



Housing

During the 2017 legislative session, the General Assembly considered measures related to affordable housing, landlord-tenant agreements, construction defects, and homelessness.

Affordable Housing

Mobile homes are increasingly recognized as an affordable housing option, especially in tight housing markets. The General Assembly addressed tax issues that differentiated these homes from ones affixed to the ground. Prior law required county treasurers to enforce the collection of delinquent taxes on mobile homes through a court action or by seizing and selling the mobile home. *House Bill 17-1354* gives discretion to county treasurers to determine how to collect delinquent taxes on mobile homes. In addition, the bill authorizes a county treasurer to declare tax liens for mobile homes as county-held, and to withhold tax liens for mobile homes from being sold to investors.

Household energy bills also impact monthly housing costs and affordability. *House Bill 17-1116* extends low-income energy assistance funds through July 1, 2023. These funds assist eligible low-income households with heating and cooling energy costs, bill payment, energy crisis assistance, weatherization, and energy-related home repairs.

The Legislative Oversight Committee Concerning the Treatment of Persons with Mental Illness in the Criminal and Juvenile Justice System found housing to be unattainable for many mentally ill offenders transitioning to the community from a jail or prison. The committee recommended *Senate Bill 17-021*, which directs the Division of Housing in the Department of Local Affairs to establish a housing voucher and supportive services program for this population.

A documentary fee is a paperwork charge that a county clerk and recorder collects for recording real estate deeds or other related documents. Two bills, *House Bill 17-1309* and *Senate Bill 17-085*, attempted to increase this fee to finance a statewide affordable housing investment fund. Both bills were postponed indefinitely in the Senate Committee on State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee.

Landlord-Tenant

State law regulates several areas related to landlord-tenant agreements, including notices of rent increase or other changes and the terms in which a lease may be broken.

Under *Senate Bill 17-245*, the required notice period for a termination or eviction for tenancies of one to six months was extended from 7 to 21 days. The bill also requires a 21-day notice for any rent increases in short-term tenancies.

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House Bill 17-1035 allows victims of sexual assault and stalking to break a residential lease agreement without incurring any fine or financial penalties. Tenants are required to provide one of three documents: a police report or protection order; a statement from a medical professional; or a statement from the state's confidentiality program.

Construction Defect Actions

For a number of years, there have been attempts to reform the state's construction defect law, which previously allowed as few as two condominium owners to bring a class-action lawsuit against a builder. *House Bill 17-1279* addressed this topic, stipulating that legal action against a builder for alleged construction flaws can only proceed when more than half of all homeowners in a condominium complex agree to it. The bill also outlines lawsuit notification, meeting, and unit owner voting requirements.

Right to Rest

Jurisdictions across the state have been grappling with how to best address the growing homeless population. Some cities, including Denver, have instituted an urban camping ban and a series of sweeps to enforce it. In response, bills have been proposed over the past few years to establish statewide protections for this population. *House Bill 17-1314*, the Colorado Right to Rest Act, received a hearing in the House Local Government Committee, but was postponed indefinitely. Like its predecessors from previous sessions, this bill sought to de-criminalize homelessness and protect certain rights of those living on the street.