

City of Alexandria, Virginia

2026
City of Alexandria
Housing
Legislative Update

Alexandria Affordable Housing Advisory Committee

June 4, 2026



2026 Session Overview



- Session opened: January 14, 2026
- Key dates:
 - Crossover: February 12
 - Adjournment: March 14
 - Governor’s final action deadline: May 22
- **88 housing bills tracked, 36/~180 passed**
- Focus areas:
 - Affordable Housing Preservation & Development
 - Tenant Protection & Eviction Prevention
 - Housing Safety & Landlord Accountability

City's 2026 Housing Legislative Priorities



Advance Housing Affordability and Economic Opportunity

The City seeks new tools and funding to expand housing options so those who make Alexandria work can call Alexandria home

The City Supports:

- Right of First Refusal for affordable housing preservation
- 14-day eviction notice period
- Anti-rent gouging & Housing Trust Fund
- Local habitability enforcement
- Faith-based/nonprofit housing flexibility
- Zoning appeal clarification
- Energy efficiency for low-income families

City's 2026 Housing Legislative Priorities



Advance Housing Affordability and Economic Opportunity

The City seeks new tools and funding to expand housing options so those who make Alexandria work can call Alexandria home

ACHIEVED

The City Supports:

- Right of First Refusal for affordable housing preservation
- 14-day eviction notice period
- Anti-rent gouging & Housing Trust Fund
- Local habitability enforcement
- Faith-based/nonprofit housing flexibility
- Zoning appeal clarification
- Energy efficiency for low-income families

Affordable Housing Preservation & Development

Preservation & Local Authority



*City and
Governor's
Priority*

HB4 - Right of First Refusal

- 24-month notice before sale of subsidized properties
- Allows city/nonprofits to purchase before market-rate conversion

SB74 - Local Zoning Authority for Affordable Housing

- Expands all localities' authority to adopt affordable housing measures
- Already used by Alexandria (possible expansion of authority); extends statewide

Production & Development



HB594 - Expedited Approval for 100% Affordable Housing

- Allows administrative rezoning process for affordable projects
- Could speed up affordable housing pipeline

HB888 – Parking

- Caps minimum parking requirements for residential development in designated areas near transit and higher-density zones

Expected Impact: Housing production expanded through faster approvals and reduced parking costs

Production & Development



SB388/HB1279 - "Faith-Based Housing"

- Enable churches/nonprofits to build affordable housing by-right (with certain limitations)

SB531 - ADU Requirements

- Statewide by-right ADUs in single-family zones
- Alexandria already compliant (grandfathered), but good for statewide production

Expected Impact: Unlocks faith-based/nonprofit land and simplifies ADU development

Financing Tools



HB196 - Infrastructure Fund for Residential Development

- State grants/loans for infrastructure supporting residential development
- Could help close financing gaps for AH projects
 - -can we become a part of the pilot? What are the priorities for this?

HB352 - Local AH Performance Grant Programs

- Enables AEDP to create grant program for AH development
- Grants capped at increase in assessed value

HB1227 – State Private Activity Bonds

- Increases Virginia's private activity bond housing allocation from 57% to 67%, expanding financing capacity for AH development statewide
- Boosts bond authority for both the Virginia Housing Development Authority (43% → 50%) and local housing authorities (14% → 17%)

Expected Impact: Could make more affordable housing projects financially viable through state infrastructure grants and expanded financing options



Financing Tools

SB181 – Residential Conversion Property Tax Exemptions

- Allows localities to provide partial real estate tax exemptions for underutilized commercial, retail, or religious buildings converted to residential use (if at least 30% of units at or below 80% of AMI)

HB854 – Expanded Tax Exemption

- Clarifies that localities may exempt from property taxes real property owned by entities where a nonprofit holds a controlling interest (even with for-profit partners) when used for charitable purposes such as affordable housing, including LIHTC developments

HB164 – Housing for Local Employees

- Eliminates the \$25,000 cap and VHDA income guideline requirements on homeownership and workforce housing grants that localities may provide to local government, school board, and constitutional officer employees

Expected Impact: Gives localities greater flexibility to incentivize and support production, could reduce development and operating costs for AH

Tenant Protection & Eviction Prevention

Tenant Protection Themes



**Removing
Financial
Barriers**

**Billing &
Application
Transparency**

**Notice
Requirements**

**Payment Time
& Flexibility**

**Eviction Court
Process &
Improvements**

Removing Financial Barriers



HB1005 - Payment Method Flexibility

- Requires landlords (4+ units) to accept multiple payment methods (debit, credit, cash, money order), no processing fees unless fee-free alternative offered

SB313 - Fee Prohibitions

- Prohibits maintenance/repair fees (unless tenant violation) and payment processing fees for all landlords beyond actual costs

Expected Impact: Reduce financial barriers to housing by limiting fees and expanding payment options

Billing & Application Transparency



HB379 – Rental Application Disclosures *(July 1, 2027)*

- Requires landlords to disclose all fees, tenant selection criteria (including automatic denial criteria), and applicants' rights to a free consumer report before collecting any fee or information from a prospective tenant

HB616 - Right to Ledger

- Helps tenants verify charges and catch billing errors before disputes escalate, reducing unnecessary nonpayment filings

SB294 - Utility Billing Transparency

- Requires landlords to maintain records of utility billing calculations

Expected Impact: Increases transparency in utility billing and rent calculations, helping tenants identify and dispute billing errors

Notice Requirements



HB678 - Rent Increase Notice Requirements

- 90-day notice for rent increases; tenant given at least 30 days to respond

HB1361 – Proper Notice

- Requires termination notices to include detailed statement of charges and payments over past 12 months

