



Frequently Asked Questions Ventura County Mobile Home Park Rent Control Program

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency

800 S. Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009-1740 • (805) 654-2478 • www.vcrma.org/divisions/planning

Questions and Answers

Regarding the Ventura County Mobile Home Park Rent Control Program

Q. Does the County of Ventura regulate mobile home park rent increases?

A. Yes. In 1983, the Ventura County Board of Supervisors adopted a Mobile Home Park Rent Control Ordinance (Ordinance). The Ordinance protects the owners of mobile homes located in the unincorporated areas from unreasonable rent increases, while at the same time recognizing the need for park owners to receive a fair return on their property and rental income sufficient to cover operational costs. The full text of the Mobile Home Park Rent Control Ordinance may be viewed at the following link:

https://vcrma.org/docs/images/pdf/planning/programs/mobile-home/Ordinance_4620_-_Adopted_9-26-2023.pdf

According to the 2023 California State Mobile Home Residency Law website, at last count, approximately 104 cities and counties in California had enacted rent control in some form for mobile home parks.

Q. Who oversees and administers the Mobile Home Park Rent Control Program in the County of Ventura unincorporated areas?

A. The Resource Management Agency, Planning Division, has been tasked with administering the Ordinance. Planning Division staff reviews ministerial rent increase applications (i.e., Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment Annual Rent Increase Application) for completeness and consistency with the Ordinance, as well as assists the park owners and residents with questions pertaining to the program.

The Mobile Home Park Rent Review Board (Rent Review Board) reviews all discretionary rent increase applications (e.g., Utility Separation Applications) at a scheduled public hearing. The Rent Review Board consists of five board members appointed by the Board of Supervisors for a three-year term.

If you have any questions about the program, please contact Dillan Murray, Staff Administrator, at Dillan.Murray@ventura.org or (805) 654-5042

Q. How often are the Rent Review Board meetings held?

A. The Rent Review Board meetings are typically held on the third Wednesday of the month, quarterly (every February, May, August, and November), or as needed, at

1:00 p.m. in the County of Ventura Government Center, Hall of Administration Building, Multi-purpose Room, 800 S. Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009.

If you are interested in receiving an automated email reminder of each of the scheduled Rent Review Board meetings, please sign up at the following link:

<https://vcrma.org/divisions/planning/mobile-home-park-rent-review-board-hearing-notice/>

Q. How many different types of rent increase applications are allowed by the Rent Control Ordinance?

A. There are five rent increase applications:

(1) Section 81005(b): Ministerial Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment

This amount of rent increase allowed by this type of rent increase application is related to the Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment (SSCOLA) released by the Social Security Administration each October. The Ordinance allows a rent increase of between two and eight percent each year, but this amount can be no more than the SSCOLA, unless the SSCOLA is less than 2%. A minimum increase of 2% is allowed by the ordinance each year. This type of rent increase application is reviewed at the staff level and does not require a public hearing before the Rent Review Board.

In addition, if ownership is transferred, the space rent may be decontrolled with an increase in rent of \$72 or 15 percent of the Park's average rent, whichever is less, once every four years. Prior to increasing the rent, the park owner is required to submit a proposed rent increase schedule and a proof of service to Rent Review Board staff. The proof of service states that each affected resident has been notified within 90 days of the effective rent increase date. Note: Space rents may be increased only once per year.

(2) Section 81005(e): Utility Separation

Utility costs may be separated from the base rent by the mobile home park owner and may change over time when there are rate increases imposed by the utility company. For example, water, sewer, and trash services can be separated from the monthly rent and billed to residents individually. When this type of application is approved, the rent is reduced by the amount equal to the current utility cost as determined by the Rent Review Board. Thereafter, the resident pays the actual cost for the utility as a monthly fee billed separately from the space rent.

This type of rent increase application is reviewed and approved by the Rent Review Board at a public hearing.

(3) Section 81005(f): Service Reduction

A rent increase may occur when significant housing services are permanently reduced or disrupted for an unreasonable length of time without a corresponding reduction in the dollar amount of the space rent. It is the specific intent of the Mobile

Home Park Rent Control Ordinance to prohibit such indirect rent increases. Affected residents may file a petition (application) with the Rent Review Board for this type of indirect rent increase. This type of rent increase application is determined by the Rent Review Board at a public hearing.

(4) Section 81006: Completely New Capital Improvements

Space rent may be increased if a majority of the affected spaces have consented to the expense for a new capital improvement, such as a new swimming pool. This type of rent increase application is reviewed at the Rent Review Board staff level and does not require a public hearing before the Rent Review Board.

