



Spokane Municipal Code

***Note: Many local criminal codes can now be located under [Chapter 10.60 SMC](#) while others are now cited under the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), which was incorporated into the municipal code in 2022. (See [SMC 10.58.010](#)). Code Enforcement, including Noise Control and Animal Regulations are located in Chapters 10.62 through 10.74.

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[Title 10](#) Regulation of Activities

Division II. License Code

[Chapter 10.57](#) Regulation of Residential Rental Housing

[Section 10.57.005](#) Definitions

For the purposes of this chapter:

A. “Algorithm service provider” means any person that uses any methodology, including a computer, software, or other technology, used by two or more persons, that uses nonpublic competitor information to recommend, align, stabilize, set, or otherwise influence the prices, supply levels, occupancy rates, lease contract terms, or rental contract terms, of residential dwelling units.

1. “Algorithm service provider” does not include standard property management software, market research tools, or data analysis services that do not constitute collusive or anti-competitive practices.

B. “Coordinate” and “coordinating” shall mean an algorithm service provider is:

1. Collecting nonpublic historical, anticipated, or contemporary prices, price changes, supply levels, occupancy rates, or lease or rental contract termination and renewal dates of residential dwelling units from two or more landlords; and

2. Analyzing or processing nonpublic competitor information through the use of a system or software that utilizes an algorithmic or other automated process to provide recommendations regarding rental prices, lease renewal terms, or occupancy levels to more than one landlord;

3. “Coordinate” and “coordinating” do not include publishing rental price estimates that:

- a. Are solely based on publicly available information; or
 - b. Are equally available to all members of the public; or
 - c. Do not require a contract, agreement, or registration to obtain.
- C. "Dwelling unit" has the meaning as defined in SMC 17A.020.040.
- D. "Landlord" means the owner, lessor or sublessor of the dwelling unit or the property of which it is a part, and in addition, means any person designated as a representative of the landlord.
- E. "Nonpublic competitor information" means information or data that is:
1. Not available to the general public; and
 2. Relates to property or residential rental dwelling units other than those owned or managed by the landlord receiving or using generated pricing recommendations from an algorithm service provider; and
 3. Such information or data is less than one-hundred eighty (180) days old.
- F. "Person" has the meaning as defined in SMC 01.02.100.
- G. "Stabilize" means for two or more landlords to use nonpublic competitor information from an algorithm service provider to coordinate the vacancy rates of residential rental dwelling units to generate favorable prices or terms of agreement.

Date Passed: Monday, December 1, 2025

Effective Date: Thursday, January 8, 2026

ORD C36778 Section 2

Section 10.57.010 Purpose and Intent

- A. The purpose of this chapter is to establish regulations supporting housing security to reduce homelessness and to establish standards and enforcement mechanisms as they relate to rental housing within the municipal boundaries of the City of Spokane. It is the intent of the Spokane City Council to continue its long-term commitment to maintain healthy, vibrant and diverse neighborhoods within the City of Spokane. The regulations contained in this chapter balance the needs of all community members to ensure safe, healthy, and thriving rental housing within the City's municipal boundaries. The City recognizes that the renting of residential property is a commercial venture that supplies the basic human need of adequate shelter. Providing housing for Spokane's residents directly impacts quality of life at the most basic level, and therefore requires regulations to ensure that this commercial venture is equitably undertaken to meet the shelter needs of City residents. This chapter attempts to ensure housing security for current and future residents and the owners of rental residential properties within the City of Spokane by providing clear expectations and bridging gaps that current state laws and market conditions have created.

- B. In an effort to carry out that intent, the Spokane City Council has determined that it is necessary to implement baseline standards for the rental of residential real property in Spokane, and to streamline and make more affordable the process of obtaining rental housing by establishing portable background checks, tenant relocation, and landlord mitigation programs.
- C. Washington state law and the Spokane Municipal Code already require owners and operators of rental residential properties to secure a business license and the City of Spokane intends to use the revenues from those license fees that would otherwise accrue to the general fund to support tenants and landlords in specific initiatives that will benefit landlords and tenants and increase the supply of habitable residential rental housing.
- D. Washington Law and the Spokane Municipal Code already authorizes Code Enforcement to inspect residential properties within the City for compliance with state and municipal safety and habitability standards with the consent of the resident or by court order. The City intends to provide additional resources to Code Enforcement for dedicated inspectors to increase inspections regardless of complaints to identify and remedy unsafe and uninhabitable residential conditions regardless of a resident's willingness to risk complaining. The City further intends to provide resources to create a position of rental housing navigator to support landlords and tenants in resolving conflicts between each other and City administration in achieving the goals of this chapter.

