

PAA CENTRAL
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – NOVEMBER 2015

Key:

HB = House Bill
PN = Printer's Number
SB = Senate Bill
** = new since last update

Newly Introduced Legislation

****SB974/PN1217**

Would amend the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

New Laws Taking Effect in 2015

Child Protective Services Law:

Recent additions to the CPSL have expanded the group of individuals who need background checks or who must report suspected child abuse. Employees of apartment communities who have “direct contact with children,” defined as the care, supervision, guidance or control of children or routine interaction with children, are impacted.

Pending Legislation

SB 3/PN 889:

Would allow for the use of medical marijuana by Pennsylvania residents.

SB 142/PN 89

Would amend the Landlord and Tenant Act by adding a requirement that landlords disclose to prospective tenants of residential properties the flood history of the property, including the frequency and extent of any flooding, and notify prospective tenants that they can obtain additional information from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The bill defines residential property as a “single residential dwelling unit,” so it is unclear whether the requirement would apply to apartment communities.

SB 330/PN 775:

Would give municipalities the ability to address dilapidated properties sooner and provide for increased penalties for code violations for such properties. Under the Bill, an owner would be considered to have committed an offense if he has been convicted of a second or subsequent serious violation of the same code provision and the violation poses a threat to the public's health, safety or property and the owner has not taken a substantial step to correct it, and the violation is considered to be a public nuisance and the owner has made no reasonable attempt to correct it.

SB 852/PN 1014:

Would allow residents of a manufactured housing community to challenge rent increases, define “unreasonable rent increases”. If the owner and tenants cannot agree on the rent increase, the bill would require arbitration to resolve it, with the costs being shared equally between the owner and the tenants.

HB 447/PN 491

Would amend the Landlord and Tenant Act to allow an estate of a deceased tenant, if he/she was the sole tenant, to terminate a lease upon 14 days’ notice on the last day of the month after the death or upon surrender of the apartment and the removal of all personal property, whichever occurs later.

HB 809/PN 954:

Would prevent municipalities from having ordinances that prohibit occupation of rental units to students

HB 975/PN 1231

Would amend the Landlord and Tenant Act to allow individuals with disabilities and senior citizens to terminate a lease if they need to relocate to (1) a health care facility, or (2) a family member’s home for the purpose of receiving home health care for a period of not less than six months. The bill also describes the notice and documentation that such tenant must provide to the landlord in order to terminate the lease.

HB 1051/PN 1369

Would amend the Landlord and Tenant Act that would allow tenants who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking to be released from their lease or have the locks changed. The Act also would allow a landlord to terminate the perpetrator's rights under the lease. There are specific notices required, and the Act provides for the recovery of damages against a landlord who violates it, and against the perpetrator.

HB 1427/PN 2006:

Would amend the cable television rights provisions in the Landlord and Tenant Act to include satellite television.