(5) Section 81007: Discretionary Increases

Park owners may apply for a discretionary rent increase in cases where the facts and circumstances show that the current park rent income is less than when the park was purchased. In evaluating a discretionary rent increase proposal, the Rent Review Board shall consider, along with all other relevant factors, changes in costs to the park owner attributable to increases or decreases in master land and/or facilities lease rent, utility rates, property taxes, capital improvements and more. This type of rent increase application is determined by the Rent Review Board at a public hearing.

Q. Are all mobile home spaces covered under the Ordinance?

A. No. Section 81002 of the Ordinance identifies specific exemptions from the Ordinance. Any mobile home park space subject to a long-term lease (more than 12 months) executed or amended prior to October 26, 2023 is exempt from rent control until the lease expires, at which time future rent increases will be subject to the Ordinance.

Some other examples of exemptions include the following: mobile home park-owned units; mobile home parks owned and operated by the United States Government, the State of California, or the County of Ventura; and mobile home parks constructed after September 1, 1982 (for a period of 15 years, provided certain conditions are met). For a complete list of exemptions, please refer to Section 81002 of the Ordinance.

Q. How often can rents be raised?

A. Space rents cannot be raised more than once a year, except under specific circumstances when a mobile home is transferred.

Q. How much can rents be raised?

A. Space rents can be raised annually in correlation with the current percent of the Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment (SSCOLA), between two and eight percent, without a public hearing. If a park owner requests an increase that is more than what is allowed by the SSCOLA, an application for a discretionary rent increase is required and a public hearing will be scheduled before the Rent Review Board. The dollar amount of the rent increase will be decided by the Rent Review Board.

Q. Who responds to health and safety complaints in a mobile home park?

- A. The Ordinance provides Rent Review Board staff very limited authority in regard to park maintenance in a mobile home park. The Rent Review Board staff and the Rent Review Board do not have the authority address anything other than mobile home park rent control issues. Many resident concerns involve leasing disputes, park rules and regulations, and physical improvement standards, which are covered by the Mobile Home Residency Law, §798.

However, if a resident believes that there are non-compliance issues regarding the Mobile Home Residency Law, including sewer, water, and electrical systems in the mobile home park, he/she may file a complaint with the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The HCD Mobilehome Assistance Center receives and processes complaints from the public and from public officials related to living in manufactured homes and mobile homes, as well as employee housing facilities and factory-built housing. Staff provides information, coordination, referrals, and other assistance to help resolve these complaints. HCD has jurisdiction to inspect mobile home parks in the Ventura County community to ensure that a reasonable level of health and safety is maintained in those parks. Refer to HCD's website at <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/manufactured-and-mobilehomes/mobilehome-assistance-center> to submit a complaint, or email MHAssistance@hcd.ca.gov or call (800) 952-8356.

In addition to filing a complaint with the HCD, a resident may file a Service Reduction petition (application) with Planning staff if significant housing services (i.e., water, sewer, gas, laundry facilities, and electricity) have been permanently reduced or disrupted for an unreasonable length of time without a corresponding reduction in the dollar amount of the space rent. It is the specific intent of the Ordinance to prohibit such indirect rent increases. Affected residents may file an application with the Rent Review Board for this type of indirect rent increase. Service Reduction petitions are reviewed by the Rent Review Board at a public hearing. For more information about this process, please contact Dillan Murray, the Rent Review Board Staff Administrator.

Q. Can rents be raised when a mobile home is sold or transferred?

- A. Yes. Section 81005(c) of the Ordinance allows a park owner to increase a space rent no more than once every four years at a rate of 15 percent of the average of the existing space rent of the affected spaces or \$72, whichever is lesser, upon transfer of ownership of a mobile home dwelling unit (referred to as a "vacancy decontrol").

A mobile home dwelling unit shall be deemed to have changed ownership when an existing tenant transfers all of his or her rights, title and interest in it, except that it shall be deemed not to have changed ownership when either: (1) an existing tenant acquires a replacement mobile home dwelling unit and locates the replacement on

and continues to occupy the space on which the replaced unit had been located; or, (2) when there is a transfer of all right, title and interest in the mobile home dwelling unit by a tenant to any joint tenant or family relative by gift, devise, or operation of law.

Section 81005 (g) of the Ordinance provides the method for how space rents are calculated when previously exempted spaces are no longer exempt. When Section 81005 (g) applies, the allowable space rent increase is consistent with the standard allowable rent increases under the Ordinance, as opposed to an increase equivalent to higher market rates. When park- or management-owned units are sold and re-enter a residential rental situation, the rent control re-entry calculation outlined in Section 81005 (g) shall apply, except as otherwise provided by state or federal law.