Date Passed: Monday, February 27, 2023

Effective Date: Sunday, April 9, 2023

ORD C36330 Section 1

[Section 10.57.020](#) Business Licensing and Registration

- A. Pursuant to Chapter [08.01](#) SMC, owning, renting, or leasing real property located in the City of Spokane constitutes engaging in business in the City and requires an annual business license and registration. No person shall make available for rent, or rent, lease, or let, to the public any residential housing unit without registering and maintaining registration of the residential rental property at which the unit is located pursuant to subsection (C) of this section.
- B. The annual fee for registering the business activity of renting residential real property shall be the standard annual fee described in [SMC 08.02.0206\(A\)](#) plus an additional \$15 per residential rental unit per year. Units exempt from the annual \$15 fee are:
 - 1. units in a federally funded property owned or operated by a public housing authority under chapter RCW 35.82.
 - 2. units in a property that is funded through a housing assistance program under RCW 43.185.
 - 3. affordable housing units in a property that is funded through the City's housing programs under [SMC Title 08](#).
 - 4. units in a property occupied by a tenant utilizing a Housing Choice Voucher or Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Voucher.

- C. Application for a residential rental registration shall be made to the City through a web portal established by the City of Spokane IT Department. The application shall include the applicable registration fee set forth in [SMC 08.02.0206\(A\)](#) and paragraph (B) of this section, including late fees if applicable, a declaration of compliance as described in subsection (G) of this section and a complete list of individual residential rental units under the applicant's ownership or control, including the street address of each unit, identification of whether the unit is offered at market rate or below market rate rent, whether the unit is occupied or unoccupied at the time of registration, and such other information as required in order to carry out the intent of this chapter.
- D. A property management company may apply for and secure the required business registration on behalf of a residential rental property owner.
- E. A residential rental registration expires on December 31st of the calendar year following registration or renewal.
- F. The residential rental registration is transferable to any person who has acquired ownership of a registered rental property for the unexpired portion of the one-year term for which it was issued.
- G. As a condition to the issuance and/or renewal of a residential rental registration, an applicant shall provide a valid declaration of compliance addressing each rental unit in the rental property prior to the issuance of a residential rental business registration. A declaration of compliance submitted under this chapter must state that each unit complies with the requirements and standards in RCW 59.18.060.
- H. Property owners or their property managers shall provide each tenant a digital link to the website established pursuant to [SMC 10.57.030\(B\)](#) and if the tenant doesn't have access to the internet advise them to call 311 for more information on tenant rights and responsibilities.
- I. A person may not increase the periodic or monthly housing costs charged to a tenant if the person does not have an annual City of Spokane business license or has not complied with the requirement of registering each residential housing unit with the City of Spokane and certification that each residential housing unit complies with the requirements and standards of RCW 59.18.060.
- J. A person may not evict a tenant if the person does not have an annual City of Spokane business license or has not complied with the requirement of registering each residential rental property unit with the City of Spokane and certification that each residential rental property unit complies with the requirements and standards of RCW 59.18.060. A person complies with this section if he or she has obtained an annual business license, and the residential rental property unit is registered with the City of Spokane before entry of a court order authorizing eviction or before a writ of restitution is granted. A court may grant a continuance in an eviction action in order to give a person time to license the rental housing unit and to obtain an annual City of Spokane business license.

