New California Landlord Laws for 2027: 4 Changes East Bay Owners Need to Know



Quick Answer

Four new California laws change how landlords advertise, screen and evict. On **January 1, 2027**: before substituted service or court-authorized posting of eviction papers, the process server must try personal delivery three times, on three different days at three different times, and proofs of service generally need a date-, time- and location-stamped photo (AB 747, as amended by AB 2042); a rental ad with a digitally altered or AI-generated image must disclose it on or next to the image and, if the image started as a photo, include or link to the original (AB 2025); and during a declared emergency, the

> 10% limit on rent increases now covers leases of any length, not just leases of a year or less (SB 1365). On **April 1, 2027**, every landlord needs a written pet policy, even a no-pets policy, available on the property website and in digital ads they control (and on third-party sites where the platform allows it), and given with every application (SB 1296). None of these changes how much rent you can charge outside an emergency.

Key Facts: California Landlord Laws for 2027

Law	What it requires	Starts	Who it touches
AB 747 (Stats. 2025, ch. 563), as amended by **AB 2042** (Stats. 2026, ch. 379)	3 personal-delivery attempts, on 3 different days at 3 different times, before substituted service or court-authorized posting; date-, time- and location-stamped photos on proofs of service (a missing stamp for lack of signal, or a photo skipped for safety, must be explained); the eviction complaint must add the date, time and location of service of the termination notice to the method it already had to state	Service on or after **Jan 1, 2027**	Any owner who files an unlawful detainer

Law	What it requires	Starts	Who it touches
AB 2025 (Stats. 2026, ch. 572), Civil Code §1940.11	Disclosure on or next to any digitally altered or AI-generated image in a rental ad, plus, if it started as a photo, the unaltered original or a link, URL or QR code to it	**Jan 1, 2027**	Anyone advertising a rental
SB 1365 (Stats. 2026, ch. 1028), Penal Code §396	No advertised, offered or charged rent more than 10% above the statutory baseline during a declared emergency (30 days, or longer if extended), now for leases of any length; exemptions become defenses you must prove	**Jan 1, 2027**	Owners in an area under an emergency declaration
SB 1296 (Stats. 2026, ch. 1025), Civil Code §1942.7.5	Written pet policy (including “no pets”), accessible on the property website and in digital ads you control (and on third-party sites where they allow it), given with every application, with an acknowledgment line on the application	**Apr 1, 2027**	Every landlord taking applications
Berkeley Measure X (local)	10% cap in a 12-month period on AGA-based increases, including banked AGAs	Once certified; date not yet announced	Fully covered Berkeley units

What's new: AB 2025, SB 1365 and SB 1296 were signed in late September 2026, and AB 2042 (chaptered September 20, 2026) settled when AB 747's 2025 changes apply. Each has a 2027 start date. Berkeley voters approved Measure X on November 3, according to unofficial results. Nothing here changes Oakland's 2.3%, Berkeley's 2.5% AGA or AB 1482's 8.8%; see our 2027 rent increase guide for those.

Prefer video? Watch the 3-minute video version, with chapter links and a full transcript.

4 New California Rental Laws for 2027: What Landlords Need to Know

Video Transcript

Four new California laws change how landlords advertise, screen applicants and evict. Three start January first, 2027, and one starts April first.

First, eviction service. Under AB 747, as amended by AB 2042, a process server has to try personal delivery three times, on three different days, at three different times, before leaving eviction papers with someone else or, with the court's permission, posting them. Proofs of service generally need a photo with the date, time and location. If there's no location signal, the server explains the missing stamp. If taking the photo would compromise safety, the server documents the attempt or service and explains why. And the eviction complaint, which already had to say how the termination notice was served, now also has to give the date, time and location.

Second, listing photos. Under AB 2025, if a rental ad uses a virtually staged or otherwise altered photo, the ad has to say so, right next to the image, and show the original photo or link to it. A fully AI-generated image needs the disclosure too. Routine edits like brightness, cropping and color correction don't count, as long as they don't change how the property is represented.

Third, the emergency rent cap. During a declared emergency, California's price-gouging law generally bars rent more than ten percent above the baseline set by law, which depends on the property's rental history. Limited defenses apply, and the owner has to prove them.

Under SB 1365, that now covers leases of any length, not just leases of a year or less.

Fourth, pets. Starting April first, every landlord needs a written pet policy, even if it’s no pets. It has to be available in the online ads you control, and on listing sites that allow a link, and handed out with every application.