HB1361/SB294 – Contents of Nonpayment Notices *(July 1, 2027)*

- Requires nonpayment notices to include a written statement of all charges and payments over the past 12 months, including any utility, late, and attorney fees

Expected Impact: Gives tenants more time and information to respond to rent increases and nonpayment notices, reducing unexpected displacement

Time & Payment Flexibility



HB15/SB48 - 14-Day Notice for Nonpayment

- Move from 5-day to 14-day pay-or-quit notice

**City and
Governor's Priority**

Expected Impact: Fewer UD filings (time to reach next paycheck); helps hourly workers, families with temporary financial challenges

HB95 - Mandatory Payment Plans *(July 1, 2027)*

- Requires landlords with 4+ units to offer payment plan (up to 6 months) when tenant owes \leq 1 month's rent
- Plan limited to once per lease term, & LL can file UD if tenant rejects or defaults

Expected Impact: Similar to COVID-era protections that proved effective in reducing filings (HB7001)

Court Process Improvements



HB837 / SB273 - Expand EDP Eligibility

- Lower upfront payment: 25% → 10%
- Remove "employment" requirement (income suffices)
- Allow EDP if no outstanding PP (vs. strict late payment limits)

HB593 – Information Attached to Unlawful Detainers

- Allows courts to attach plain-language information to Unlawful Detainers about available legal resources, the UD process, and the Eviction Diversion Program

Expected Impact: Increases tenant awareness of diversion options at point of UD; expanded EDP eligibility makes eviction diversion more accessible for vulnerable residents

Court Process Improvements



HB221 – Appeal Bond for Indigent Parties

- Indigent tenants no longer required to post appeal bond in UD cases (including non-payment of rent)

HB845 – Bifurcation of Unlawful Detainer Cases

- Removes the plaintiff's right to bifurcate a UD case where the defendant contests the amount of rent and damages owed

Expected Impact: Lowers barriers for indigent tenants to appeal judgments; ensures tenants can meaningfully exercise the right of redemption and pay to stop an eviction before it occurs

Housing Safety and Accountability

Local Habitability Enforcement



City Priority

HB14 - VRLTA Enforcement by Localities

- **New authority:** Cities can sue landlords on behalf of tenants for serious habitability violations
 - Listed Priority
 - Previously passed House 58-40 (2025), failed Senate committee 7-8

Expected Impact: Addresses justice gap where legal aid lacks capacity; City can intervene in worst cases of uninhabitable conditions; enforcement may prevent retaliatory evictions against complaining tenants

Will Require Implementation

Additional Housing Safety & Accountability Bills



HB519 – Essential Services (Air Conditioning)

- Adds central air conditioning (when landlord-supplied and operating at lease start) to the VRLTA definition of essential services landlords must maintain

HB281/SB373 - Habitability Defense

- Tenants may assert poor conditions as a defense in eviction/nonpayment actions without first paying outstanding rent, late charges, or fees
- Court may order landlord to remedy noncompliance rather than simply ruling for possession

HB848 - TA Without Escrow *(January 1, 2027)*

- Removes requirement to pay outstanding rent, late charges, or fees upfront to *file* a tenant's assertion; ongoing rent payments into escrow during the case are still required

Expected Impact: Strengthens tenants' ability to assert habitability rights and challenge evictions based on poor conditions, without upfront payment barriers

Additional Housing Safety & Accountability Bills



HB174/SB325 – Servicemember Lease Termination

- Removes the 60-day advance notice requirement for military servicemembers terminating a lease early, aligning Virginia law with existing federal law

HB834 – Lease Termination Due to Fire or Casualty Damage *(Jan. 1, 2027)*

- Extends notice period from 14 to 21 days; requires landlord to first meet with tenant and explore alternatives (including a comparable available unit in the same complex) before issuing a termination notice

HB1408 – Victims of Domestic Violence

- Removes the requirement that DV victims notify their landlord if the perpetrator returns to the unit, provided a protective order is in place or the perpetrator is barred by the landlord or court

Expected Impact: Protects military families, fire-displaced tenants, and domestic violence survivors from displacement

Additional Housing Safety & Accountability Bills



HB329 - Anti-Retaliation Protections

- Expands protected tenant actions (media complaints, tenant organizing)
- Shifts burden of proof to landlord

HB1305 – DPOR Investigations

- Allows DPOR to take disciplinary and fair housing discrimination cases under advisement, defer findings, or dismiss based on terms DPOR sets — adding flexibility to fair housing enforcement

HB395/SB250 – Small Portable Solar Generators *(Jan. 1, 2027)*

- Prohibits landlords from banning tenants from installing small portable solar devices on the exterior of their unit, subject to reasonable landlord restrictions on size and placement

Expected Impact: Deters retaliatory evictions and gives DPOR greater flexibility to resolve fair housing cases

Other Notable Bills (Brief Overview)

Department of Housing and Community Development



HB527 – Makes VERP permanent

- Codifies Virginia's Eviction Reduction Program in state law, focused on housing stability and eviction prevention
- Requires annual DHCD report to the General Assembly on program outcomes and recommendations

HB1043 – Timeline for Housing Trust Fund Applications

- Requires DHCD to notify Housing Trust Fund awardees within 90 days of application through July 1, 2027; future timelines to be set with stakeholders

SB666 – DHCD Housing Database

- Requires DHCD to create a publicly accessible housing development database containing the number of proposed, available, and affordable housing units in each locality, updated annually

Questions?