



## Voter-Proposed Charter Change for Just Cause Eviction Fact Sheet

**Summary:** Voters have petitioned for the city to change its charter. This change could allow Winooski City Council to adopt a 'Just Cause Eviction' law. Residents can vote on this item on the Town Meeting Day election on March 7, 2023. The state would also need to approve the change. Then City Council would need to decide whether to create a Just Cause Eviction law. This fact sheet gives information on the process and timeline. It also shows the full text of the proposed voter charter change.

Visit the website: [winooskivt.gov/justcause](http://winooskivt.gov/justcause)  
Call or email with questions: 802 655 6410 / [justcause@winooskivt.gov](mailto:justcause@winooskivt.gov)

**Share your thoughts with the public during meetings, free and open to all:**

Thursday, January 26, 2023  
6 PM at Winooski City Hall (27 West Allen Street)  
Attend online: [us06web.zoom.us/j/84364849328](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84364849328)  
Attend by phone: 1 646 558 8656  
Webinar ID: 843 6484 9328

Saturday, February 4, 2023  
11 AM at the O'Brien Community Center (In-person only)

### Info on Charter Changes

A city's charter sets the rules for how the local government is organized and how it can act. Vermont law lets city voters suggest changes to the city charter. If 5 percent of city voters sign a petition to change the charter, the city has to place the proposed change on its next election ballot. Winooski received a petition signed by 5 percent of its voters for a charter change that would give Winooski City Council the power to write a law that would provide protections for renters from evictions without 'just cause.' See the proposal below.

### Timeline for this Charter Change and if there is an Ordinance



**Any "no" vote and Just Cause Eviction would not be in place in Winooski for now**  
**This timeline may also require a second city vote to validate the process**

If you are looking for housing resources, visit [winooskivt.gov/housing](http://winooskivt.gov/housing)

## Voter-proposed charter change that will appear on the 2023 Town Meeting Day ballot:

### Article 4

Shall the Charter of the City of Winooski, Acts of 2013, No. M-9, as amended, be further amended to give the City Council the power to provide by ordinance protections for residential tenants from evictions without 'just cause' by adopting and adding a new subsection 304(b)(13) to read as follows:

"304(b)(13)(A) To provide by ordinance protections for residential tenants, as defined in Chapter 137 of Title 9 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated, from eviction without 'just cause,' where just cause shall include, but is not limited to:

- (1) a tenant's material breach of a written rental agreement,
- (2) a tenant's violation of state statutes regulating tenant obligations in residential rental agreements,
- (3) non-payment of rent, and
- (4) a tenant's failure to accept written, reasonable, good faith renewal terms.

(B) Such ordinance shall exclude from 'just cause' the expiration of a rental agreement as sole grounds for termination of tenancy. In addition to the exemptions in Chapter 137. of Title 9, the ordinance shall exempt from this provision, subject to mitigation provisions, sublets and in-unit rentals as well as the following properties but not limited to:

- (1) owner-occupied duplexes, and triplexes;
- (2) those being withdrawn from the rental market, including properties to be occupied by the owner or an immediate family member as a primary residence; and
- (3) those in need of substantial renovations which preclude occupancy.

(C) Such ordinance shall include provisions that:

- (1) mitigate potential negative impacts on tenants and property owners, including but not limited to requirements of adequate notice and reasonable relocation expenses,
- (2) provide for a reasonable probationary period after initial occupancy, and
- (3) limit unreasonable rent increases to prevent de facto evictions or nonrenewals, although this shall not be construed to limit rents beyond the purpose of preventing individual evictions.

(D) The ordinance shall define what is 'reasonable' and 'adequate notice' in defining just cause and shall require that landlords provide notice of just cause and other legal requirements as part of the rental agreement."?