

2026 -- H 8108

=====  
LC005773  
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

—————  
A N A C T

RELATING TO PROPERTY -- RESIDENTIAL LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Potter, Cruz, Handy, DeSimone, Alzate, Stewart,  
Morales, Kislak, Giraldo, and Batista

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 34-18 of the General Laws entitled "Residential Landlord and Tenant  
2 Act" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **34-18-63. Rent stabilization act.**

4 (a) During any private rental tenancy, the landlord shall not increase the rent:

5 (1) During the first year after the tenancy begins;

6 (2) At any time after the first year of the tenancy without giving the tenant written notice  
7 in accordance with § 34-18-16.1; and

8 (3) Except as provided in subsection (e) of this section, during any twelve (12) month  
9 period, in an amount greater than four percent (4%).

10 (b) The written notice required under this section shall specify:

11 (1) The amount of the rent increase;

12 (2) The amount of the new rent;

13 (3) Facts supporting the exemption, if the increase includes amounts authorized under  
14 subsection (e) of this section in addition to the four percent (4%) permitted under subsection (a)(3);  
15 and

16 (4) The date on which the increase becomes effective.

17 (c) A landlord terminating a tenancy with a thirty (30) day notice without cause as  
18 authorized by § 34-18-37, shall not reset the rent for the next tenancy in an amount greater than  
19 four percent (4%) above the previous rent, except as provided in subsection (e) of this section.

1           (d) A landlord refusing to extend the tenancy at the request of the tenant, shall not reset the  
2 rent for the next tenancy in an amount greater than four percent (4%) above the previous rent,  
3 except as provided in subsection (e) of this section.

4           (e) A landlord is not subject to the provisions of subsection (a)(3), subsection (c), or  
5 subsection (d) of this section when:

6           (1) The tenant leaves on their own volition and the landlord rents to a new tenant;

7           (2) The landlord is providing reduced rent to the tenant as part of a federal, state or local  
8 program or subsidy; or

9           (3) The landlord is granted an exemption by the secretary of housing. A landlord may be  
10 granted an exemption if they are able to demonstrate through sufficient evidence that:

11           (i) There have been necessary repairs and improvements made to the dwelling unit directly  
12 related to maintaining or improving the health and/or safety conditions of the unit and to ensure the  
13 unit is in compliance with § 34-18-22; or

14           (ii) There has been an increase in the municipal taxes and/or insurance of the dwelling in  
15 an amount greater than four percent (4%) of the annual rent.

16           (4) If the landlord is granted an exemption pursuant to subsection (e)(3) of this section, the  
17 landlord may increase the rent by:

18           (i) An amount not to exceed four percent (4%) pursuant to subsection (a)(3); and

19           (ii) An additional amount equal to the documented and approved costs forming the basis  
20 of the exemption.

21           (5) If the landlord is granted an exemption pursuant to subsection (e)(3)(ii) of this section,  
22 any portion of the rent increase attributable to municipal taxes and/or insurance shall not exceed  
23 the amount of the increase in the municipal taxes and/or insurance, divided by the number of  
24 dwelling units of the property.

25           (f)(1) A landlord that increases rent in violation of this section or a landlord which  
26 wrongfully evicts a tenant shall be liable to the tenant in an amount equal to three (3) months' rent  
27 in addition to actual damages sustained by the tenant as a result of the tenancy termination.

28           (2) In addition to the remedies provided in subsections (f)(1) and (f)(3) of this section, if  
29 the tenant prevails after a hearing or trial on the merits, the tenant may be awarded attorneys' fees,  
30 if appropriate.

31           (3) In addition to the remedies provided in subsections (f)(1) and (f)(2) of this section, if  
32 the landlord's conduct is shown to be motivated by malice or ill will, or when the landlord's actions  
33 are reckless or callous indifference to the requirements of this section, the court may award punitive  
34 damage.

1           (g) A tenant is entitled to recovery under this section if the tenant commences an action  
2 asserting the claim within one year after the tenant knew or should have known the landlord  
3 terminated the tenancy in violation of this section.

4           (h) This section does not create a right to increase rent that does not otherwise exist.

5           (i) This section does not require a landlord to compromise, justify or reduce a rent increase  
6 that the landlord otherwise is entitled to impose.

7           (j) The secretary of housing shall enforce the provisions of this section.

8           SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

=====  
LC005773  
=====

EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO PROPERTY -- RESIDENTIAL LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT

\*\*\*

1           This act would limit rent increases to 4% annually, but allows an additional increase for  
2 taxes, insurance, or health and safety costs if the landlord gets an exemption from the secretary of  
3 housing, and provides tenants civil remedies for violations.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

=====  
LC005773  
=====