
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING – EXPANDED EVICTION GROUNDS

A recent amendment by the province of British Columbia to the Residential Tenancy Act (the “Act”) will significantly increase supportive housing providers’ grounds for eviction with problematic tenants. This encouraging change comes amid concerns raised by both operators and municipalities regarding troubling safety incidents with some residents. While the changes are for the benefit of providers, they have nonetheless aimed to maintain basic protections for supportive housing tenants.

Background to the Changes

Supportive housing is subsidized housing that provides on-site supports for adults, seniors and people with disabilities or those at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness. While there are certain important carve-outs related to tenant’s right to quiet enjoyment, restrictions on entering the unit, and guest protections, operators are still bound by the Residential Tenancy Branch (the “RTB”) and the Act. These operators are a significant resource, with approximately 15,000 people serviced across the province.

Engagement regarding the potential legislative changes began in summer 2025, and it involved not just supportive housing providers, but also sector associations, law enforcement, union representatives, tenant advocates and those with lived experience. This process revealed that there have been rare but serious safety incidents involving both tenants and their guests, requiring more tools and support for operators. The intent of both the consultation and these changes is to properly strike a balance between promoting safety while still maintaining Residential Tenancy Act-related protections for tenants in the supportive housing sector.

The Legislative Amendments

The bill in question is Bill 18, the Residential Tenancy Amendment Act, and it will expand the circumstances under which supportive housing sites can evict tenants. The operator will be able to apply for an order to end a tenancy if a resident, or their guest, has possession of a weapon on the property.

The bill will also increase protections for workers in the sector, and violence against staff will now be a reason for eviction in any type of housing. Finally, landlords will also be able to restrict the

access of residents to the housing site while they are seeking the expedited eviction process with the RTB. These changes are in addition to earlier updates in 2024 that defined supportive housing in the Residential Tenancy Regulation and expanded the right to implement policies for guest management and wellness checks.

Sector Response

Despite support from supportive housing providers, some stakeholders in the industry have expressed concerns. The Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre (“TRAC”) has claimed that while the changes may seem like a good idea, they actually further restrict tenant rights in an area where landlords already have an enormous amount of power. This tenant advocate is concerned that the bill does not leave enough room for tenants to defend themselves against accusations regarding weapons, and that many providers already have policies that can lead to eviction on this ground.

That being said, the BC Non-Profit Housing Association (“BCNPHA”) believes that these changes strike a good balance between the rights of people with the operations realities of supportive housing, and that “ultimately, these changes will help ensure safer communities for both residents and staff.” More generally, sector engagement has demonstrated that a growing number of sites have been linked by local residents, businesses and police to frequent emergency calls, drug use, public disorder and violence. This can affect safety and quality of life not just within the housing units, but in the surrounding neighborhood as well.

Supportive housing staff have also indicated that the changes are therefore a welcome step in helping manage difficult tenants with complex issues. Providers also believe that these additions will assist in protecting non-problematic residents as well. To help maintain a balance, the Province will continue to engage with the sector and various partners as these regulations are implemented.

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