



## CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING

<b>AGENDA SECTION</b>	WORK SESSION
<b>MEETING DATE</b>	JANUARY 5, 2026

<b>ITEM:</b>	<b>Just Cause Tenant Protection. (10 Minutes)</b>	
<i>Presenting Item: Aaron Chirpich, City Manager and Dan O’Brien, Fire Chief</i>		
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b> Admin and Fire	<b>BY/DATE:</b> Aaron Chirpich / December 31, 2025	
<b>CORE CITY STRATEGIES:</b> <i>(please indicate areas that apply by adding an “X” in front of the selected text below)</i>		
X Community that Grows with Purpose and Equity	<input type="checkbox"/> Engaged, Effective and Forward-Thinking	
<input type="checkbox"/> High Quality Public Spaces	<input type="checkbox"/> Resilient and Prosperous Economy	
X Safe, Accessible and Built for Everyone	<input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive and Connected Community	

### BACKGROUND

The Council has expressed interest in ordinance updates that enhance tenant protections in the City of Columbia Heights. In this regard, one type of ordinance that is gaining traction locally relates to just cause protection. Just cause tenant protection ordinances are local regulations that require landlords to provide a valid, specified reason (“just cause”) before terminating a residential tenancy or choosing not to renew a lease. These ordinances are intended to promote housing stability by protecting tenants from arbitrary or retaliatory evictions while still preserving a landlord’s ability to manage and maintain their property. Under a typical just cause ordinance, landlords may end a tenancy only for defined reasons, which commonly include nonpayment of rent, violation of lease terms, illegal activity, failure to allow lawful access, or the landlord’s intent to occupy or substantially renovate the property.

Just cause ordinances do not prevent evictions; rather, they establish clear standards and procedures that balance tenant protections with property owner rights. Communities that have adopted just cause ordinances often to cite increased housing stability, reduced displacement, and clearer expectations for both tenants and landlords. Careful ordinance design is important to ensure compliance with state law and to avoid unintended impacts on housing providers.

### SUMMARY OF CURRENT STATUS

The cities of Saint Paul, Minneapolis and Brooklyn Center have all passed just cause tenant protection measures locally. Additionally, there is a legislative push in Minnesota for statewide just cause protections with a bill (HF 997) that was introduced in the House of Representatives during the 2025 legislative session.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff generally support the adoption of a just cause tenant protection ordinance as a tool to promote housing stability and fairness in the local rental market. Staff believe this topic aligns with broader community goals related to housing security and resident well-being.

**Requested Council Action/ Discussion Topics / Key Questions**

*(Briefly state the specific action staff is requesting of the City Council, if any. For example: provide direction, discuss options, or review information.)*

Staff are requesting City Council feedback on the concept of a just cause tenant protection ordinance, including general policy direction, key considerations Council would like staff to evaluate, and whether Council wishes staff to return with a draft ordinance or additional analysis for future discussion.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

- Sample Ordinance, City of Brooklyn Center
- House File 997