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MOTION

The Rent Escrow Account Program (REAP) exists to resolve the most persistent health and safety and habitability issues found in rental properties in the City. In addressing these issues REAP helps reduce blight, protects tenants from substandard housing, and helps preserve the City's valuable affordable housing stock.

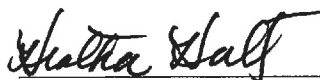
REAP encourages owners to make the repairs and return the property to a safe and habitable condition. Tenants of affected units are given a 10% to 50% rent reduction depending on the nature and severity of the violations cited. Tenants have the option to pay their reduced rents to the landlord or into an escrow account managed by the Department.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD) administrative and REAP hearings have been less accessible to public, with hearings being conducted by phone and other technologies without full consideration of tenants and property owner's ability to participate. The City should move back to in-person hearings, while providing as much language and participation accessibility as possible to the public.

I THEREFORE MOVE to REQUEST the City Attorney's Office to report back with a draft ordinance amending Los Angeles Municipal Code 162.06 and recommendations to amend Rent Adjustment Commission Regulations 1200.00 to require all LAHD administrative hearings, including REAP and General Manager hearings conducted by the Department, to be scheduled in-person on a permanent basis, with the ability for the public to watch and participate virtually. The draft ordinance should require LAHD to post all REAP hearings, General Manager hearings, and any other administrative hearing notices in one easily accessible place on the Department's website, with all notices posted in English and Spanish, and other accessible languages included depending on the neighborhood. The draft ordinance should further require LAHD to provide Spanish interpretation at all administrative hearings, including REAP and General Manager hearings, and provide language interpretation in any available language if a member of the public makes a request for interpretation at least 72 hours prior to the hearing.

I FURTHER MOVE to INSTRUCT the LAHD, with the assistance of the City Attorney's Office, to report back on recommendations to accept and consider evidence and testimony of new information at all administrative hearings, including REAP and General Manager hearings.

PRESENTED BY:



HEATHER HUTT

Councilmember, 10th District

SECONDED BY:



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