

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



**FROM:** Supervisor John J. Benoit and Supervisor Marion Ashley

**SUBMITTAL DATE:**  
December 22, 2009

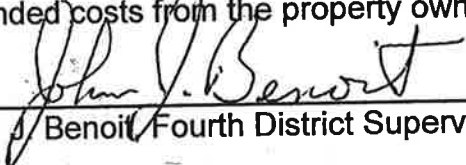
**SUBJECT:** Introduction and Adoption of Ordinance No. 893 Providing For Displacement Payments for Residential Households

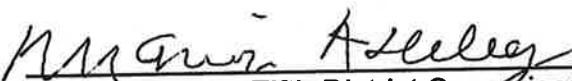
**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** That the Board of Supervisors introduce, and on the following week, adopt, Ordinance No. 893 Providing for Displacement Payments for Residential Households.

**BACKGROUND:** Some residential rental properties within the County fall into such a poor condition due to an owner's neglect that the County must order the property's tenants to vacate the property for the tenants' own health and safety. Although the substandard conditions at these properties are in no way the tenants' fault, they must currently bear the cost and burden of relocation to other, habitable housing.

In addition, the County has occasionally expended relocation benefits to tenants who have been displaced due to property owner neglect, where the owner has failed to provide such assistance. Yet, the County currently has no enforcement mechanism for recovering these funds from the property owners responsible for the health and safety violations that resulted in their tenants' displacement.

The attached ordinance addresses the foregoing issues by requiring that residential rental property owners who fail to maintain their properties in a safe and habitable condition pay the relocation expenses of their displaced tenants. Residential rental property owners who fail to do so will be subject to penalties. Furthermore, the attached ordinance provides County agencies that expend relocation benefits to displaced tenants with a mechanism whereby they can recover these expended costs from the property owner.

  
John J. Benoit, Fourth District Supervisor

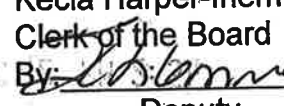
  
Marion Ashley, Fifth District Supervisor

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

On motion of Supervisor Benoit, seconded by Supervisor Stone and duly carried, IT WAS ORDERED that the above ordinance is approved as introduced with waiver of the reading; and,

IT WAS FURTHER ORDERED, that the notice of violation reference the above ordinance and Code Enforcement staff report back to the Board on its effectiveness.

**Ayes:** Buster, Stone, Benoit and Ashley  
**Nays:** None  
**Absent:** Tavaglione  
**Date:** February 23, 2010  
**xc:** Supvrs. Benoit and Ashley, CED, COB

Kecia Harper-Ihem  
Clerk of the Board  
By:   
Deputy

**Prev. Agn. Ref.:**

**District:**

**Agenda Number:**

ATTACHMENTS FILED WITH  
THE CLERK OF THE BOARD

3.6

FORM APPROVED COUNTY COUNSEL  
BY: JONATHAN D. DELOACH  
12/22/09  
Date of Submittal Concur Date

1 ORDINANCE NO. 893

2 AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

3 PROVIDING FOR DISPLACEMENT PAYMENTS FOR RESIDENTIAL HOUSEHOLDS

4  
5 The Board of Supervisors of the County of Riverside ordains as follows:

6 Section 1. FINDINGS. The Board of Supervisors finds that several residential rental  
7 units in the unincorporated areas of Riverside County have severe code violations, which threaten the  
8 safety of the residents and require the units to be vacated to allow for extensive repairs and remediation.  
9 Residential households displaced as a result of severe code violations suffer a financial burden and the  
10 threat of homelessness because of the acute lack of resources available for locating and securing suitable  
11 replacement housing. The displacement payment obligations imposed on property owners by this  
12 ordinance will partially mitigate the financial hardships faced by displaced residential households.  
13 Furthermore, these displacement payment obligations have the additional purpose of encouraging owners  
14 to maintain their properties in a habitable condition and in compliance with all applicable codes.

