



RISE UP

FOR RENT CONTROL

A TOOLKIT FOR ORGANIZING YOUR COMMUNITY

PREPARED BY HOUSING NOW! CALIFORNIA

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Table of Contents

- 4 Introduction**
Introducing Rise Up for Rent Control
About Housing Now! California

- 5 Background**
What is Proposition 10? What is Costa-Hawkins?
Our Goal with Rise Up for Rent Control

- 7 Door-Knocking Guide**

- 11 The Rap**

- 16 Organizing 101:**
How to Set-up Your First Meeting

- 19 Organizing 101:**
Sample Housing Meeting Agenda



Picture courtesy Housing Is a Human Right

Introduction

A TOOLKIT FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS

Welcome! This guide was designed to help folks like you learn some of the basics of volunteering and how to speak to others about why we must pass **Proposition 10** this November.

The next few months will require a lot of organizing work up and down the state, and many hours of conversations and education in our communities. We hope this guide is an invaluable introduction to canvassing your neighborhood, talking to people over the phone and organizing a successful meeting!

ABOUT HOUSING NOW! CALIFORNIA

We are a broad and diverse movement of people combatting the affordable housing crisis in the state. Led by tenants, our coalition includes landlords, realtors, and over 60 community, faith and labor organizations.

MEMBERS OF OUR COALITION

STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS

Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE) • AFSCME Local 3299 • Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN) • California Calls • Gamaliel California • California Reinvestment Coalition (CRC) • Courage Campaign • Housing California • Mobilize the Immigrant Vote (MIV) • PICO California • PolicyLink • Public Advocates • SEIU Local 2015 • Tenants Together • SEIU-USWW • Western Center on Law & Poverty

LOCAL & REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Alameda Renters Coalition • Alliance for Community Transit (ACT-LA) • Bend the Arc - Southern California • California Coalition for Rural Housing • Causa Justa Just Cause (CJJC) • Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE) • Chinatown Community for Equitable Development (CCED) • Clinica Romero • Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA) • Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto • Council of Community Housing Organizations (CCHO) • Crenshaw Subway Coalition • Democratic Socialists of America-Sacramento • East Area Progressive Democrats • East Bay Housing Organization (EBHO) • Employee Rights Center • Eviction Defense Collaborative • Faith in Bay Action • Faith in the Valley • Fannie Lou Hamer Institute • Glendale Tenants Union • Housing Advocates • Housing Is a Human Right • Housing Long Beach • Housing Rights Committee San Francisco • Inland Empire for Our Revolution • Inner City Law Center • Institute of the Black World 21st Century • Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance (KIWA) • LA VOICE (PICO Affiliate) • Leadership Counsel for Justice & Accountability • Long Beach Residents Empowered (LiBRE) • Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA-CAN) • Los Angeles Forward • Los Angeles Human Rights Collective • Los Angeles Tenants Union (LATU) • Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA) • North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP) • Pasadena Tenants Union • People Organized for Westside Renewal (POWER) • Public Interest Law Project • Sacramento Housing Alliance • San Diego Organizing Project • San Francisco Tenants Union (SFTU) • SEIU Local 1021 • SEIU Local 221 • Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE) • UFCW Local 135 • Union de Vecinos • United Taxi Workers of San Diego (UTWSD) • United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) • Uplift Inglewood • Urban Habitat

Background

WHAT ARE PROP 10 & THE COSTA-HAWKINS ACT?

Rise Up for Rent Control is designed to engage activists across California in support of Proposition 10. What is Proposition 10? Proposition 10 is a proposed ballot initiative that would restore the right of local communities to protect families from skyrocketing rents by repealing the **Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act of 1995**. Costa-Hawkins places severe restrictions on rent control, tying the hands of local governments to act against the housing crisis.

We believe that everyone should have a safe, healthy and affordable place to call home. But out of control housing costs, driven by corporate landlords and big real estate, are causing more and more people to lose their homes. For too long, our politicians have failed to give our cities the tools they need to fight against this crisis.

That's why Californians are taking matters into our own hands, placing Proposition 10 on the ballot. By restoring the right of local communities to protect all families from rent gouging, we can make California affordable for all of us! We need to act now to give families stability and provide immediate relief.

OUR GOAL

Through **Rise Up for Rent Control**, we want to organize thousands of activists across the state to engage potential voters on the housing crisis and how we can fight back by passing Proposition 10 this November. We hope this guide will help you organize your community and spread the word!

