

Proposed Local Law Number 18 Of 2023

County Of Ulster

A Local Law Establishing A Residential Rental Registry

BE IT ENACTED, by the Legislature of the County of Ulster, as follows:

SECTION 1. TITLE.

This Local Law shall be known by and may be cited as the “Residential Rental Registry” Act.

SECTION 2. LEGISLATIVE INTENT.

As the crisis in housing unaffordability and unavailability continues, the purpose of the “Residential Rental Registry” Act is periodically to obtain and publish information about Ulster County residential rentals including their vacancy status in order to make obtaining and providing housing fairer and quicker.

In order to establish and maintain this Registry and to enforce participation by landlords, the County intends to collaborate with building and other departments within the various municipalities; as well as any other government or others having authority to inspect residential real properties.

For municipalities that maintain their own such Registry, the County would re-publish that information in satisfaction of the intention of this Act.

Ulster County already has a Parcel Viewer among several tools that publish useful information about real property.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS.

“Registry” means the published form of the information obtained by County pursuant to this Act.

“Residential Rental” means real property in Ulster County, actually consisting, or planned to consist based upon permits sought and/or planning- or zoning-board appearances made, of one or more residences for rent, whether or not actually occupied.

“Initial Registration Form” means the form filed with County by a landlord of a new Residential Rental registering for the first time under this Act.

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“Annual Re-registration Form” means the form filed with County by a landlord of any Residential Rental already having an “Initial Registration Form” recorded with County.

SECTION 4. REAL-PROPERTY OWNER OBLIGATION.

Any owner of a Residential Rental shall register said property with the Clerk of the County of Ulster.

The Initial Registration shall include usual & customary information that landlords use to advertise housing for rent, including but not limited to sample lease terms; term of rental offered whether a year or longer lease, month-to-month, or short-term-rental (STR); a rental amount and any utilities included; bedrooms; bathrooms; other features required under municipal, county, state or federal law; any accessibility limitations; other lawful restrictions or qualifications on who may rent; any housing voucher programs accepted; and repair & maintenance history during the last five years if available.

An owner may submit a copy of an advertisement as part of fulfillment of this obligation but in no case shall such submission suffice unless it includes the information required by this Law.

ANNUAL RE-REGISTRATION

Owners shall re-register with County Clerk annually, indicating any changes to property characteristics.

SECTION 5. ESTABLISHMENT & MAINTENANCE OF REGISTRY.

The Clerk of the County of Ulster shall establish and maintain the Registry, an Initial Registration Form and an Annual Re-registration Form.

The Clerk shall publish the Registry in usual manners updating it at a minimum once per week or as additional information becomes available, whichever period is longer.

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For any Municipality that publishes a substantially similar Registry to that which County shall publish under this act, the Clerk may substitute and refer to that Registry.

The Real Property Tax Service Agency shall collaborate with the Clerk as necessary in order to implement this Act.

SECTION 6. PROHIBITION AND PENALTIES.

A failure to register, and the registration of incomplete information, are hereby prohibited.

Violation of this law by an individual owner shall be a violation; and a second violation, an unclassified misdemeanor.

Multiple convictions for misdemeanor conduct under this law shall be the maximum penalty permitted to be assessed.

Violation of this law by an owner or their agent other than an individual shall be subject to civil penalties and punitive damages as determined by a civil court of jurisdiction.

SECTION 7. SEVERABILITY.

In the event that any portion of this local law is found to be invalid, such finding will not have any effect on either the remaining portions or applications of this local law or any provisions of the Code of the County of Ulster, which shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Local Law shall become effective within three months of filing with the Office of the Secretary of State of the State of New York.