15 Section 2. PURPOSE. The purpose of this ordinance is to alleviate hardships  
16 associated with residential household displacements by requiring owners to make payments to residential  
17 households displaced as a result of a determination by enforcement agency authorities that the residential  
18 unit is unsafe for habitability by the residents and to implement the administrative procedures set forth in  
19 Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 17975) of Chapter 5 of Part 1.5 of Division 13 of the Health and  
20 Safety Code.

21 Section 3. AUTHORITY. This ordinance is adopted pursuant to Article 2.5  
22 (commencing with Section 17975) of Chapter 5 of Part 1.5 of Division 13 of the Health and Safety Code  
23 which provides that local enforcement agencies shall determine eligibility for payments to displaced  
24 tenants and shall implement an administrative appeals procedure for owners found liable for such  
25 payments. This ordinance is also authorized by Health and Safety Code section 17975.7 which provides  
26 that the remedies under Article 2.5 are not exclusive.

27 ///

28 ///

1                    Section 4.      EXEMPTIONS.      The following exemptions shall apply in the  
2 application of this ordinance:

- 3                    a.      No owner shall be liable to any residential household or County agency for  
4 displacement payments if the residential household or any one of its  
5 members caused or substantially contributed to the condition giving rise to  
6 the order to vacate, nor shall any displacement payments be payable to a  
7 residential household if any guest or invitee of the residential household has  
8 caused or substantially contributed to the condition giving rise to the order  
9 to vacate.
- 10                  b.      No owner shall be liable to any residential household or County agency for  
11 displacement payments if the unit or structure became unsafe or hazardous  
12 as the result of a fire, flood, earthquake, or other event beyond the control of  
13 the owner, and the owner did not cause or contribute to the condition.
- 14                  c.      No owner shall be liable to any residential household or County agency for  
15 displacement payments provided the owner provides a habitable  
16 replacement residential unit of comparable size and appurtenances to the  
17 vacated residential unit and provided the owner pays all costs associated  
18 with moving the residential household to the replacement unit.
- 19                  d.      No owner shall be liable to any residential household or County agency for  
20 displacement payments if the residential household is in default in payment  
21 of rent, unless rent is being lawfully withheld by the residential household.
- 22                  e.      No owner shall be liable to any residential household or County agency for  
23 displacement payments if the vacated unit is operated as an emergency or  
24 temporary shelter for homeless persons (whether such persons have  
25 assigned rooms or beds, and regardless of duration of stay by any occupant)  
26 by a nonprofit organization or public agency owning, leasing, or managing  
27 such unit.

28 ///

1 f. No public entity, as defined in Government Code Section 7260, holding all  
2 or any part of the legal title to a residential unit occupied by a residential  
3 household otherwise subject to this ordinance, shall be liable for  
4 displacement payments.

5 Section 5. DEFINITIONS. As used in this ordinance, the following terms shall  
6 have the following meanings:

7 a. County Agency. Any agency, department, division, or political  
8 subdivision of the County of Riverside or under the authority of the County  
9 of Riverside Board of Supervisors, or the Board of Supervisors sitting as the  
10 directors of said agency.

11 b. Enforcement Agency. Any County of Riverside department or  
12 division, including its director or the director's designees, authorized to  
13 ascertain the condition of a residential unit and to issue notices requiring  
14 owners to bring such units into compliance with applicable building and  
15 housing codes that threaten the health and safety of residential households.

16 c. Owner. Any person, persons, landlord, corporation, or any entity  
17 holding all or any part of the legal title to a property or their agent,  
18 successors or assigns. "Owner" does not include a residential household as  
19 defined herein, or any member thereof, that holds legal title to the  
20 residential unit in which they reside.

21 d. Displacement. The required vacating of a residential unit by a residential  
22 household as a result of an order to vacate or an order requiring the vacation  
23 of a residential unit by the enforcement agency.

24 ///

25 ///

26 ///

27 ///

28 ///

1 e. Residential Unit. A structure or that part of a structure which is used as  
2 a place of permanent or customary and usual abode of a residential  
3 household, including but not limited to a room in a single family home,  
4 hotel or motel, rooming house or apartment, single family home, mobile  
5 home or mobile home space, trailer or trailer space. "Residential unit" does  
6 not include any unit occupied pursuant to an innkeeper-guest relationship.

