

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

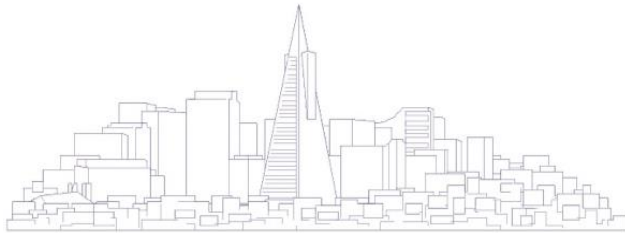
Rent Watch, a column for tenants and landlords written by Project Sentinel, appears in the Real Estate section of the *San Francisco Chronicle* and many other local papers.

More information on rental issues can be obtained from:

Project Sentinel Website:  
[www.housing.org](http://www.housing.org)

Every Tenant's Legal Guide, Nolo Press  
[www.nolo.com](http://www.nolo.com)

California Landlord's Law Book, Nolo Press  
[www.nolo.com](http://www.nolo.com)



If you think you have been subject to unlawful discrimination, call Project Sentinel's fair housing services at (650) 321-6291.

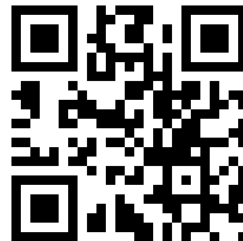
Who is my property owner? To find out, call the Santa Clara County Assessor's office, at: (408) 299-5500 or [www.sccassessor.org](http://www.sccassessor.org)



**Administered by**  
**Project Sentinel**  
**1490 El Camino Real**  
**Santa Clara, CA95050**



[www.housing.org](http://www.housing.org)



## THE LOS GATOS RENTAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROGRAM

RENT INCREASES  
REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE  
CHANGE OF TERMS  
EVICTIONS  
DEPOSITS

**CALL**

**(408) 402-0307**

Services are  
confidential,  
neutral and free

**For all Los Gatos  
residents**

## WHAT IS PROJECT SENTINEL?

Project Sentinel, a non-profit agency, provides information and dispute resolution services to tenants, mobile home owners, and landlords.

Project Sentinel answers questions and helps to resolve disputes such as deposits, repairs, rent increases, nonpayment of rent, other rental housing and mobile home park issues.

We also provide information and referral for subsidized and affordable housing, as well as counseling on first time home buying and mortgage default.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I CALL PROJECT SENTINEL?

A housing counselor works with you to help you resolve your situation, by answering your questions, providing you with information, and discussing possible solutions.

Comprehensive services include:

- Information & Counseling, description of rights and responsibilities for all parties;
- Resource Referrals;
- Administration of Petitions filed under the Rental Dispute Program, including forms and copies of the Ordinance and supporting Regulations

## RENT CONTROL IN LOS GATOS

Within the Town limits, the Los Gatos Rental Dispute Ordinance and supporting Regulations limit rent increases in certain residential rental properties.

- This program applies to properties with 3 or more rental units, and to mobilehome parks.
- In these properties, rent can only be increased once a year, and is generally limited to a 5% ceiling.
- However, landlords are allowed to increase the rent beyond 5% under certain limited conditions arising from increased costs.
- Otherwise valid rent increases can be challenged if there has been a Service Reduction, which is a failure to provide basic services such as adequate plumbing or other requirements of habitability.

The program resolves disputes through a three-step process.

- After a case is opened, program staff contact both sides to conciliate the dispute over the telephone.
- If conciliation is unsuccessful, a tenant can request mediation. In the mediation, a neutral professional meets with both sides in a confidential discussion to facilitate a settlement.
- If mediation fails to resolve the dispute, a tenant may request binding arbitration.

The program is administered by Project Sentinel as the Town's designated Agent. To find out more about the program and the forms to open a case, contact Project Sentinel at 408-402-0307. Additional information is also available on the Town of Los Gatos website.

## GUIDELINES FOR TENANTS AND LANDLORDS

### Tenants Should:

- Read the rental agreement or lease carefully, and comply with its terms, including paying the rent on time;
- Maintain the property in good condition, and notify the landlord promptly if repairs are needed;
- Safeguard against damage to the property caused by themselves or their guests.

### Landlords Should:

- Comply with the terms of the rental agreement or lease;
- Make repairs promptly;
- Give proper written notice for changes in rent or rental terms, or when entering onto the property;
- Offer a pre-departure joint inspection;
- Return security deposits, with an explanation for any deductions, within 21 days after the tenant vacates. Provide receipts if the deductions exceed \$125.

### Everyone Should:

- Record all agreements in writing, and keep copies in a safe place;
- Jointly complete a checklist of the condition of the property at the move-in.

