
OFFICE OF THE TENANT ADVOCATE
SUMMARY OF TENANT RIGHTS UNDER SECTION 501(f)
OF THE RENTAL HOUSE ACT OF 1985

The purpose of section 501(f) is to provide for the temporary relocation of tenants for the purpose of making alterations and repairs that cannot safely be made while the units are occupied. The "Tenant Evictions Reform Amendment Act of 2006" added detailed application, notice and relocation requirements to better ensure that:

- a. No tenant is evicted except for the *bona fide* statutory purpose;
- b. The tenant may exercise the absolute right to reoccupy the rental unit; and
- c. The tenant may reoccupy the rental unit at the same rent, provided that the alterations or renovations re necessary to bring the rental unit into substantial compliance with the housing regulations.

Section 501(f) scenario:

1. **Filing of application:** housing provider files plans for the alterations or renovations filed with the Rent Administrator and the Chief Tenant Advocate, together with:
 - a. Application & explanation.
 - b. Copy of notice to tenants of application.
 - c. Draft 120-day Notice to Vacate.
 - d. Timetable for: tenant relocation; completion of work; progress reports.
 - e. Tenant relocation plan.
2. **Inspection:** A DCRA inspector must inspect the housing accommodation for the accuracy of material statements in the application; report findings to the Rent Administrator and the Chief Tenant Advocate.
3. **Notice to Tenants:** OTA must give tenants notice of rights & availability to assist tenants throughout process. Also on or before the filing of the application, the housing provider must give the tenant:
 - a. Notice of the application;
 - b. Notice of all tenant rights;
 - c. A list of sources of technical assistance as published in the District of Columbia Register by the Mayor;
 - d. A summary of the plan for the alterations and renovations to be made; and
 - e. Notice that the plan in its entirety is on file and available for review at the office of the Rent Administrator, at the office of the Chief Tenant Advocate, and at the rental office of the housing provider.
4. **Tenant comment period:** tenants have 21 days to comment on information included in application and on impact of plan.
5. **Housing provider's 120-day Notice to Vacate** must include: (a) notification of tenant rights; (b) a list of sources of technical assistance; (c) a copy of the notice issued by the Chief Tenant Advocate.
6. **OTA's role:** assist tenants throughout process, make inquiries into housing provider's compliance with the law, and maintain registry of relocated tenants.
7. **Housing provider's notice to tenants when units ready to be reoccupied:** required within 5 days of the completion of alterations and renovations.