At AEBP, eviction service is handled by the eviction attorneys we hire. Our listing photos are mostly shot by a professional photographer, and if we virtually stage a photo after January first, we’ll follow the new disclosure rules. And we’re adding written pet policies and updating our applications before the end of this year.

The full guide, with a checklist for each law, is linked below.

1. Eviction Service Rules (AB 747 and AB 2042)

Short answer: for service on or after January 1, 2027, “reasonable diligence” means at least three good-faith attempts at personal delivery, on three different days at three different times, and proofs of service generally need photo evidence.

AB 747 (the SPARE Act) rewrote the rules for serving a summons and complaint, and AB 2042 clarified this year that they apply to service attempted or completed on or after January 1, 2027. For an unlawful detainer, the changes that matter to owners are:

- **Three real attempts first.** Before substituted service (leaving the papers with an adult at the home and mailing a copy) or court-authorized posting, the server must attempt personal delivery at least three times, on three different days, at three different times (CCP §§415.20, 415.45).
- **Photo proof of service.** For personal service, substituted service or posting, each attempted or completed service needs a photo of the site with a readable stamp showing the date, time and GPS (or equivalent) coordinates, and, at a home or business, at least one photo of the door (or the entrance, with an explanation of why the door

wasn’t reasonably accessible). If there’s no signal, the server has to explain the missing stamp; if a photo would compromise the server’s safety, they document the service or attempt and explain why (CCP §417.10).

- **The complaint must say more about the notice.** The unlawful detainer complaint already had to state how the termination notice (such as a 3-day notice to pay rent or quit) was served. From January 1 it must also state the date, time and location of service (CCP §1166).
- **The burden shifts if service is challenged.** If a tenant moves to set aside a default and offers evidence that service wasn’t lawful, the owner has to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that it was (CCP §473.2).

What it means in practice: an eviction that rests on sloppy service is easier to undo after January 1. The process server carries most of the new work, but the termination-notice details in the complaint come from whoever served the notice, so a written record of when, where and how each notice was served is now a practical necessity *(strongly recommended best practice)*. Our AB 747 law library entry has the details, and our eviction notice guide gets its 2027 update on November 30.

2. Altered Listing Photos (AB 2025)

Short answer: starting January 1, 2027, a rental ad that uses a digitally altered or AI-generated image must disclose it on or next to the image and, if the image started as a photo, include the original or a link, URL or QR code to it.

AB 2025 adds Civil Code §1940.11. It applies to anyone advertising a rental, not just licensees, and it mirrors the rule California adopted for for-sale listings in 2025 (AB 723).

Counts as “digitally altered”	Doesn’t count
Virtual staging (adding furniture)	Lighting and exposure

Counts as “digitally altered”	Doesn’t count
Removing or adding fixtures, appliances or flooring	Sharpening and white balance
Changing paint color, landscaping or the facade	Color correction
Replacing the view through a window, or removing utility poles, streetlights or neighboring buildings	Cropping, straightening and angle
A photo generated entirely by AI	Any common edit that doesn’t change how the property is represented

- **The disclosure** must be reasonably conspicuous and on or next to the altered image.
- **The original** must be in the posting, or reachable by a link, URL or QR code. If you use a link, the disclosure has to say the unaltered images are available there.
- **Images that didn’t start as a photo,** such as a fully AI-generated image or an architectural rendering, don’t need an “original.” A fully AI-generated image still needs the disclosure.
- **For a real estate licensee,** a violation counts as a violation of their licensing law.

See our AB 2025 law library entry for the full text.

3. The Emergency Rent Cap Now Covers Long Leases (SB 1365)

Short answer: during a declared emergency, advertising, offering or charging rent more than 10% above the statutory baseline is price gouging, and starting January

1, 2027, that applies to rentals with any lease length.

California's price-gouging law (Penal Code §396) already barred rent more than 10% above a statutory baseline (for a unit rented in the past year, generally the rent the tenant was paying) for 30 days after a state of emergency or local emergency is declared, or longer if the declaration is extended. Until now, it only covered housing with an initial lease of one year or less. SB 1365 makes it cover any rental housing. It also:

- **Turns the exemptions into affirmative defenses.** There are two: an increase the tenant agreed to by contract before the declaration, and an increase directly attributable to repairs or additions beyond normal maintenance made in the year before the declaration, if the unit was rented or offered for rent when the costs were incurred, or you can prove you already intended to rent it within six months of the work. Either way, the burden is on you to prove it, so keep the lease and the invoices.
- **Keeps the evict-and-re-rent ban.** The law still allows evictions for lawful reasons. Separately, it bars evicting a tenant during the protected period and then renting or offering the unit for more than the evicted tenant could have been charged. An eviction lawfully begun before the declaration may continue.
- **Doesn't override rent control.** Where a local ordinance allows less than 10%, the lower limit still applies.

