

# Strongest tenant protections in decades begin Jan. 1, 2020

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Venus Zuhura Noble, a social worker with Alameda County, speaks about her many clients that cannot afford to live in the city they work in because of housing costs at Frank Ogawa Plaza in Oakland, Calif., on Monday, April 23, 2018. Supporters of a California ballot initiative to lift statewide restrictions on rent control stage rallies in Oakland, Sacramento and Los Angeles as part of an effort to repeal the state’s Costa Hawkins Rental Housing Act. (Laura A. Oda/Bay Area News Group)

## Sponsors of the Tenant Protection Act launch TenantProtections.org to help tenants learn their new rights and how to defend them

**by Amy Schur, ACCE Campaign Director**

On Jan. 1, 2020, ACCE Action, TechEquity Collaborative, Code for San Francisco and Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto launched an early (beta) version of [tenantprotections.org](https://tenantprotections.org). The new site will help the 17 million Californians who rent learn about and defend their rights under the new law taking effect New Year’s Day.

[Tenantprotections.org](https://tenantprotections.org) is designed to serve as a self-help resource for tenants. The site includes an eligibility test where tenants can enter basic information about their residence and tenancy to determine if they are covered by the law, and, if so, what their rights are. The site also helps tenants defend their rights by providing a downloadable letter to send to their landlord informing them of their rights and provides connections to legal aid services and tenant organizations. The site is still under construction, but basic functionality in both English and Spanish is now available to tenants, with additional improvements to launch in the coming weeks.

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came together under the Keep Families Home coalition to ensure the bill's passage through the legislature in 2019. Sponsors of the legislation included ACCE Action, Public Advocates, PICO California, PolicyLink, TechEquity Collaborative, and the Western Center on Law and Poverty.

The Tenant Protection Act of 2019 (AB 1482) caps annual rent increases in California to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 5 percent. CPI varies by metro area, but it averages roughly 2.5 percent in California. Thus, under the cap of CPI plus five percent in AB 1482, the cap on annual rent increases varies by region, but tends to be within the range of 7-8 percent.

Rent increases cannot exceed 10 percent under the bill. Furthermore, the new law provides covered tenants with just cause for eviction protections, preventing landlords from issuing arbitrary and retaliatory evictions.

Under the Tenant Protection Act of 2019, roughly 8 million California tenants are eligible for just cause and anti-rent gouging protections. However, tenants will need assistance in navigating and defending these new rights. That's why sponsors of the Tenant Protection Act of 2019 (AB 1482) TechEquity Collaborative and ACCE Action in partnership with Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto and volunteers at Code for San Francisco have developed [tenantprotections.org](https://tenantprotections.org).

The [tenantprotections.org](https://tenantprotections.org) project is a unique collaboration between technologists and non-profit advocacy organizations. The site was built by a volunteer team of engineers from Code for America in San Francisco through their Brigade projects, which allow technologists to build projects that serve their communities. Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto (CLESPA), a legal aid organization serving tenants, and ACCE Action, a co-sponsor of AB1482 and tenant advocacy organization, provided expertise to ensure the site was accurate and best serves tenants.

TechEquity Collaborative, another co-sponsor of AB 1482, served as product manager for the site, coordinating efforts between coder-volunteers and tenant-serving stakeholders. TechEquity mobilizes tech workers to build a more equitable tech-driven economy, by building a bridge between tech and the community through volunteerism, advocacy, and projects like [tenantprotections.org](https://tenantprotections.org).



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