7 f. Residential Household. Any person or group of people, whether  
8 related or unrelated, entitled to occupy a residential unit or portion of real  
9 property primarily for living or dwelling purposes under a written or oral  
10 rental agreement as tenants, subtenants, lessees or sublessees, including  
11 such persons' personal property that is a normally and customarily  
12 contained within the residential unit. "Residential household" does not  
13 include the owner of a residential unit or members of the owner's  
14 immediate family, except as provided in Section 9 of this ordinance.

15 Section 6. ENTITLEMENT TO DISPLACEMENT PAYMENTS. Any residential  
16 household that is displaced or subject to displacement from a residential unit as a result of an order to  
17 vacate or an order requiring the vacation of a residential unit by the enforcement agency as a result of a  
18 violation so extensive and of such a nature that the immediate health and safety of the residents is  
19 endangered, shall be entitled to receive displacement payments from the owner.

20 Section 7. CONTENTS AND SERVICE OF ORDER TO VACATE. At the time of  
21 the service of an order to vacate, the enforcement agency shall determine if any residential household  
22 subject to the order may be entitled to displacement payments. The determination of entitlement to  
23 displacement payments, or the reason that any residential household may not be entitled to displacement  
24 payments, shall accompany the order to vacate. The order to vacate shall also include, or be accompanied  
25 by, a summary of the provisions of this ordinance and an itemized accounting of the displacement  
26 payment due to the residential household. Failure to provide such summary or itemized accounting shall  
27 not relieve any person of the obligations imposed by this ordinance.

28 ///

1            Section 8.      DISPLACEMENT PAYMENT.      The amount of the displacement  
2 payment due to the residential household shall be determined as follows:

3            a.      The displacement payment shall be made available by the owner to the  
4 eligible residential household in an amount equal to two months of the  
5 periodically established Fair Market Rent for the Riverside-San Bernardino-  
6 Ontario, California Metropolitan Statistical Area as determined by the  
7 United States Department of Housing and Urban Development pursuant to  
8 Section 1437f of Title 42 of the United States Code. The Fair Market Rent  
9 for residential households shall be the amount established according to the  
10 number of unit bedrooms, except in cases in which the residential  
11 household owns the residential unit as set forth in Section 9 of this  
12 ordinance, in which case the Fair Market Rent shall be the amount  
13 established for manufactured home spaces. In addition, the displacement  
14 payment shall include an amount, as determined by the enforcement  
15 agency, sufficient for utility service deposits. The displacement payment  
16 shall be paid by the owner in addition to the return, as required by law, of  
17 any security deposits held by the owner. The displacement payment shall be  
18 payable on a per residential household basis.

19            b.      The displacement payment shall also include the fixed residential moving  
20 cost established by the Federal Highway Administration as set forth in  
21 Section 24.302 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

22            Section 9.      ADDITIONAL DISPLACEMENT PAYMENT FOR MOVEABLE  
23 RESIDENTIAL UNITS ON RENTED REAL PROPERTY.      In the  
24 case of an order to vacate a portion of real property in which the residential  
25 household, or any member thereof, hold legal title to a moveable residential  
26 unit on the owner's real property, the displacement payment shall include  
27 the reasonable cost of moving the residential household's residential unit to  
28 a comparable portion of real property within the County of Riverside,

1 provided such residential unit is not subject to an order to vacate or  
2 otherwise not habitable or not moveable as determined by the enforcement  
3 agency. If such residential unit is not habitable or not moveable and was  
4 allowed by the owner to be placed upon the real property without the owner  
5 complying with all applicable land use laws and regulations, then the owner  
6 shall reimburse the residential household for the fair market value of the  
7 residential unit. If such residential unit is not habitable or not moveable,  
8 and if the owner is in compliance with all applicable land use laws for the  
9 placing of the residential unit on the owner's real property, then the owner  
10 shall not be liable for reimbursing the residential household for any portion  
11 of the value of residential unit. An owner's obligation to provide a  
12 displacement payment to a residential household that is required to vacate a  
13 portion of real property due to the owner's conduct, as determined by the  
14 enforcement agency, is limited only to the extent provided by this section.