A violation is a misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in county jail, a fine of up to $10,000, or both. **Before you raise rent or set an asking rent, check whether an emergency declaration covers the property.** Cal OES keeps a list of areas currently under price-gouging protection. Details are in our SB 1365 law library entry.

SB 1365 included an alternate version that depended on a separate bill, SB 493, which didn't advance in 2026. The rental rules described here are the same in both versions.

4. Written Pet Policies (SB 1296, April 1, 2027)

Short answer: starting April 1, 2027, every landlord needs a written pet policy, even one that bans pets, and must make it available on the property website and in digital ads they control, and hand it out with every rental application.

SB 1296 adds Civil Code §1942.7.5. It doesn't require you to allow pets, build a property website or advertise anywhere in particular. It requires:

- **A written policy or pet addendum** in plain language, covering pet owners' rights, responsibilities and requirements. If you have no pet rules, the policy has to say so.
- **A link or other electronic access** on the property's website (if it has one) and in digital ads you control, plus third-party sites and rental search feeds where the platform permits or supports it.
- **A copy with every application** (electronic if the application is electronic), plus a space on the application for the applicant to acknowledge receiving it.
- **An application fee refund** within seven business days of a written request, if you didn't disclose the policy before charging the fee and the applicant became ineligible or declined because of it.

A few limits: you can change the policy for prospective tenants only; a tenant's failure to sign a pet addendum can't be the sole basis for an eviction; a nonmaterial error corrected on notice isn't a violation; and service and support animal rules are unaffected. Our Thursday Tip on November 19 walks through the pet policy checklist, and the SB 1296 law library entry has the full rule.

What We're Changing at AEBP Before 2027

Here's how these four laws land on a portfolio of 600+ East Bay units, and what we're doing about each.

Pet policies come first, even though they're due last. SB 1296 has the latest start date, April 1, but it's the one that touches every vacancy. We're adding written pet policies and

updating our rental applications before the end of 2026, so every application we take in 2027 already has the policy and the acknowledgment line.

Listing photos mostly won’t change. We hire a professional photographer for most of our listings, and sometimes the agent shoots them. We’ve used virtual staging in the past, but not often. If we virtually stage a listing photo after January 1, it will carry the disclosure and the original photo.

Eviction service stays with the attorneys. Anything involving an unlawful detainer, including service, is handled by the eviction attorneys we hire. Most of what AB 747 and AB 2042 change falls on the process server and on what the complaint has to say.

Before and After 2027, Side by Side

Topic	Through 2026	From 2027
Substituted service or court-authorized posting of eviction papers	“Reasonable diligence,” with no set number of attempts	3 attempts, on 3 different days at 3 different times
Proof of service	No photo requirement	Plus date-, time- and location-stamped photos of the site; a missing stamp (no signal) or a skipped photo (safety) must be explained
Eviction complaint	Must state how the termination notice was served	Must also state the date, time and location of service

Topic	Through 2026	From 2027
Virtually staged rental photos	No rental-specific disclosure rule	Disclosure on or next to the image, plus the original photo or a link to it
Emergency 10% rent cap	Leases of 1 year or less	Any lease length, measured against the statutory baseline; exemptions are defenses you must prove
Pet policy	No statewide written-policy requirement	Written, accessible in digital ads you control, given with every application (from Apr 1)

Self-Managed vs. AEBP-Managed

Task	If You Self-Manage	With AEBP
Written pet policy and application update	You draft the policy, make it available in the digital ads you control, and add it and the acknowledgment line to your application by April 1	Written pet policies and updated applications in place before the end of 2026
Listing photos	You decide which edits count as “altered” and add disclosures and originals	Mostly professional photography; any virtually staged photo after January 1 carries the disclosure and the original

Task	If You Self-Manage	With AEBP
Unlawful detainer service	You hire the attorney and process server and check the new proof-of-service rules are met	Handled by the eviction attorneys we hire, including service

On the Horizon

- **Berkeley Measure X.** Approved by voters on November 3, according to unofficial results. Once certified and in effect, AGA-based increases, including banked AGAs, are capped at 10% in a 12-month period. See our Measure X guide.
- **SB 876, the Disaster Recovery Reform Act.** Signed September 27, 2026, with most provisions operative January 1, 2028. It puts the duties on insurers, including offering extended replacement cost coverage of at least 50% above the dwelling limit. If you insure a small rental under a residential property policy, ask your carrier which provisions will apply to it.

