1	ORDINANCE NO.		
2 3 4 5 6	AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CITY CODE CHAPTER 4-14 TO RENAME THE CHAPTER; TO RENAME AND RENUMBER PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE REGISTRATION OF RENTAL PROPERTY; TO ESTABLISH A TENANT'S RIGHT TO ORGANIZE; TO PROHIBIT RETALIATION; AND TO CREATE AN OFFENSE AND PENALTY.		
7	BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:		
8 9 10	<b>PART 1.</b> City Code Chapter 4-14 ( <i>Registration of Rental Property</i> ) is amended to rename the chapter and Article 1 ( <i>General Provisions</i> ) and to rename and renumber Articles 2, 3, 4, and 5 to read:		
11	CHAPTER 4-14 [REGISTRATION OF] RENTAL PROPERTY		
12 13	ARTICLE 1. <u>REGISTRATION OF RENTAL PROPERTY</u> [GENERAL PROVISIONS]		
14	<u>DIVISION 1</u> [ARTICLE 2]. RENTAL REGISTRATION APPLICATION.		
15	<u>DIVISION 2</u> [ARTICLE 3]. OPERATION.		
16	<u>DIVISION 3</u> [ARTICLE 4]. INSPECTION.		
17	<u>DIVISION 4</u> [ARTICLE 5]. ENFORCEMENT.		
18 19 20 21 22 23 24	<b>PART 2.</b> City Code Section 4-14-1 ( <i>Purpose</i> ), Section 4-14-2 ( <i>Definitions</i> ), Section 4-14-3 ( <i>Registration Required; Exceptions</i> ), Section 4-14-4 ( <i>Registration</i> ), Section 4-14-6 ( <i>Other Permits or Licenses Required</i> ), Section 4-14-30 ( <i>Rental of Unregistered Property Prohibited</i> ), Section 4-14-31 ( <i>Registration Period</i> ), Section 4-14-34 ( <i>Signs</i> ), Section 4-14-40 ( <i>Inspection by Code Official</i> ), Section 4-14-50 ( <i>Suspension</i> ), Section 4-14-51 ( <i>Revocation</i> ), and Section 4-14-53 ( <i>Penalty</i> ) are amended to replace the word "chapter" with "article".		
25 26	<b>PART 3.</b> City Code Chapter 4-14 ( <i>Rental Property</i> ) is amended to add a new Article 2 ( <i>Tenant Right to Organize</i> ) to read:		
27	ARTICLE 2. TENANT RIGHT TO ORGANIZE.		

### ARTICLE 2. TENANT RIGHT TO ORGANIZE.

# **§ 4-14-121 PURPOSE**.

The purpose of this article is to grant a right to a tenant to establish or participate in a tenant organization.

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#### **§ 4-14-122 DEFINITIONS.**

In this article:

- (1) ACCOUNTABLE OFFICIAL means the City officer or employee designated to administer, implement, and enforce this article.
- (2) DWELLING means one or more rooms rented for use as a residence.
- (3) LANDLORD means a person who owns, leases, or subleases a dwelling and includes the landlord's manager or agent.
- (4) LEASE means any written or oral agreement between a landlord and tenant that establishes or modifies the terms, conditions, rules, or other provisions regarding the use and occupancy of a dwelling.
- (5) ON-SITE AREA means a community room or other available space for meetings that is located at the premises.
- (6) PREMISES means a tenant's dwelling, any on-site area or facility the lease authorizes the tenant to use, and the appurtenances, grounds, and facilities held out for the use of tenants generally.
- (7) TENANT means a person, or a member of their household, who is authorized to occupy a dwelling to the exclusion of others.

## § 4-14-123 ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT.

- (A) The accountable official administers, implements, and enforces this article.
- (B) The accountable official may adopt rules under Chapter 1-2 (*Adoption of Rules*) to implement, administer, and enforce this article.

## § 4-14-124 RIGHT ESTABLISHED.

- (A) A tenant may establish and participate in a tenant organization.
- (B) A tenant establishes or participates in a tenant organization if the tenant engages in one or more of the following activities:
  - (1) initiates contact with other tenants related to tenant organizing;
  - (2) posts information related to tenant organizing on a bulletin board that is available for use by tenants generally;

- (4) substantially interferes with the tenant's rights under the tenant's lease; or
- (5) issues a notice to vacate or files an eviction proceeding except as provided for in Subsection (D).
- (C) A landlord does not retaliate against a tenant if the landlord:
  - (1) assesses a fee that is included in the tenant's written lease and imposed on each tenant for the use of an on-site area or facility;
  - (2) increases rent under an escalation clause in the tenant's written lease for utilities, taxes, or insurance; or
  - (3) increases rent or reduces services as part of a pattern of rent increases or service reductions applicable to each tenant at the premises.
- (D) A landlord does not retaliate against a tenant if the landlord issues a notice to vacate or files an eviction proceeding because:
  - (1) the actions of the tenant, or the tenant's household members or guests, pose an imminent threat of physical harm to the landlord, the landlord's employees, or other tenants, including other tenants within the household;
  - (2) the tenant, or the tenant's household members or guests, engage in criminal activity;
  - (3) an insured casualty loss such as fire, smoke, hail, explosion, or a similar cause creates a condition that makes the residential premises totally unusable;
  - (4) the tenant is delinquent in rent when the landlord gives notice to vacate or files an eviction action;
  - (5) the tenant, or the tenant's household members or guests, intentionally damage property on the premises;
  - (6) the tenant holds over after giving notice of termination or intent to vacate; or
  - (7) the tenant has materially breached the lease, other than by holding over, by an action such as violating written lease provisions.

117 118	(E) A material breach of the lease does not include establishing, attempting to establish, or participating in a tenant organization.			
119 120	(F)	In this article, criminal activity does not include establishing, attempting to establish, or participating in a tenant organization.		
121	§ 4-14-1	§ 4-14-126 OFFENSE AND PENALTY.		
122 123	(A)	(A) A person who violates this article commits a misdemeanor punishable as provided by Section 1-1-99 ( <i>Offenses; General Penalty</i> ).		
124 125	(B)	(B) A culpable mental state is not required and need not be proved for an offense punishable under this section.		
126 127 128	(C)	(C) A violation of this article and any subsequent enforcement of this article does not limit or modify a tenant's remedy in a proceeding authorized under Chapter 92 of the Texas Property Code.		
129	PART 4	1. This ordinance takes effect on _	, 2022.	
130	PASSED AND APPROVED			
131 132 133 134 135 136		, 2022	§ § Steve Adler Mayor	
137 138 139 140	APPRO	Anne L. Morgan City Attorney	ATTEST: Myrna Rios City Clerk	