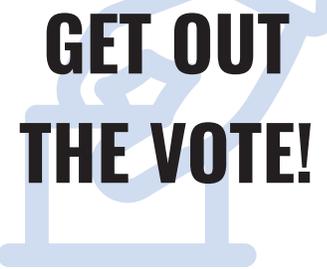
**DOWNLOAD
TOOLKIT**

A light blue icon of a document with a download arrow pointing to it.

**TALK TO YOUR
NEIGHBOURS**

A light blue icon showing three stylized human figures in a circle with arrows between them, representing communication.

**GET OUT
THE VOTE!**

A light blue icon of a ballot box with a ballot being inserted.

**HOST HOUSE
PARTIES!**

A light blue icon of a group of people sitting around a table with question marks above them, representing a discussion or party.

**VOLUNTEER
TRAINING**

A light blue icon of a group of people standing together, representing a training session.

Rise Up for Rent Control
Path to Victory in November

Door Knocking Guide

GOALS

In this section, you will learn the basics of door-knocking and how you can start conversations at the doorstep. Specifically, you will learn how to do the three following things:

- 1** Recruit neighbors to help pass Proposition 10 this November
- 2** Engage with the community about the issues and proudly represent our goals and values
- 3** Register your neighbors to vote before November and make sure their voices are heard

MATERIALS NEEDED

Pledge Cards
Voter Registration Cards
Tracking Sheet
Walk Script

Rise Up Flyer
Pens! (Blue or Black)
Snacks + Water

So you want to canvass?

OVERVIEW

Talking to neighbors at their door is the most direct way to get people involved. You might feel intimidated, but that's normal because you're doing something new. Organizing for change starts with a conversation, and if we want to repeal Costa-Hawkins, we're going to have to learn new skills to get people involved.

Below, are tips and best practices for door knocking and a break down of a rap that you can make your own.

WHY DO PEOPLE GET INVOLVED?

Why are you involved? It's probably because you are impacted by out of control rents and unaffordable housing, right?

People are a lot more likely to get involved in an issue that they have a direct interest in. When knocking on doors, your goals are to identify the issues affecting your neighbors and to get them to be a part of our group to win change.

BASIC SKILLS



EYE CONTACT

Eye contact conveys trust, integrity, and confidence; holds attention; and allows you to watch their response



LISTENING

The best organizers are the best listeners. It is only through listening that organizers truly understand a problem and are able to organize around a real solution



K.I.S.S. (KEEP IT SHORT & SIMPLE)

People are busy; keeping it short is a courtesy. The discussion of problems and solutions should be short and simple so people can understand it. One of the main reasons for going door-to-door is to get people off the fence. Involve them!



Picture courtesy Houing Now! CA

The Rap

INTRODUCTION

YOU

Hi! My name is [SAY NAME]. I'm your neighbor and I'm with Rise Up for Rent Control. People in our neighborhood are organizing to:

- Stop rent increases and evictions; and,
- Pass rent control for all buildings in California.

Are you concerned about the neighborhood?

YOUR NEIGHBOR

Sure!

YOU

Of course, you live here. Do you have a minute to talk?

YOUR NEIGHBOR

Actually, I'm a bit busy at the moment, sorry...

YOU

It'll only take a few minutes!

NOTE

- Let the person that you are talking to know who you are, what group you are a part of, and why you are there.
- Not everyone will be willing to talk to you, but a person you will connect with might be at the next door down! Having a good attitude and assuming they will talk to you are also key.

RAISE THE ISSUE

YOU

How long have you lived here? What is your biggest concern? (examples: high rents, evictions, general affordability, ownership)

NOTE

Depending on their housing status, you can ask different questions to understand how rising rents impact them. Don't assume that homeowners won't get involved. Many homeowners, like tenants, want a stable neighborhood. And a stable neighborhood comes from having stable housing!

IF THE TENANT HAS RENT ISSUES

YOU

How long has this increase affected you? What sacrifices have you made to pay the rent? How long has it been that way?

NOTE

Asking questions not only helps you understand what people are experiencing—your experience might be different—but it also helps paint a picture for the person you're talking too and a sense of urgency.

IF THE TENANT HAS NO RENT ISSUES

YOU

How much have you seen your neighborhood change these past few years?

Do you know anyone that has left because of the rent?

Do you think, with the rents and housing affordability spiraling out of control, you'll still be able to live here?

NOTE

Sometimes, people don't act until there is a sense of emergency. Asking people questions that can help them think about how the housing crisis impacts them can get them to understand that we need to act before it's too late!

