

# Everyone Needs a Home

Solutions for Preventing Homelessness,  
Evictions, and Displacement

## Calls to Action

Tenant households in British Columbia are bearing the brunt of the housing crisis, facing the highest eviction rates in the country and dramatic increases in rent.

Eviction causes homelessness, community displacement, family separation, disconnection from work and necessary services, and a host of physical and mental health impacts. We see these impacts across British Columbia, and across the income spectrum.

The risks are higher for Indigenous people, Elders and seniors, people with disabilities, children, and other vulnerable groups. Tenants are living in fear because they know eviction is easy. Landlords are motivated to evict to increase rental profits.

### **It doesn't have to be this way.**

We call on the Minister of Housing and the government of British Columbia to amend the *Residential Tenancy Act* to:

#### **1. Prevent unnecessary and bad faith evictions:**

- require landlords to make an application and show evidence before evicting tenants
- include better protections for tenants against bad faith “Landlord’s Use” evictions and coercive “mutual agreements”
- give tenants an opportunity to pay arrears and resolve issues before landlords can apply for eviction

#### **2. Make eviction a last resort instead of a first response:**

- abolish 48-hour orders of possession and instead to allow a tenant enough time to find new housing after eviction



- require multiple factors to be considered before an eviction order is granted, including the impacts of eviction, the risk of homelessness and displacement, any effects on children, and other factors such as Indigenous identity and having a disability

### **3. Improve procedural fairness and appeal rights at the Residential Tenancy Branch:**

- confirm that tenants have the right to review the landlord's evidence for eviction and to respond to it
- allow internal review of decisions where there is an error of law or fact or natural justice has not been followed
- change the time limit for review applications from 2 days to 15 days

### **4. Protect tenants from illegal conduct:**

- prohibit landlords from harassing or threatening tenants, or inducing them to leave
- increase penalties for landlords who breach the Act and increase compensation for tenants who have been harmed

### **5. Support diversity and inclusion in rental housing:**

- prohibit lease terms that charge extra for additional occupants
- prohibit "no pets" clauses
- prohibit landlords from interfering with the use of cooling devices in hot weather
- give co-tenants the right to continue a tenancy, and give all tenants the right to assign their tenancy

### **6. Stop rent gouging and disincentivize illegal evictions:**

- apply the annual allowable rent increase to all units, even where there is a change of tenant (vacancy control) ■

## **More Information**

Scan to read our detailed law reform platform and find other ways to support our calls.



**FIRST UNITED** is a responsive and low-barrier service provider to people who are low-income and homeless in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. We provide essential services that meet the daily needs of those in the community, and engage in systems change work to reduce homelessness and break the cycle of poverty.

**firstunited.ca** 