Date Passed: Monday, October 14, 2024

Effective Date: Saturday, November 23, 2024

ORD C36576 Section 1

Section 10.57.030 Residential Rental Housing Navigator

- A. The City of Spokane's Department of Community, Housing and Human Services or the Office of Civil Rights, Equity and Inclusion is authorized to publish a request for qualifications ("RFQ") from local entities that have the capability to serve as a housing navigator for landlords and tenants in the community and contract for services; or create a position within the department to accomplish the same function. This work would focus on education about resources for landlords and tenants seeking assistance with questions and complaints about complying with fair housing, habitability and other residential rental requirements.
- B. The City of Spokane's department of Community, Housing and Human Services, in coordination with the City's Office of Civil Rights, Equity and Inclusion, may establish a public-facing website that provides links to access a variety of resources for landlords and tenants, including tenant rights and responsibilities, a change of address form, and a voter registration form. The City will make the website compliant with Resolution 2022-0071, approved by the City Council August 1, 2022, ensuring its accessibility for languages most commonly spoken in Spokane. Request for additional reasonable accommodations to access the public-facing website may be made to the City's department of Community, Housing and Human Services or Office of Civil Rights, Equity and Inclusion.

Date Passed: Monday, February 27, 2023

Effective Date: Sunday, April 9, 2023

ORD C36330 Section 1

Section 10.57.040 Inspections

- A. The City of Spokane's Code Enforcement Department may conduct both periodic and cause-based inspections of all residential rental property that is subject to this chapter.
1. Periodic inspections: Subject to the limitations in RCW 59.18.125, the Director of Code Enforcement or designee may periodically select from registered properties containing rental housing units the properties to be inspected by Code Enforcement as long as the tenant of the residence consents or a lawful court-ordered warrant for inspection is secured. The property selection process shall be based on a methodology adopted by the Director that will further the purpose of this chapter. The inspection shall review for compliance with the standards set forth in [SMC 17F.070.400](#) and other applicable state and local statutes.
 2. In addition to periodic inspections, the Code Enforcement department is also authorized to conduct cause-based inspections, including those provided for under RCW 59.18.115. Where context is needed in addition to the deficiency categories in SMC 17F.070.400, Code Enforcement staff will utilize the latest edition of the International Code Council's International Property Maintenance Code for that context as it may apply to both periodic and cause-based inspections.
 3. Code Enforcement will prioritize resources based on the level of safety sensitivity to be addressed by an inspection and available resources.

B. No fees shall be assessed to landlords or tenants for the initial inspection authorized of this section.

1. If a deficiency is discovered during the initial inspection conducted under paragraph (A)(1) of this section, Code Enforcement may schedule a second inspection to review for remedy of the deficiency and compliance with the standards set forth in [SMC 17F.070.400](#) and other applicable state and local statutes.
2. Upon second inspection, if the deficiency is not remedied, Code Enforcement may schedule subsequent deficiency inspections and assess fees against the residential rental unit's registrant for the additional safety inspections as established in [SMC 08.02.031\(S\)](#).
3. Failure to pay assessed fees will bar renewal of a residential rental unit business registration.
4. At the discretion of the Director, Code Enforcement may issue notices of violation and infraction pursuant to SMC 01.05.040 for residential rental units that do not comply with the standards set forth in [SMC 17F.070.400](#). Additionally, the Director or designee of the Director may issue a complaint to the residential rental unit's registrant pursuant to [SMC 17F.070.420](#) to proceed through a building official hearing pursuant to [chapter 17F.070 SMC](#).
5. A repeat offender is defined as the owner of residential rental unit(s) who has a confirmed non-compliance history, including any identical or similar violations of [SMC 17F.070.400](#), Existing Building and Conservation Code, at the same site or on a different tax parcel under the same ownership, two times within a 12-month period. If an owner is found to be a repeat offender, they may be subject to a non-compliance fee of \$2,500 per violation that is not resolved by the compliance timeframe listed on the Code Enforcement Notice of Violation.

C. Code Enforcement may utilize revenues received from business registrations pursuant to [SMC 10.57.020](#), [SMC 08.02.0206](#), and [SMC 07.08.139](#) to:

1. Create at least three additional dedicated inspector positions for residential rental housing;
2. To develop and maintain the rental registry described in [SMC 10.57.020](#).

