

## LAWS PROTECTING TENANTS FACING CONVERSIONS

Several State and County laws offer help to tenants at apartment buildings facing conversion to condominium or cooperative ownership.

### Notice of Plans for Conversion

Anyone planning to convert a rental complex must notify tenants when he starts the process of registering the project with the Virginia Real Estate Commission in Richmond. After the Real Estate Commission determines that all required parts of the filing are in order, it officially registers the project. This is usually within 60 days. Arlington County requires a developer to provide two copies of the filing, and one of them is available to the public at the Central Library, 1015 North Quincy Street.

### 60-Day Option to Purchase

When the condominium is officially registered in Richmond the developer must give each tenant an individual notice stating the purchase price and proposed condominium fees for his unit and offering him a 60-day exclusive option to buy it. That notice must also describe any relocation assistance the developer is providing.

### 120-Day Notice to Vacate

At any time after registration the developer may give tenants a formal notice to vacate. That notice must be for at least 120 days. Therefore, the filing and notification requirements give tenants roughly six months to formulate their plans.

The developer can begin work in halls and other common areas any time after purchase, but a County noise ordinance restricts somewhat the levels of noise and hours of work. The State law prevents a developer from doing work inside any unit during that time unless he gives a 45-day notice of the work.

### Extension of Leases for the Elderly and Disabled

A County ordinance requires that the developer offer to elderly and disabled tenants up to 3, one year lease extensions at the tenant's option from the date of the 120 day notice for the same unit or a unit similar in size, number of bedrooms and overall quality.

### Relocation Assistance

The County requires condominium and cooperative developers to pay actual relocation expenses to each displaced tenant or a fixed payment based on The URA Fixed Residential Moving Cost Schedule, as follows:

Number of Rooms	Payments
1 room	\$700
2 rooms	\$940
3 rooms	\$1,125
4 rooms	\$1,320
5 rooms	\$1,500

**Further Information**

The Arlington County Housing Information Center (703) 228-3765 can answer specific questions about tenant rights during the conversion process.