

MOTION

The Los Angeles Housing Department's (LAHD) Rent Escrow Account Program (REAP) ensures that residential units are maintained safe and habitable. In cases where a residential unit is cited for certain health, safety, or housing law violation and an owner does not make the necessary repairs in a timely manner, that unit will be entered into the REAP Program. Following a specified period of time, LAHD inspects the unit to ensure that the violations have been addressed. Generally, if deemed resolved, the Department makes a recommendation to Council to remove the unit from REAP. At that time, it is imperative that the pertinent Council District office is notified of LAHD's recommendation to remove a unit from REAP in advance of Council's hearing to ensure adequate communication.

The overall methodology for determining when a unit should be removed from REAP should be assessed to ensure that the City's residential stock remains in habitable condition. While under REAP status, a tenant may pay a reduced rent to either the property owner or have the funds deposited into escrow. Escrowed funds would only be available to an owner, tenant, or interested party upon request for certain eligible uses, including repairs, utilities, or relocation to another building. Following removal from REAP, these escrowed funds would no longer be available. Having a clear understanding of the process to remove a unit from REAP and improved procedures for removing a unit from REAP could maximize the benefits of this program.

Because Council Offices help maintain the overall well-being of our communities, each Council Office should receive notice that a unit is recommended for removal from REAP. This would ensure that the office is able to identify any additional issues that may directly relate to the removal action. Offices should be notified of LAHD's recommendation to remove a unit from REAP before such recommendations are agendized for Council consideration.

I THEREFORE MOVE that Council instruct the Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD) to report within 30 days on:

- The City's procedure for approving a unit removal from the Rent Escrow Account Program (REAP) and an analysis of the current methodology for clearing a unit; and
- The feasibility of implementing an automatic notification system that would alert the pertinent Council Office with LAHD's recommendation to remove a unit from REAP at the earliest possible date prior to a Council hearing.

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