

2025 -- S 0718

LC002226

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

A N A C T

RELATING TO PROPERTY -- RESIDENTIAL LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT

Introduced By: Senators Appollonio, Ciccone, Tikoian, Burke, Thompson, Patalano, and McKenney

Date Introduced: March 07, 2025

Referred To: Senate Housing & Municipal Government

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 34-18-58 of the General Laws in Chapter 34-18 entitled "Residential
2 Landlord and Tenant Act" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **34-18-58. Statewide mandatory rental registry.**

4 (a) All landlords [who lease a residential property constructed prior to 1978](#) shall register
5 the following information with the department of health:

6 (1) Names of individual landlords or any business entity responsible for leasing to a tenant
7 under this chapter;

8 (2) An active business address, PO box, or home address;

9 (3) An active email address;

10 (4) An active telephone number that would reasonably facilitate communications with the
11 tenant of each dwelling unit;

12 (5) Any property manager, management company, or agent for service of the property,
13 along with the business address; ~~or PO box, or home address~~ of the property manager, management
14 company, or agent and including:

15 (i) An active email address; and

16 (ii) An active telephone number, for each such person or legal entity, if applicable, for each
17 dwelling unit; and

18 (6) Information necessary to identify each dwelling unit.

19 (b) All landlords who lease a residential property constructed prior to 1978 and that is not

1 exempt from the requirements of chapter 128.1 of title 42 (“lead hazard mitigation”) shall, in
2 addition to the requirements of subsection (a) of this section, for each dwelling unit, provide the
3 department of health with a valid certificate of conformance in accordance with chapter 128.1 of
4 title 42 (“lead hazard mitigation”) and regulations derived therefrom, or evidence sufficient to
5 demonstrate that they are exempt from the requirement to obtain a certificate of conformance.

6 (c) Contingent upon available funding, the department of health, or designee, shall create
7 a publicly accessible online database containing the information obtained in accordance with
8 subsections (a)(1), (a)(5)(ii), ~~but excluding subsections (a)(2) through (a)(4);~~ and (b) of this section,
9 no later than nine (9) months following the effective date of this section [June 20, 2023].

10 (d) All landlords subject to the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) of this section as of
11 ~~September 1, 2024~~ September 1, 2025, shall register the information required by those subsections
12 no later than ~~October 1, 2024~~ October 1, 2025.

13 A landlord who acquires a residential rental property constructed before 1978, or begins
14 leasing a rental property to a new tenant, after ~~September 1, 2024~~ September 1, 2025, shall register
15 the information required by subsections (a) and (b) of this section within thirty (30) days after the
16 acquisition or lease to a tenant, whichever date is earlier. All landlords subject to the requirements
17 of subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall, following initial registration, re-register by October
18 1 of each year in order to update any information required to comply with subsections (a) and (b)
19 of this section, or to confirm that the information already supplied remains accurate.

20 (e) Any person or entity subject to subsections (a) and (b) of this section who fails to
21 comply with the registration provision in subsection (d) of this section, shall be subject to a civil
22 fine of at least fifty dollars (\$50.00) per month for failure to register the information required by
23 subsection (a) of this section, or at least one hundred and twenty-five dollars (\$125) per month, for
24 failure to register the information required by subsection (b) of this section.

25 (f) All civil penalties imposed pursuant to subsection (e) of this section shall be payable to
26 the department of health. There is to be established a restricted receipt account to be known as the
27 “rental registry account” which shall be a separate account within the department of health.
28 Penalties received by the department pursuant to the terms of this section shall be deposited into
29 the account. Monies deposited into the account shall be transferred to the department of health and
30 shall be expended for the purpose of administering the provisions of this section or lead hazard
31 mitigation, abatement, enforcement, or poisoning prevention. No penalties shall be levied under
32 this section prior to ~~October 1, 2024~~ October 1, 2025.

33 (g) ~~Notwithstanding the provisions of § 34-18-35, a landlord or any agent of a landlord~~
34 ~~may not commence an action to evict for nonpayment of rent in any court of competent jurisdiction,~~

1 ~~unless, at the time the action is commenced, the landlord is in compliance with the requirements of~~
2 ~~subsections (a), (b), and (d) of this section. A landlord must present the court with evidence of~~
3 ~~compliance with subsections (a), (b), and (d) of this section at the time of filing an action to evict~~
4 ~~for nonpayment of rent in order to proceed with the civil action.~~

5 (+) The department of health may commence an action for injunctive relief and additional
6 civil penalties of up to fifty dollars (\$50.00) per violation against any landlord who repeatedly fails
7 to comply with subsection (a) of this section. The attorney general may commence an action for
8 injunctive relief and additional civil penalties of up to one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per violation
9 against any landlord who repeatedly fails to comply with subsection (b) of this section. Any
10 penalties obtained pursuant to this subsection shall be used for the purposes of lead hazard
11 mitigation, abatement, enforcement, or poisoning prevention, or for the purpose of administering
12 the provisions of this section. No penalties shall be levied under this section prior to ~~October 1,~~
13 ~~2024~~ [October 1, 2025](#).

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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RELATING TO PROPERTY -- RESIDENTIAL LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT

1 This act would limit the mandatory rental registry to properties constructed prior to 1978,
2 and further push out the effective date of registration to September 1, 2025, with the penalty clause
3 becoming effective as of October 1, 2025. This act would further eliminate the prohibition on
4 landlords from evicting a tenant for nonpayment of rent unless they have registered the property
5 with all of the personal information and provided the department of health a certificate of
6 conformance.

7 This act would take effect upon passage.

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