IF THEY ARE A HOMEOWNER

YOU

Do you know of any family or friends who are having a hard time finding an affordable place to live in your community?

Don't you want to live in a stable community where you know your neighbours?

IF THEY ARE A HOMEOWNER AGAINST RENT CONTROL

YOU

How many people do you know in the neighborhood that lost their homes during the crisis?

Do you feel if more of your neighbors owned their homes that the community would be a nicer or more stable place?

NOTE

Not **ALL** homeowners are against rent control. We have many homeowners that support rent control. People who have lived in a neighborhood for a long time want to protect it. Sometimes, asking the right questions can help give context.

YOUR STORY

Many of us are involved in the campaign to repeal Costa-Hawkins because we've been impacted by rising rents and displacement. Telling people your story about why repealing Costa-Hawkins is important to you can make the person at the door understand that they are not alone and that everyday people—like YOU—are at risk of getting pushed out of the neighborhood.

You want to make sure you can tell your story in a concise and simple way. Here are some questions to help do that:

How long have you lived in the neighborhood?

Who else lives with you? (family, kids)

How has rising rent impacted you?

GETTING COMMITMENTS

YOU

Do you agree that we need to protect our communities and families and fight for statewide rent control?

That's why we're organizing to pass Proposition 10 and repeal Costa-Hawkins! Costa-Hawkins prevents local communities from enacting strong rent control laws.

Is stopping displacement and keeping families in their homes important to you?

Do you want to be involved in the campaign? If so, great! This is the way to get involved and stay involved. (Hand over the pledge card) This way, we can make sure

IF THEY ARE REALLY EXCITED

YOU

I'm glad that you want to get involved. Several neighbors and I are organizing a meeting to plan how we pass Proposition 10. We are meeting on [DATE] at [TIME] time. Would you like to come to the meeting?

RECAP!

- **INTRODUCE YOURSELF**
- **RAISE THE ISSUE**
- **TELL YOUR STORY**
- **GET A COMMITMENT!**

Organizing 101

How to Set-up Your First Meeting

Whether you are setting up a meeting, a house party, a phone bank, a canvass or a community launch event, the basic steps to event planning are the same. Here are nine steps you should take to execute the perfect meeting.

STEP 1

Decide a meeting date, start and end time, and location!

STEP 2

Let us know about your party/meeting by registering at:
<http://www.housingnowca.org/rise-up/house-parties>.

STEP 3

Identify another person, or a few people, to work with you on making the house party happen.

STEP 4

Plan the program for the event!

STEP 5

Recruit! Recruit! Recruit! Make a turnout plan for the event (i.e. knocking on doors in your neighborhood, recruitment calls, sending emails and Facebook invites). Set up a time with your committee to make recruitment calls. Remember, to hit your attendee goals, make sure to get at least double the amount confirmed in order to get the actual amount desired.

STEP 6

Make confirmation calls and send reminder messages 1-2 days before the event. Walk each attendee through what they'll need to do in order to show up: (i.e. getting directions, parking, accounting travel time, finding a babysitter, etc.)

STEP 7

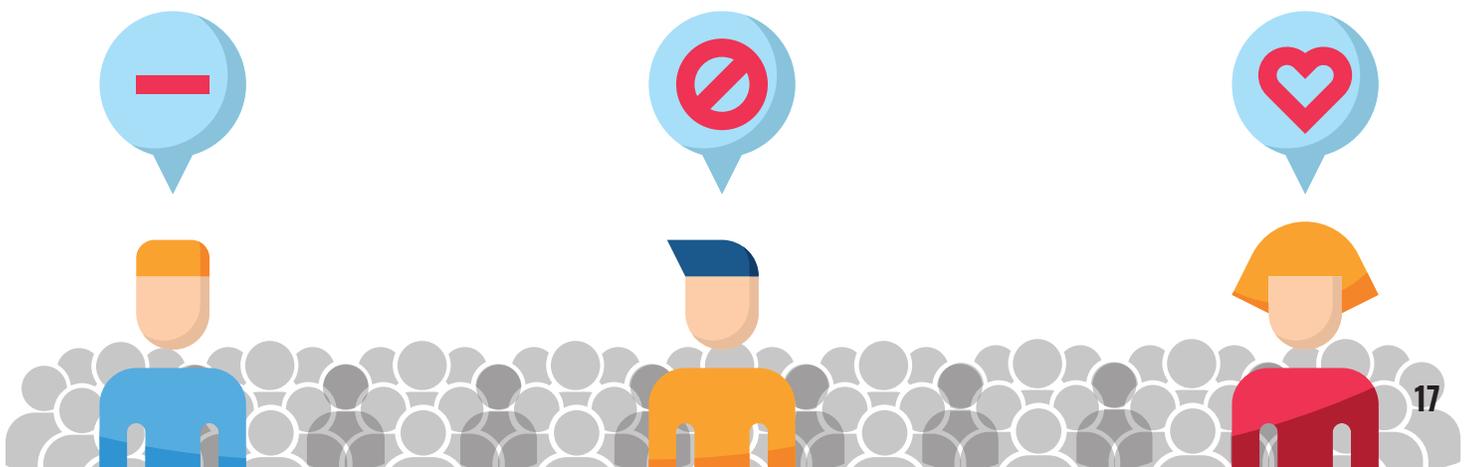
Walk through the meeting plan/agenda with your team. Divide up roles. Prepare materials and the space for the event.