Additionally, per RRB Resolution RRB20-003 (adopted September 23, 2020), the method for determining space rent in situations wherein a park owner has purchased a unit, replaced the unit with a new mobile home, and sold the unit to a new buyer, shall follow the rent control re-entry provisions identified in Section 81005 (g) in addition to the decontrol provision identified in Section 81005 (c). This provision is intended to encourage the maintenance of a high-quality inventory of mobile homes and mobile home parks within the County, while enabling park owners to receive a fair return on their property and rent income sufficient to cover increases in costs outlined in Section 81000 of the Ordinance.

Q. Are there any other resources for property owners and residents of mobilehome parks?

A. Some resources that may be of interest are provided below:

- The **Ventura County Area Agency on Aging** has compiled a list of housing resources to help the populations they serve navigate individualized needs. For more information, the VCAAA can be reached at (805) 477-7300 or at the following link: <https://www.vcaaa.org/our-services/housing/>
- **Community Action Ventura County** helps empower families and individuals to live self-sufficiently and with dignity, with offices in Oxnard and Simi Valley. They may be contacted at (805) 436-4000 or at the following link: <https://ca-vc.org/#>
- The **Housing Rights Center (HRC)** provides housing counseling, discrimination issues, tenant rights, and tenant/landlord counseling. The HRC can be reached at (800) 477-5977 or at the following link: www.housingrightscenter.org.

- The **County of Ventura Self-Help Legal Access Center (LAC)** provides self-help resources for citizens on legal and court matters. The LAC can be reached at (805) 654-3962 or <https://www.ventura.courts.ca.gov/self-help.html>
- **Project Understanding** provides resources for eviction protection. Project Understanding can be reached at (805) 654-1326 or www.projectunderstanding.org.
- Contact the **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)** for questions related to senior housing at a mobile home park. HUD can be reached at (800) 333-4636 or www.hud.gov.
- **California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA)** is a nonprofit legal service program created to help California's low-income individuals and communities. CRLA can be reached at (800) 337-0690 or www.crla.org.
- The **Golden State Manufactured-Home Owners League (GSMOL)** is a statewide non-profit organization that supports manufactured-home owners (residents). For more information, please visit their website at www.gsmol.org. If you have questions, contact the following Region 8 representative:

Glenn Berry
 166 Don Antonio Way
 Ojai, CA 91320
 Phone: (805) 815-9434
Gberry.gsmol@gmail.com

- The **Western Manufactured-Housing Community Association (WMA)** is a non-profit organization established for the exclusive purpose of promoting and protecting the interest of owners, operators, and developers of manufactured-home communities in California. The WMA can be reached at (916) 448-7002 or www.wma.org.
- The **California Public Utilities Commission (PUC)** regulates privately owned electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water, railroad, rail transit, and passenger transportation companies. The PUC serves the public interest by protecting consumers and ensuring the provision of safe, reliable utility service and infrastructure at reasonable rates, with a commitment to environmental enhancement and a healthy California economy. The PUC can be reached at (800) 848-5580 or www.cpuc.ca.gov.

- **211 Ventura County.** Interface 211 Ventura County (211VC), an Interface program, is the most comprehensive information and referral service for local residents. If you or someone you know needs assistance with housing, health care, food, utilities, or other social services, Dial 211 or Text your zip code to 898211.
- **Southern California Edison Mobile Homes Rebate Program.** Upgrade your mobile home for free when you take advantage of no cost energy upgrades for mobile homes and mobile-home communities. More information can be found here: <https://www.sce.com/residential/rebates-savings/manufactured-home-program>
- **SoCal Gas Rebate and Financing Programs.** When upgrading your home to the latest energy efficient appliances and equipment, check out current rebate and financing offers helping you save money and energy. More information can be found here: <https://www.socalgas.com/savings/rebates-and-incentives>

Q. What protection do I have if the park owner retaliates against me for demanding my rights?

- A. Pursuant to Sections 81013 and 81014 of the Ordinance, it is unlawful for a park owner to retaliate against a resident or residents for organizing, petitioning government for rent relief, providing public testimony at a hearing, or exercising any right granted under the Ordinance. Furthermore, any action brought within three months of the determination of a request for a rent increase, petition, or complaint filed by the resident, or public testimony of a resident at a public hearing shall be presumed to be retaliatory; this presumption affects the burden of proof and is rebuttable by the park owner in a court of law.

If a resident believes that he or she is a victim of retaliation, please contact Dillan Murray, RRB Staff Administrator.