15 Section 10. TIMING OF DISPLACEMENT PAYMENT.

- 16 a. The displacement payment required by this ordinance shall be paid by the  
17 owner to the residential household within ten (10) days after the date that  
18 the order to vacate is first mailed to the owner and posted on the premises,  
19 or at least twenty (20) days prior to the vacation date set forth in the order to  
20 vacate, whichever occurs later.
- 21 b. If there are fewer than ten (10) days between the first posting and mailing of  
22 the order to vacate and the vacation date, the displacement payment shall be  
23 paid by the owner to the residential household within twenty-four (24)  
24 hours after the notice is posted and mailed. The enforcement agency shall  
25 attempt to provide telephonic or written notice to the owner to notify the  
26 owner that the benefits are payable immediately. Failure to provide the  
27 notice as specified in this section shall not relieve the owner of any  
28 obligations imposed by this ordinance.

1 c. Any owner who does not make a timely payment shall be liable to the  
2 residential household for an amount 1½ times the displacement payments  
3 payable pursuant to Section 8 of this ordinance. No penalty shall apply  
4 when displacement payments are payable fewer than ten (10) days after the  
5 date the order to vacate is first mailed and posted, if the owner makes  
6 payment no later than ten (10) days after the order is first mailed and  
7 posted.

8 Section 11. DISCRETIONARY DISPLACEMENT PAYMENT BY COUNTY AGENCY.

9 Any County agency may, at its discretion, advance displacement payments to displaced residential  
10 households, and shall be entitled to recovery of any advanced displacement payments. The enforcement  
11 agency shall be entitled to recover on any County agency's behalf all displacement payments that were  
12 due and payable to the residential household by the owner as determined by the enforcement agency and  
13 were actually paid by the County agency. The enforcement agency shall also be entitled to recover from  
14 the owner an additional amount equal to the sum of one-half the amount so paid, but not to exceed ten  
15 thousand dollars (\$10,000), as a penalty for failure to make timely payment to the displaced residential  
16 household, and the County's actual costs, including direct and indirect costs, of administering the  
17 provision of displacement payments to the displaced residential household. Any amounts paid by the  
18 County agency and any applicable penalties and actual costs may also be placed as a lien against the  
19 property by the enforcement agency by recording the lien in the County Recorder's office. Prior to  
20 instituting any action to collect from the owner any displacement payments paid pursuant to this section,  
21 or to impose a lien therefor, the enforcement agency shall send to the owner by first-class mail, postage  
22 prepaid, at the owner's address as shown on the last equalized assessment roll, an itemized accounting of  
23 all payments paid by any County agency to the residential household, and any penalties or costs the  
24 enforcement agency is seeking to recover on the County agency's behalf. Nothing herein shall be  
25 construed as requiring the County or any County agency to pay any displacement payments to any  
26 residential household, or assume any obligation, requirement, or duty of the owner. Further, nothing  
27 herein shall be construed as limiting the County's remedies for recovering any advanced displacement  
28 payments.