Date Passed: Monday, October 14, 2024

Effective Date: Saturday, November 23, 2024

ORD C36576 Section 2

[Section 10.57.050 Appeals](#)

A. General. Appeals of registration denials, revocations, or suspensions; other final, written decisions or determinations made by the director under this chapter; and the written findings of an inspection by a city building code enforcement officer relative to the application and interpretation of this code (i.e., decisions) may be appealed to the hearing examiner by filing a notice of appeal in the form specified in subsection (B) of this section at the city of Spokane permit center and paying the applicable appeal fee within 14 days of issuance of the decision.

- B. Form of Notice of Appeal. A person appealing a decision must pay the applicable appeal fee and submit a completed notice of appeal which sets forth:
1. The decision being appealed and the date it was issued;
 2. Facts demonstrating that the person is adversely affected by the decision;
 3. A statement identifying each alleged error in the decision;
 4. The specific relief requested; and
 5. Any other information reasonably necessary to make a decision on the appeal.
- C. No suspension or revocation of a registration issued pursuant to the provision of this chapter shall take effect until 14 days after the mailing of the notice thereof by the department and, if appeal is taken as herein prescribed, the suspension or revocation shall be stayed pending final action by the hearing examiner.
- D. The decision of the hearing examiner shall be final. The owner and/or the department may seek review of the decision by the superior court of Washington in and for Spokane County within 21 days from the date of the decision. If review is sought as herein prescribed, the suspension or revocation shall be stayed pending final action by the superior court.
- E. Upon revocation or suspension of any registration as provided in this chapter, no portion of the registration fee shall be refunded.

Date Passed: Monday, February 27, 2023

Effective Date: Sunday, April 9, 2023

ORD C36330 Section 1

[Section 10.57.060](#) Consistency with Chapter 59.18 RCW, Authority to Promulgate Public Rules

- A. The provisions of this chapter shall be interpreted and enforced in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of Chapter 59.18 RCW.
- B. Any public rule promulgated under this chapter shall be adopted pursuant to Chapter 03.14 of the Spokane Municipal Code.

Date Passed: Monday, November 24, 2025

Effective Date: Tuesday, January 7, 2025

ORD C36752 Section 18

[Section 10.57.060](#) Consistency with Chapter 59.18.RCW

- A. The provisions of this chapter shall be interpreted and enforced in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of Chapter 59.18 RCW.
- B. Terms in this chapter shall have the meaning set forth in Chapter 59.18 RCW unless a different meaning is expressly provided herein.

Date Passed: Monday, December 1, 2025

Effective Date: Thursday, January 8, 2026

ORD C36778 Section 3

[Section 10.57.060](#) Consistency with Chapter 59.18 RCW, Authority to Promulgate Public Rules

- A. The provisions of this chapter shall be interpreted and enforced in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of Chapter 59.18 RCW.
- B. Any public rule promulgated under this chapter shall be adopted pursuant to Chapter 03.14 of the Spokane Municipal Code.

Date Passed: Monday, November 24, 2025

Effective Date: Tuesday, January 7, 2025

ORD C36752 Section 18

[Section 10.57.060](#) Consistency with Chapter 59.18.RCW

- A. The provisions of this chapter shall be interpreted and enforced in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of Chapter 59.18 RCW.
- B. Terms in this chapter shall have the meaning set forth in Chapter 59.18 RCW unless a different meaning is expressly provided herein.

Date Passed: Monday, December 1, 2025

Effective Date: Thursday, January 8, 2026

ORD C36778 Section 3

[Section 10.57.070](#) Immunity, No Warranty by City

The purpose of this chapter is to promote the safety and welfare of the general public and not to create or designate any particular class of persons who will or should be specially protected by its terms. Nothing contained in this chapter is intended nor shall be construed to create any liability on the part of the city or its employees for any injury or damage

resulting from the failure of an owner, landlord, inspector, or other individual to comply with the provisions of this chapter, or by reason or in consequence of any act or omission in connection with the implementation or enforcement of this chapter on the part of the city or its employees. By enacting and undertaking to enforce this chapter, neither the city, its agents or employees, nor the city council warrant or guarantee the safety, fitness or suitability of any dwelling in the city or any unit inspected under this program. Owners, landlords, and occupants shall take whatever steps they deem appropriate to protect their interest, health, safety and welfare.

