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Law & Legislation

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg signed legislation recently requiring realtors and landlords to disclose contact information for tenant screening agency that will screen rental applicants.

“The final bill before me today is **Introductory Number 5-A**, sponsored by Council Members Garodnick, Brewer, Gonzalez, James, Koppell, Koslowitz, Lander, Lappin, Mark-Viverito, Palma, Seabrook, Williams, Arroyo, Crowley, Nelson, Reyna, Vann and Rodriguez,” said Mayor Bloomberg at the council’s public hearing. “Introductory Number 5-A requires landlords, realtors, and others who rent residential properties to disclose the contact information of the tenant screening agency that they use to investigate potential tenants. Realtors and landlords often use tenant screening agencies to determine if a potential tenant has appeared frequently before housing court, but their determinations are not transparent; reports do not provide context on why the tenant appeared in court, and few tenants even know that such a report has been compiled.

“Introductory Number 5-A sheds light on this process. It requires that all rental applications contain contact information for the tenant screening agency that the landlord will use, as well as a disclosure of the rights afforded to potential tenants under State and Federal law.”

In response to growing concerns from members, the **Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY)** has developed a new set of **Purchasing Application Processing Guidelines for Co-op Boards of Directors**. By compiling these guidelines, REBNY hopes to

streamline the application and transfer process of cooperative shares and define the appropriate roles of the Co-op Board and the Agent resulting in increased efficiency for all parties involved.

REBNY developed the guidelines to ease the transfer of cooperative shares from sellers to buyers and walk each party through each step of the **co-op application** process.

The steps begin with creating a list of application package requirements and acknowledging its receipt in a timely manner. The final step explains how to effectively communicate rejection and acceptance decisions to applicants.

“It is important that both parties in the purchasing process clearly know their responsibilities,” said **Steve Spinola**, REBNY president. “Each of the guidelines outlines the most effective next step so that nothing is overlooked. Not only will the guidelines be helpful to the real estate community, but when followed, they can help appreciate the value of the apartments by showing that the building has a strong co-op board and is therefore a more desirable place to buy and live.”

The **Purchasing Application Processing Guidelines for Co-op Boards of Directors** also recommend other steps to streamline the transfer of the co-op shares, such as greening the application process. The guidelines suggest that if less paperwork will help make the process more efficient and reduce the chance that information can be misinterpreted. REBNY offers recommendations regarding who should receive full printed application packages and how to shift to electronic media. Both documents are available to REBNY members online at: www.REBNY.com.