1           Section 12.    APPEAL OF DETERMINATION OF DISPLACEMENT PAYMENTS.

2                   a.    If the owner contends that not all of the payments deemed chargeable to the  
3                           owner by the enforcement agency on the grounds that the intended or actual  
4                           recipients were not displaced residential households, no displacement  
5                           payments were payable pursuant to this ordinance, or on other grounds, the  
6                           owner shall be entitled to an administrative hearing before the enforcement  
7                           agency's director or director's designee by submitting a written appeal to  
8                           the director of the enforcement agency within twenty (20) days after receipt  
9                           by the owner of an itemized accounting of displacement payments due the  
10                          residential household or reimbursement due the County for advance  
11                          displacement payments paid by any County agency to the residential  
12                          household, including any costs and penalties provided herein. After  
13                          providing at least ten (10) days written notice to the owner, the enforcement  
14                          agency's director or director's designee shall hold the administrative  
15                          hearing for the purpose of determining the amount chargeable to the owner,  
16                          including penalties and costs, if any. Notice may be delivered in person or  
17                          may be mailed to the address listed by the owner in the request for hearing.  
18                          In determining the validity of any displacement payments, penalties or costs  
19                          chargeable to the owner, the director or director's designee shall consider  
20                          whether the violations that led to the order to vacate were created by, or are  
21                          the responsibility of, the owner and shall also consider those exceptions set  
22                          forth in Section 4 of this ordinance. In conducting the hearing, the director  
23                          or director's designee shall not be limited by the technical rules of evidence.  
24                          The decision of the director or the director's designee shall be in writing  
25                          and include notice of a right to appeal the decision to the Board of  
26                          Supervisors.

27    ///

28    ///

- 1                   b.       The decision of the director or the director's designee may be appealed by  
2                               filing a written notice of appeal with the enforcement agency within ten  
3                               (10) days after mailing the decision. The appeal shall be heard by the  
4                               Board of Supervisors which may affirm, amend or reverse the decision and  
5                               may take any other action deemed appropriate. The enforcement agency's  
6                               director or the director's designee shall give written notice of the time and  
7                               the place of the hearing to the appellant. In conducting the hearing, the  
8                               Board of Supervisors shall not be limited by the technical rules of evidence.
- 9                   c.       The final decision of the Board of Supervisors shall be subject to Section  
10                              1094.5 of the Code of Civil Procedure. If the owner fails to obtain a more  
11                              favorable decision than that set forth in the itemized accounting, the owner  
12                              shall be liable to the enforcement agency for the costs of the administrative  
13                              hearing and appeal, not to exceed five thousand dollars (\$5,000). The  
14                              failure to receive the itemized accounting shall not relieve the owner of any  
15                              obligation under this ordinance.

16                   Section 13.     TIME FOR OWNER TO REIMBURSE COUNTY FOR

17 DISCRETIONARY DISPLACEMENT PAYMENTS. If there are fewer than ten (10) days between the  
18 first posting and mailing of the order to vacate and the vacation date, and if the County advances  
19 displacement payments to any residential household, prior to the expiration of the 10-day period, the  
20 owner shall not be required to reimburse the enforcement agency for a charge identified on the itemized  
21 accounting if the owner contests the charge within twenty (20) days after the itemized accounting is  
22 mailed to the owner. The owner shall pay any charges that were the subject of the appeal within thirty  
23 (30) days after an adverse decision by the enforcement agency on the appeal is mailed to the owner. In all  
24 other cases, the owner shall pay any charge identified on the itemized accounting within thirty (30) days  
25 after the itemized accounting is mailed to the owner.

26 ///  
27 ///  
28 ///

1 Section 14. PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION. Any person who is a member of a  
2 residential household who is entitled to displacement payments from an owner under this ordinance shall  
3 have the right to file an action for injunctive relief and/or damages against the owner. Attorney fees and  
4 costs shall be awarded to the prevailing party in any such action. These remedies shall be in addition to  
5 those provided by any other law.

6 Section 15. SEVERABILITY. If any provision, clause, sentence or paragraph of this  
7 ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstances shall be held invalid, such invalidity  
8 shall not affect the other provisions of this ordinance which can be given effect without the invalid  
9 provision or application, and to this end, the provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared to be  
10 severable.

11 Section 16. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days after  
12 its adoption.

13  
14 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY  
15 OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
16

17 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
18 Chairman, Board of Supervisors

18 ATTEST:  
19 KECIA HARPER-IHEM  
20 Clerk of the Board

21 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
22 Deputy

23 (SEAL)  
24

25 APPROVED AS TO FORM

26 December 22, 2009  
27 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
28 JONATHAN D. HOLUB  
Deputy County Counsel