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## CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Office of the City Solicitor  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

August 5, 2024

City Council  
Cambridge City Hall  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139

### ***Re: Amendments to Tenant's Rights and Resources Notification Ordinance***

To the Honorable, the City Council:

At the June 20, 2024 Ordinance Committee meeting there was discussion about the proposed amendments to the Tenant's Rights and Resources Notification Ordinance ("Ordinance"). Councilor Sobrinho-Wheeler made a further amendment at that meeting to include a requirement to mail information about the Ordinance to residents. At the Ordinance Committee meeting, the Committee requested that the Law Department review Councilor Sobrinho-Wheeler's amendment and consider whether the Law Department had further suggestions to address some of the questions/comments that Councilors shared at that meeting.

In the attached, the original amendments that were before the Council are underlined. The amendments made at the June 20<sup>th</sup> Ordinance Committee are in bold, and my further suggested amendments are in red text for the Council's consideration.

Additionally, I have conferred with other departments about citywide mailings, and one possible option for mailing would be to include this notification with one of the existing citywide mailings that are sent out annually because there are costs associated with getting updated mailing lists of residents and of producing the mailings, so it would save resources to send this notification in conjunction with another mailing. Also to note, this requirement to send notification to residential addresses will not reach all landlords because not all landlords receive mail at a residential address in Cambridge, but it would inform tenants of the Ordinance requirements.

Very truly yours,

  
Megan B. Bayer  
Acting City Solicitor

8.71.040 Required notice.

8.71.040.1 Notice to Tenant/Former Homeowner. At the inception of a tenancy and when a landlord or foreclosing owner serves the tenant or former homeowners any notice to quit or notice of lease nonrenewal or expiration, such landlord or foreclosing owner shall, at the same time, also provide the tenant or former homeowner with a notice of basic housing rights and resources, including a list of organizations available to assist tenants and/or former homeowners with their contact information on a form or forms prepared by the City of Cambridge which shall be attached thereto. Where a landlord or foreclosing owner is exercising a right of lease nonrenewal or expiration, the owner shall give such a written notice prepared by the City of Cambridge at least thirty days prior to commencing any summary process action against the tenant or former homeowner. Such notice shall be provided in-hand or by both certified mail and first-class mail.

8.71.040.2 Notice by the City. The City of Cambridge shall annually publicize the requirements of Chapter 8.71 on the City's website and through other digital City notifications directed at the community, such as daily update e-mails and social media. **The City shall use reasonable efforts to mail notice of these requirements to every residential address in the City at least annually; this mailing may be a postcard that contains a QR code or other electronic link to the City's website or may be part of another City mailing that goes to residential addresses.** Also, the City shall annually provide information about the requirements of Chapter 8.71 at a City sponsored community event/program that is organized to provide information about housing resources. The City may publicize and provide information at events/programs about the requirements of Chapter 8.71 more frequently.