Date Passed: Monday, February 27, 2023

Effective Date: Sunday, April 9, 2023

ORD C36330 Section 1

Section 10.57.080 Portable Background and Credit Checks

A. Purpose and Intent.

1. The screening of a prospective tenant's rental history, financial history, and criminal background is a common aspect of renting residential real property and provides an important benefit to both landlords and tenants.
2. While tenants usually pay a fee associated with this screening each time they apply for a unit, state law requires that fees collected can only cover the actual cost of screenings performed. Multiple applications for rental housing currently require prospective tenants to pay multiple fees which can be burdensome to prospective tenants, especially in a tight rental market.
3. The intent of this section is consistent with RCW 59.18.257 to support landlords getting the data they need to make an informed decision about a prospective tenant at no cost to the landlord and in compliance with state law, while ensuring that prospective tenants are not unduly burdened by the need to pay multiple background and credit check fees.

B. Portable background and credit checks program.

1. The City of Spokane's department of Code Enforcement is authorized to publish a request for qualifications ("RFQ") from consumer reporting agencies that have the capability to provide certified portable background and credit checks.
2. The content of the background and credit report must comply with state and federal laws and housing requirements, including guidance from the federal government on criminal background checks, and would be decided by the Spokane City Council upon the recommendation of an advisory group that must include representatives from landlord, tenant and social services housing organizations.
3. All portable background and credit checks conducted under this section shall be valid for at least ninety (90) days from the date of issuance.
4. The City of Spokane and its agents shall have no right to access the information included in a portable background check unless provided to them by the prospective tenant subject of the report.

5. Prospective tenants are responsible for paying the fee for the creation of the portable background and credit check and landlords cannot be charged for it. Landlords cannot charge tenants an additional fee for accessing the check.
6. Landlords that accept a portable background check pursuant to RCW 59.18.257(1)(iv) may not charge a tenant for a second background and credit screening service.
7. Nothing in this section restricts a landlord from asking a prospective tenant about their criminal, credit or rental history, or making a decision on whether or not to rent to an individual based on that history.

Date Passed: Monday, March 27, 2023

Effective Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2023

ORD C36366 Section 1

[Section 10.57.090](#) Residential Rental Property Mitigation Program

- A. The department of Community, Housing and Human Services is authorized to operate a rental property mitigation program, which is intended to assist in the repair of residential rental properties that are damaged during a tenancy and where damage occurs through no fault of the landlord.
- B. The City's fund will be supplemental to any similar state or federal program, and will only be used after the applicant has completed a timely and complete application for those funds, exhausted the tenant's damage deposit, and still has not been fully compensated for the damage.
- C. The department of Community, Housing and Human Services is authorized to establish public rules for the operation of the rental property mitigation fund, and shall publish and accept public comment on such rules for sixty (60) days prior to the effective date of the rules for the program.
- D. Landlords applying for funding from the rental property mitigation fund must meet the criteria established by the Community, Housing and Human Services department pursuant to subsection (C) of this section. Within a calendar year, disbursement of such funds shall prioritize assistance to landlords where a government, nonprofit operated program, or privately operated program under government contract that provides housing support to low income individuals referred the tenant to the landlord or provided a portion of their rent or damage deposit, with remaining funding disbursed to all other qualifying applicants thereafter.
- E. The City may contract with another entity to administer its Residential Rental Property Mitigation Program.

