



City of Seattle

Seattle Renters' Commission

October 19, 2026

Seattle Renters' Commission Letter Demanding Seattle City Council and Mayor Provide Adequate Funding to Tenant Services

Dear Mayor Wilson and Seattle City Council members:

The Seattle Renters' Commission is writing to demand the Council and Mayor provide adequate funding to tenant services. While renters have made up more than half of all Seattle households for years, the City continues to ignore renters' needs and services. Mayor Wilson's proposed 2027 budget keeps tenant services funding flat, which not only fails to provide the help Seattle renters need, but forces tenant services providers to do more with less due to inflation. The City of Seattle must at least double the proposed \$2.48 million in funding.

Tenant programs are essential to fill the gaps in City services and keep people housed. Without these services, tenants face eviction. King County continues to see record numbers of eviction cases filed. As noted by the [Eviction Research Network](#), "2026 is projected to be the highest eviction filing year [in Washington] on record, exceeding 2019 by nearly 12,000 cases", with July 2026 alone setting a record 2,413 eviction cases filed, the highest since the data began being collected in 2016. Further, the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections receives far more renter complaints than they could ever hope to handle. Tenant services providers step in to offer representation during eviction hearings, guide renters through the process of settling problems with their landlords, and ensure people have the knowledge necessary to avoid eviction.

Despite their crucial role in improving renters' housing stability and helping people avoid homelessness, tenant services providers are not adequately funded to meet the demand for their help. There are hundreds of thousands of renters in Seattle, but the programs that serve these people cannot afford to hire the staff necessary to serve all of the renters who need help. This leaves many vulnerable when access to information and support could make the difference between having a roof over your head and watching the Sheriff put everything you own on the street.

We also cannot lose sight of the fact that these indispensable services represent a critical tool in the fight for housing justice. Researchers have found, over and over, that marginalized populations contend with a [disproportionate risk of eviction and homelessness](#). If Seattle cares about the wellbeing of our Hispanic/Latina/e/o, Black/African American/African, Multi-Racial, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaska Native/Indigenous neighbors, then it must ensure we all have access to the support we need to stay housed.

The current proposed funding for tenant services fails to account for cost of living increases for tenant services staff and forces organizations to do more with less. We can and must do better if we are serious about addressing our housing and homelessness crises. The Council must increase the tenant services budget by *at least* \$500,000 to prevent reductions in services, but

needs to double the proposed funding if it wishes to provide meaningful support to Seattle's renters.

Sincerely,

Seattle Renters' Commission