

Good Landlord Program Proposal
Salt Lake City

From: Paul Smith, Utah Apartment Association
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Background: Several Utah cities, including Ogden, West Valley, South Salt Lake, Clearfield and Washington Terrace have instituted good landlord programs. The result has been a reduction in costs of service, amount of crime on rental property (as much as 30%), and an increase in the quality of tenants in the city. The partnership is a benefit for the city, landlords, and tenants, and is improving neighborhoods and making life easier for city employees.

Purpose: To reduce the cost of service for calls to rental property, to improve cooperation between city and landlords, and to create a partnership designed to improve and preserve the quality of neighborhoods in Salt Lake City.

What the program would do?

The program would license all rental operators in Salt Lake City. Currently, the city licenses approximately 22,000 rental units of the 37,000 in the city. So there are 15,000 units in duplexes and single family rentals that would need to be licensed.

The reason all need to be licensed, is to create an incentive program to encourage behaviors that will reduce costs to the city. This would be done through disproportionate fee on rental units.

For instance, in Ogden, a single family license costs \$156 per year. However, when an owner participates in the city's "Good Landlord" partnership program, they receive a \$143 discount, making their fee only \$13 per year.

In addition to incentivizing behavior, the program would provide necessary support to landlords to help them be more effective in preventing the use of city services.

What would be required of owners?

Owners would provide:
Email addresses
Cell phone numbers
Mailing addresses
Other contact info

This voluntary program would allow rental property owners to also commit to do the following:

- 1 – Run complete background checks on all renters and refuse to rent to individuals with certain criminal backgrounds police have found are most likely to create more crime if allowed in neighborhoods.
- 2 – Commence evictions immediately (if legally permissible) on tenants who commit a crime or become a nuisance.
- 3 – Maintain properties in compliance with city codes and ordinances.
- 4 – Take a city approved landlord training course to help landlords understand legal and business issues of managing rentals and how to reduce costs to city.

What would be required of the city?

The city would provide both crime prevention support (done through the crime prevention officer and the training class) and provide notice of criminal activity on the property so landlords can be aware of and deal with problems. The city would also provide training and a contact person on its zoning and code enforcement processes.

The best way to notify landlords of crime on their property so they can resolve it before there is future cost would be through emails. This also is the most cost effective way for a city to notify owners.

Why is the training so important?

The training program is essential to the good landlord program because it empowers owners to better manage properties with a dual emphasis on being more profitable and reducing costs to the city. The curriculum covers reducing problems through proper screening, initiating good agreements and policies, crime prevention through environmental design and proper inspections and monitoring, as well as dealing with problems, such a criminal or nuisance, when they occur to reduce cost to the city. The training also helps owners understand federal and state and city laws concerning rentals.

An 8 hr initial course is sufficient. It is recommended that a 4 hour refresher course then be required every two years.

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What role would the Utah Apartment Association play?

The UAA would be your partner in creating and supporting the program. We would help design the program and help get it approved, including supporting it at council meeting, etc.

The UAA would then manage the training program. The city would CHOOSE the curriculum, based on its needs, and provide instructors from its staff on crime prevention and zoning and code enforcement issues. The UAA would then do the training and handle all marketing and registration for the program.

Is there any cost to the city?

No. The UAA charges a small fee to students, which covers the administration and marketing of the class. The UAA would be a full partner in helping landlords understand how to reduce municipal costs, improve neighborhoods, and more effectively run their rental businesses.

Results

We are confident this program would result in:

- Less criminals renting in Salt Lake City and zero tolerance policy towards crime
- Reduced costs of municipal services
- Greater compliance to zoning
- Quicker resolution to neighborhood problems (ie: quicker eviction, etc)
- Better cooperation between city and landlords

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