Date Passed: Monday, March 27, 2023

Effective Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2023

ORD C36366 Section 1

[Section 10.57.100](#) Legal Services and Relocation Program

- A. City of Spokane is authorized to use monies from the Legal Services and Relocation Fund to contract with another entity to provide attorney services for landlord and tenant legal services and mediation costs, with a focus on habitability and violations of the Chapter 59.18 RCW - Residential Landlord Tenant Act ("RLTA"). The city investment would provide seed money for first year of salary and benefits for an attorney and reasonable litigation costs, including mediation fees. Legal fees from successful representation would be used to sustain the attorney(s) and associated costs for the long term.
- B. The City is further authorized to disburse monies from the Legal Services and Relocation Fund to provide immediate relocation funds to tenants living in rental units that are below the standards of habitability and likely to be able to recover relocation funds from their landlord, which will reimburse the fund. The City is also authorized to disburse monies from the Legal Services and Relocation Fund to landlords to assist with tenant removal or relocation. The attorney described in Section A shall establish an application, review, and appeals process for the relocation fund program.
- C. Minimum program requirements:
1. A program that focuses on pursuing legal remedies for rental housing units that clearly fall below standard of habitability defined in the Spokane Municipal Code and/or violate the RLTA in consultation with Code Enforcement.
 2. A program that provides prompt relocation funds from City directly to the tenant once it appears to the attorney described in Section A that a landlord is more likely than not to be held liable under state law and then collects from the landlord and any settlement funds as first priority a reimbursement to the relocation funds advanced and any attorney fees that could be used to fund the attorney positions in the future.
 3. A program that builds increased capacity for these services, including education and outreach.
 4. Services provided under this section may only be provided to individuals from households with incomes less than 400% of the federal poverty level.

Date Passed: Monday, March 27, 2023

Effective Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2023

ORD C36366 Section 1

Section 10.57.110 Landlord Walkthroughs and Inspections

- A. Prior to any rental occupancy, the landlord or owner or manager of residential rental real property shall self-inspect the unit ensuring it meets the requirements of applicable building and housing codes impacting health, safety, and livability.
- B. The owner of residential rental real property shall make all necessary repairs to keep the premises in habitable condition as defined by the Spokane Municipal Code before a tenant may occupy the unit.
- C. Any entity or individual operating rental housing shall maintain all move-in and move-out inspection records for at least three years.

- D. Execution of any rental agreement shall act as certification by the landlord or owner or manager of residential rental real property that all relevant state and municipal building and housing codes impacting health, safety, and habitability are met.

Date Passed: Monday, March 27, 2023

Effective Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2023

ORD C36366 Section 1

[Section 10.57.115](#) Future Rent – COVID-19 Repayment

- A. For rent accruing after April 30, 2023, it is the expectation that tenants will pay rent in full, negotiate a lesser amount or a payment plan with the tenant's landlord, or actively seek rental assistance if assistance is needed, consistent with the requirements of RCW 59.18.
- B. For rent owed that accrued due to COVID-19 or the economic effects of the pandemic (such as, without limitation, loss or reduction of income in connection with COVID-19) on or after February 29, 2020 through April 30, 2023, landlords are prohibited from serving or enforcing, or threatening to serve or enforce, any notice requiring a resident to vacate any dwelling, including but not limited to an eviction notice, notice to pay or vacate, unlawful detainer summons or complaint, notice of termination of rental, or notice to comply or vacate if the landlord has made no attempt to establish a reasonable repayment plan with the tenant. Tenants must respond to landlords within 14 days of the landlord's offer. If a tenant fails to accept the terms of a reasonable repayment plan or if the tenant defaults on any rent owed under a repayment plan, a landlord must first provide notice to the tenant of the default, and then follow the procedures provided in Chapter 59.18 RCW, before filing an unlawful detainer action based in whole or in part on non-payment.

Date Passed: Monday, August 21, 2023

Effective Date: Monday, August 21, 2023

ORD C36417 Section 1

[Section 10.57.116](#) Enforceable Debt

- A. If based in whole or in part on any arrears for a current tenant that accrued due to COVID-19 or the economic effects of the pandemic (such as, without limitation, loss or reduction of income in connection with COVID-19) on or after February 29, 2020 to April 30, 2023, landlords are prohibited from treating any unpaid rent or other charges related to a dwelling as an enforceable debt or obligation that is owing or collectable, if the landlord has made no attempt to establish a reasonable repayment plan with the tenant in the manner set forth in section 10.57.116. This prohibition against enforcing a debt arising from unpaid rent includes attempts to collect, or threats to collect, independently or through a collection agency, by filing an unlawful detainer or other judicial action, by withholding any portion of a security deposit, by reporting to credit bureaus, or by any other means.

