

2008-2009 ANNUAL REPORT

Commission on Landlord –Tenant Affairs (COLTA)

COLTA Membership

The ordinance establishing the Commission on Landlord and Tenant Affairs provides for the appointment of twelve members and is intended to include representation from Takoma Park tenants, homeowners, and landlords. There are currently 12 members serving on COLTA. Five of the current members are home owners, four are landlords, and three are tenants. Four of the commission members whose terms expired June 30, 2009 sought reappointment and received council approval for new three-year terms ending June 30, 2012. Two new commissioners were appointed by the council to terms that end on June 30, 2011. A roster of the current membership is attached.

The Commission is an experienced group of volunteers, appointed by the Council for staggered three-year terms. During their respective tenure, ten of the members have heard complaints on landlord-tenant issues or rent increase petitions/fair return petitions. New Commissioners receive an orientation session where the Takoma Park Landlord-Tenant and COLTA Codes, administrative regulations, hearing procedures and forms are reviewed. New Commissioners also routinely attend COLTA Hearings as observers prior to sitting on a hearing panel.

COLTA Case Load Activity

Caseload Activity	July 2007-June 2008	July 2008-June 2009
COLTA Cases Filed	41	24
Landlord Tenant Cases	21	22
Mediated (a)	11 (a)	11 (a)
COLTA Hearings	10	6
Security Deposit Refunds	6	9
Defective Tenancy / Notice to Vacate	6	9 4(b)
Rent Stabilization Rent Increase Petitions	20	2
Preliminary Administrative Decisions (PAD) Issued	21	2
Preliminary Administrative Decisions (PAD) Pending	0	2
Rent Increase Petition Objections	0	0

(a) Complaints mediated by HCD Landlord Tenant Mediation Specialist

(b) Hearing Pending

COLTA Business Meetings

COLTA conducts a minimum of one business meeting per year in addition to the hearings which are scheduled to address unresolved complaints filed by landlords and tenants in addition to any objections filed in response to Preliminary Administrative Decisions rendered by the Commission.

The minutes of COLTA's December 11, 2007 and December 17, 2008 business meetings are attached.

Other COLTA Activities

Commission members are provided drafts of proposed housing legislative initiatives and administrative regulations for their review and comments. Their comments have been of assistance in the development of the COLTA Administrative Regulations and in the review of the city's Rent Stabilization Law. A COLTA Newsletter designed by the Landlord-Tenant Division and written by the Landlord-Tenant Mediation Specialist is provided to commissioners twice per year. A copy of the Fall 2008 and Spring 2009 COLTA Newsletter editions are attached.

COLTA Staffing

Responsibility for the staffing of the Commission has been assigned to the Landlord-Tenant Mediation Specialist in the Housing and Community Development Department's Landlord Tenant Division. The Assistant City Attorney serves as the Commission's Executive Director.

Attachments: Commission on Landlord and Tenant Affairs Membership Roster (July 2009)
COLTA Business Meeting Minutes (December 11, 2007, December 17, 2008)
COLTA Newsletter (Fall 2008, Spring 2009)

July 22, 2009