



Legal Outreach

Working for Equal Justice in the API Community

Supporting Immigrant Communities Amid COVID-19 Crisis



API Legal Outreach

HOUSING RIGHTS PROGRAM

INFORMATION ABOUT APILO HOUSING RIGHTS PROGRAM

- Pg. 02: APILO's Legal and Social Services for Housing Rights
- Pg. 03: APILO's Legal Work for Housing Rights in San Francisco and Oakland & Foreclosure
- Pg. 04: The Impact of COVID-19 on Tenants in San Francisco and Oakland
- Pg. 04: APILO Tenant Rights' *Success* Stories

APILO's housing advocacy work began in 2012 as a 1-person project providing housing counseling and eviction defense services to tenants in San Francisco's South of Market neighborhood. **In the past eight years, APILO has evolved into a 6-person team that now serves tenants in both San Francisco and Oakland and provides foreclosure defense services to homeowners and tenants throughout California.**

Please call API Legal Outreach for any issue relating to Tenants' Rights in San Francisco & Oakland, including:

- Eviction Prevention
- Wrongful Eviction
- Illegal Rent Increases
- Repair Requests
- Foreclosure



APILO's Legal and Social Services for Housing Rights



- Full-scope representation for tenants in unlawful detainer actions in San Francisco and Oakland
- Staffing/hosting clinics to conduct general housing counseling
- Conducting “know your rights” trainings and other outreach/education events to the community
- Leadership development for community advocates
- Representation in administrative law proceedings, particularly at the San Francisco and Oakland rent boards
- Foreclosure defense for homeowners throughout California
- Policy advocacy to improve legal protections for tenants and homeowners

APILO's Legal Work for Housing Rights in San Francisco

- In SF, APILO is one of several organizations funded to provide **full-scope legal protection as a part of the City's Tenant Right to Counsel initiative**.
- Under this initiative, the City was required to establish a program to provide legal representation for all tenants facing eviction, making San Francisco only the second city in the entire country to provide such a program.
- While this program was designed to primarily aid defendants in unlawful detainer actions, **APILO goes beyond these particular cases and also provides representation for tenants facing eviction outside of the court system**.
- Our advocacy includes assistance in cases that are resolved at the **SF Rent Board, fighting against landlords' attempts at self-help measures**, as well as informal negotiations in untenable living situations.



APILO's Legal Work for Housing Rights in Oakland

- In Oakland, **APILO was tasked to provide legal consultations and legal representation to all tenants in need, but as the only API-based legal services organization in the City of Oakland**, APILO has a special role in providing services to monolingual API tenants.
- **APILO's location in Chinatown allows for it to be easily accessible to tenants** that otherwise would not be able to find any cultural competent services in their own respective languages.

APILO's Legal Work for Foreclosure Prevention

- APILO's foreclosure defense work is primarily focused on **providing representation and education to limited-English proficiency homeowners and tenants** who are statistically among the most vulnerable to foreclosure.
- Under this program, **APILO travels throughout the Bay Area and to the Central Valley to provide services** to the most at-risk homeowners and tenants in California.

The Impact of COVID-19 on Tenants in San Francisco



- There is an **Eviction Moratorium**, which apply to all residential units, including residential hotels.
- However, “exception” cases are still being heard (e.g. criminal activity or nuisance cases that involves threats or bodily injury)
- **Mayor London Breed’s Executive Order is currently set to expire on July 31, 2020, however, the eviction moratorium will last for an additional two months.**
- If you missed your rent payments due to COVID-19, you can provide a written notice to your landlord, and you have 6 months to pay all of your back rent.
- **San Francisco Supervisors voted on June 9, 2020, to extend the eviction moratorium, and turn non-payment of rent cases into consumer debt.**
- Rent Board hearings are postponed until further notice.

The Impact of COVID-19 on Tenants in Oakland



- **The Eviction Moratorium, which only applies to tenancies regulated under the Oakland Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance and the Oakland Rent Adjustment Ordinance, has been extended to August 31, 2020,** or at the end of the local emergency, whichever comes first, unless the City Council extends it.

APILO Tenants' Rights Success Stories

- In SF, **the Rent Board ruled in our clients' favor for unlawfully increasing the rent multiple times,** and ordered the landlord to refund all rent overpayments in accordance to the notice and percentage requirements under the San Francisco Rent Ordinance.
- In Oakland, **the landlord of our monolingual Cantonese speaking client, giving no reason, demanded that the client move out of his apartment.** He was afraid of defying the order, but he had nowhere else to go. We wrote to the landlord and let her know that he did not have to move just because she asked him to do so. She replied that the apartment needed repairs and that he needed to move immediately. However, she didn't say what repairs were needed, nor did she mention relocation payments for the tenant while he was being displaced, a requirement under the Oakland Relocation Ordinance. **After this omission was pointed out to the landlord, she left the tenant alone and dropped her demands shortly thereafter.**