Date Passed: Monday, August 21, 2023

Effective Date: Monday, August 21, 2023

ORD C36417 Section 2

Section 10.57.120 Disclosures

- A. Prior to entering into a lease or rental agreement, the landlord, owner or manager of residential rental real property must disclose to prospective tenants whether the unit has had a history of mold, any remediation, and whether the landlord has been informed by past tenants of any health concerns related to mold.
- B. The landlord or owner or manager of residential rental real property must disclose to tenants within ten (10) days when a unit they are renting is part of a building or parcel that has been listed for sale. In the event that the property is sold, the landlord or owner or manager of residential rental real property must provide all known contact information for the new owner(s) to the tenants.
- C. The landlord or owner or manager of residential rental real property must disclose any known history of methamphetamine manufacturing on the premises.

Date Passed: Monday, March 27, 2023

Effective Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2023

ORD C36366 Section 1

Section 10.57.130 Anti-Retaliation Protections

A. Purpose and Intent.

Due to fears of retaliation, tenants may fear speaking up about housing habitability issues, practices relating to collection of past due rent, or organizing as tenants. State law provides protection against retaliation, and the City of Spokane intends for its code to provide additional protections.

B. Prohibition on retaliation.

1. No landlord or owner or manager of residential rental real property in Spokane may intimidate any person because that person is engaging in activities designed to make other persons aware of, or encouraging such other persons to exercise rights granted or protected by the fair housing laws, or engaging in political speech or political organizing.
2. No person may threaten any employee or agent with dismissal or an adverse employment action, or take such adverse employment action, for any effort to assist any person in the exercise of their fair housing rights.
3. Landlords are prohibited from retaliating against individuals for invoking their rights or protections under subsections 10.57.115, 10.57.116, 10.57.160, 10.57.170, and 10.57.180.
4. For purposes of this section, "fair housing laws" and "fair housing rights" include the federal Fair Housing Act, and the Washington Law Against Discrimination.

Date Passed: Monday, December 1, 2025

Effective Date: Thursday, January 8, 2026

ORD C36778 Section 4

[Section 10.57.140](#) Private Right of Action

- A. Any person or class of persons who claim to have been injured by a violation of sections [10.57.020\(H\)](#), [10.57.110](#), [10.57.120](#), [10.57.130](#), [10.57.160](#), [10.57.170](#), or [10.57.180](#) may commence a civil action in Superior Court, not later than three (3) years after the occurrence of the alleged violation to obtain relief with respect to such violation. Upon prevailing, such aggrieved person may be awarded reasonable attorneys' fees and costs, and such other legal and equitable relief as appropriate to remedy the violation including, without limitation, the payment of compensatory damages, a penalty of up to \$500, and injunctive relief.
- B. If a landlord fails to comply with the requirements of sections [10.57.020\(H\)](#), [10.57.110](#), [10.57.120](#), [10.57.130](#), [10.57.160](#), [10.57.170](#), or [10.57.180](#). and such failure was not caused by the tenant, the tenant may terminate the rental agreement by written notice pursuant to law.

Date Passed: Monday, December 1, 2025

Effective Date: Thursday, January 8, 2026

ORD C36778 Section 5

[Section 10.57.150](#) Severability

Any portion of this ordinance that is determined by a competent adjudicator to be illegal or pre-empted shall be severed from this law and the balance of the law preserved

Date Passed: Monday, February 27, 2023

Effective Date: Sunday, April 9, 2023

ORD C36330 Section 1

[Section 10.57.160](#) Minimum Notice to Increase Rent

A landlord may not increase residential rent except in accordance with this section.

- A. Any rental agreement or renewal of a rental agreement entered into after the effective date of this ordinance shall include, or shall be deemed to include, a provision requiring not less than:
1. One hundred twenty days' written notice for rent increases equal to or less than three percent; or
 2. One hundred eighty days' written notice for rent increases greater than three percent.