STEP 8

Host your event! Make sure to take pictures and/or video to share on social media. And remember, tag our Housing Now! social media accounts when you do!

STEP 9

Debrief! Debrief for event participants and for event organizers. Thank people for their time and evaluate what went well and what could go better next time!





Picture courtesy LA Tenants Union

Organizing 101

Sample Meeting Agenda

PREPARING THE AGENDA

- Make sure there are enough seats/space for people who are coming. However, if there is enough energy and people are excited about coming together and organizing, groups will make do.
- Make sure your meeting location is free and has limited distractions. Don't have a meeting while the TV or radio is on! The more distractions, the longer the meeting can take.
- Write up the agenda ahead of time—and with time limits! This helps keep people on track.
- Try to spread out responsibilities for your meeting. You want to make sure you are not the only person speaking the entire time!

MATERIALS NEEDED

Butcher paper
Markers
Sign-in Sheets
Flyers
Printed Agendas (Optional)

SAMPLE AGENDA

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Best Practice

Have everyone state their name and where they live. You can also use a quick ice breaker, e.g. “who is your shero/hero?” This is a quick way to get to know each other.

II. WHAT IS RISE UP FOR RENT CONTROL?

Best Practice

You may have already talked to people about the meeting topic—that’s why they came—but talking about why you are coming together affirms everyone’s shared goals and values. For example, Rise Up consists of tenants and supporters coming together and organizing to win rent control and fight unjust evictions.

This is also a good time to talk about what Proposition 10 is and what it does.

III. WHAT ARE OUR HOUSING CONCERNS?

Best Practice

Have everyone give their top three housing concerns.

Have people state how rising rents and bad housing conditions are impacting them. The goal is to identify our shared concerns and remind ourselves of why we need to fight!

IV. HOW CAN WE REPEAL COSTA-HAWKINS?

Best Practice

We will only repeal Costa-Hawkins if we have **POWER IN NUMBERS**.

If we want to win rent control and Costa Hawkins repeal, how many people would we need to talk to and help? You can plan an action and a winning strategy, but unless you are talking to your neighbors and getting them involved, you'll have a hard time winning.

V. HOW DO WE GET MORE PEOPLE INVOLVED?

Best Practice

Door knocking! The most direct way to talk to people is at their door. People will appreciate that a neighbor personally talked to them about community concerns, like housing. If you are collecting pledge cards and registering people to vote, door knocking is a great way to do this.

However, people can brainstorm different ways to get people involved—like talking to groups you already belong to or making a list of your friends and family to get involved.

VI. GOALS & COMMITMENTS

Best Practice

Organizing is lots of work. The more people we have taking pieces of it, the easier the work load for everyone.

Remember, the goal of this meeting is to build a group to **WIN** change.

Example

How many people do we need in order to win rent control in your city? How many more to win Costa-Hawkins Repeal? If each person in the room talked to 10 people before the next meeting, imagine how quickly the group would grow?

VII. NEXT STEPS

Next Activity

Tip: If you have people who haven't done this before but want to learn, set up a time—like a Saturday—where everyone can practice, go in pairs, and knock on some doors. Or if you already made a plan earlier in the agenda, make sure to recap dates and times and who's doing what!

Next Meeting

Recommendations: The next meeting can be used to plan an action or follow up on goals and commitments.





Picture courtesy Housing Is a Human Right



To find out more about **Housing Now! California**, please visit our website at housingnowca.org. For press inquiries or if you have further questions, please contact us at press@calorganize.org

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Follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/HousingNowCA