v. 8314 Roanoke Ave., LLC -(Wasser, Munger)-Tenant's illegal rent/defective tenancy complaints were granted and monetary damages awarded.

## Do You Know????

- The Landlord-Tenant staff conducts periodic "Your Rights as a Tenant" workshops for city tenants. A workshop was held on October 14, 2009 and the next one will be held in February, 2010 at a Maple Ave. apt. building.
- The Landlord-Tenant staff participates in monthly Landlord Certification Seminars.
- The Landlord-Tenant staff will conduct training for landlords on electronic submission of rent reports in the late summer/early fall of 2010.
- Ministries United Silver Spring Takoma Park (MUSST) was selected and received City Council endorsement to administer the city's Emergency Assistance Fund Program.
- The Landlord-Tenant Staff will conduct Fair Return Petition Training for Landlords on 12/10/09, from 7:00-9:00pm, on 2/24/10 from 9:30am-11:30am and on 4/24/10 from 7:00pm-9:00pm. All training sessions will be held at 7500 Maple Avenue.

## From the Chair

Thanks again to Commission members who provided written responses to requests for comments on selected questions from council members during the July presentation of the COLTA Annual Report. Your responses were incorporated into the written response to the council.

For the period 7/08-6/09, twenty-two (22) Landlord-Tenant Complaints were filed of which eleven (11) were mediated without a hearing. Of those proceeding to a hearing, Security Deposit refunds followed by Notice to Vacate and

Defective Tenancy were the top three complaint subject areas.

Commissioners are reminded to provide the LL-T Office with as much advance notice as possible when there is a conflict that will prevent their attendance at a hearing.

Best wishes for a safe and enjoyable holiday season and continuing success in 2010.



**Section 6.16.140 of the City's Landlord-Tenant law requires that tenants be provided a minimum of 48-hours written notice prior to entry by the landlord or his/her agent.. If a Tenant has requested repairs to their apartment and the repairs are done within two weeks of the request, the 48-hr notice is not required. A report of entry should always be left if the tenant is not present in the apartment at the time of repair.**

## A Word From Moses

Welcome to new Commissioners Lauren Price and Victoria Sutton.

Best wishes to former Commission Co-Chairperson Joanne Hill who resigned following her moving out of the city.

**COLTA Hearings until Council Chamber renovations are completed will be held in available rooms at the city's Community Center.**

Four commissioners whose current terms will expire on June 30, 2010 will be sent their reappointment applications which are to be returned to the city clerk.

An article in the monthly city newsletter entitled "Housing Mailbox" answers tenant and landlord questions based on selected sections of the city's landlord-tenant relations law.

Commissioners are again requested

to provide me with your suggestions for topics to be included in future editions of the COLTA Newsletter.

Have a safe and enjoyable holiday season!