3. In a subsidized tenancy where the amount of rent is based on the income of the tenant or circumstances specific to the subsidized household, the rental agreement shall instead provide at least 30 days' prior written notice of an increase in the amount of rent to each affected tenant.
- B. Any notice of residential rent increase shall specify the percentage of the rent increase, the amount of the new rent, and the date on which the increase becomes effective.
 - C. Any notice of a residential rent increase shall be served in accordance with RCW 59.12.040.
 - D. For purposes of this section, the term "rent" shall have the meaning set forth in RCW 59.18.030 (29), as amended from time to time.

Date Passed: Monday, April 29, 2024

Effective Date: Sunday, June 23, 2024

ORD C36515 Section 3

Section 10.57.170 Portable Cooling Devices

- A. For purposes of this section a "portable cooling device" means air conditioners and evaporative coolers, including devices mounted in a window or that are designed to sit on the floor but not including devices whose installation or use requires alteration to the dwelling unit.
- B. A landlord may not prohibit or restrict a tenant from installing a portable cooling device of the tenant's choosing, unless:
 1. The installation of the device would:
 - a. Violate building codes or state or federal law; or
 - b. Violate the device manufacture's written safety guidelines for the device; or
 - c. Cause unreasonable damage to the premises or render the premises uninhabitable; or
 - d. Require amperage to power the device that cannot be accommodated by the power service to the building, dwelling unit or circuit; or
 - e. The device would be installed in a window, and:
 - i. The window is a necessary egress from the dwelling unit; or
 - ii. The device would interfere with the tenant's ability to lock a window that is accessible from outside; or
 - iii. The device requires the excessive use of brackets or other hardware that would damage or void the warranty of the window or frame, puncture the envelope of the building or otherwise cause significant damages; or

- iv. The restrictions require that the device be adequately drained to prevent damage to the dwelling unit or building; or
 - v. The restrictions require that the device be installed in a manner that prevents risk of falling.
2. In addition to subsection (B)(1) of this section, the landlord may also require that the device be:
- a. Installed or removed by the landlord or landlord's agent; or
 - b. Subject to inspection or servicing by the landlord or landlord's agent.
- C. A landlord who must limit portable cooling devices for a building under subsections (B)(1)(d) of this section shall prioritize allowing the use of devices for individuals who require a device to accommodate a disability as defined by state and federal law. A landlord is not responsible for any interruption in electrical service that is not caused by the landlord, including interruptions caused by an electrical supply's inability to accommodate use of a portable cooling device.
- D. If a tenant fails to comply with a restriction on the installation or use of a portable cooling device under subsections (B) of this section, a landlord may issue notice to the tenant in accordance with RCW 59.18.160 and RCW 59.18.170.

Date Passed: Monday, June 10, 2024

Effective Date: Sunday, July 14, 2024

ORD C36523 Section 3

[Section 10.57.180](#) Prohibition on Algorithmic Rental Price Fixing

- A. Exceptions. This section does not apply to coordinating functions provided with either short-term rentals as defined in [SMC 17C.316.020](#) or hotels as defined in [SMC 17C.348.020](#).
- B. Violation. It is a violation of this section for:
1. Any landlord, in or affecting commerce, to contract with or otherwise exchange anything of value in return for the coordinating services of an algorithm service provider, as defined in Section 10.57.005 SMC.
 2. Any algorithm service provider, in or affecting commerce, to provide coordinating services to two or more landlords.
 3. It is not a violation of this section for a landlord to use a system or software recordkeeping tool absent conduct otherwise prohibited under this section.
- C. Penalty. The City may file a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction for violations of Section 10.57.180 for civil penalties of up to five thousand dollars per violation. Each instance of coordinating services for each dwelling unit shall be considered a separate violation. The court may award reasonable attorney's fees and costs to the City if the City is the prevailing party.

D. Revocation of Business License. Pursuant to [Section 08.01.321\(A\)\(7\)](#), the City of Spokane may cancel or revoke the business license of a landlord, landlord's agent, or algorithm service provider successfully found in violation of this section and shall not be eligible to obtain a City of Spokane business license for five years thereafter.

E. Submission of Violations. Tenants, landlords, and the employees or contractors of landlords are encouraged to submit violations of this section to the City Attorney and the Residential Rental Housing Navigator.

Date Passed: Monday, December 1, 2025

Effective Date: Thursday, January 8, 2026

ORD C36778 Section 6