Before January 1: A 2027 Checklist

- Review active and upcoming listings for virtual staging, sky or view replacement, or removed objects, and add disclosures and originals before January 1.
- Keep a written record of when, where and how every termination notice is served.
- Before any rent increase or new asking rent, check whether an emergency declaration covers the property, and keep proof of any repair costs behind an increase.
- Write a pet policy (or a no-pets policy), make it available on your property website and in the digital ads you control (and on third-party sites that allow a link), and add it and an acknowledgment line to your application before April 1.
- If you own in Berkeley, check how Measure X affects any planned January 1 increase.

Bottom Line

None of the 2027 laws changes how much rent you can normally charge. They change the paperwork around it: how eviction papers are served and proved, what a listing photo has to disclose, what counts as gouging during an emergency, and what every applicant must see about pets. Three take effect January 1 and the pet policy rule follows on April 1. The pet policy is the one to start on now, because it touches every application you'll take next year.

Frequently Asked Questions

What new California landlord laws take effect in 2027?

Three start January 1, 2027: stricter service rules for eviction papers (AB 747, as amended by AB 2042), disclosure of digitally altered photos in rental ads (AB 2025), and the 10% emergency rent limit extended to leases of any length (SB 1365). On April 1, 2027, landlords must have a written pet policy, make it available in the digital ads they control, and give it with every application (SB 1296).

Does SB 1296 require landlords to allow pets?

No. SB 1296 requires a written pet policy, which can be a no-pets policy, but it doesn't require you to allow pets. You must make the policy available on the property website (if there is one) and in digital ads you control, and on third-party sites where the platform permits it, give a copy with every rental application, and include a space on the application for the applicant to acknowledge it. Service and support animal rules are unchanged.

Do I have to disclose brightened or cropped listing photos under AB 2025?

No. Lighting, exposure, sharpening, white balance, color correction, cropping, straightening and angle changes don't count, as long as they don't change how the property is represented. Virtual staging, removing or adding objects, changing finishes or views, and fully

AI-generated images do count. They need a disclosure on or next to the image and, if the image started as a photo, the original or a link to it.

Does the 10% price-gouging cap apply to my long-term lease?

Starting January 1, 2027, yes, but only during a declared emergency: for 30 days after a state or local emergency is declared, or longer if the declaration is extended. The 10% is measured against a statutory baseline, which for a unit rented in the year before the declaration is generally the rent the tenant was paying. Outside an emergency, your normal limits (AB 1482 or local rent control) apply. If a local ordinance allows less than 10%, the lower limit still controls.

Do the new eviction service rules apply to a 3-day notice?

The three-attempt and photo rules apply to serving the summons and complaint, not the 3-day notice itself. But starting January 1, 2027, the eviction complaint must add the date, time and location the termination notice was served to the method of service it already had to state, so you need a record of when, where and how every notice was served. The rules apply to service attempted or completed on or after January 1, 2027.

Sources

- Eviction service: three attempts, photo proof of service, complaint contents, burden on a default challenge (CCP §§415.20, 415.45, 417.10, 473.2, 1166) — *Required by law.* AB 747 (Stats. 2025, ch. 563); AB 2042 (Stats. 2026, ch. 379)
- Altered rental listing photos (Civil Code §1940.11) — *Required by law.* AB 2025 (Stats. 2026, ch. 572); for-sale listing rule: AB 723 (Stats. 2025, ch. 497)
- Emergency rent cap, defenses, evict-and-re-rent ban, penalties (Penal Code §396) — *Required by law.* SB 1365 (Stats. 2026, ch. 1028); current declarations: Cal OES, Price Gouging

- Written pet policy (Civil Code §1942.7.5), operative April 1, 2027 — *Required by law.* SB 1296 (Stats. 2026, ch. 1025)
- Berkeley Measure X — *Required by local ordinance once certified and in effect.* See our Measure X guide for sources.
- SB 876 timing and coverage offer — California Department of Insurance, Sept 28, 2026; Clyde & Co, Oct 1, 2026
- AEBP's listing photography, pet policy and application update, and use of eviction attorneys for unlawful detainers — *Company policy*, confirmed by AEBP (November 12, 2026).

Want Your Rentals Ready for 2027?

We manage 600+ rental units across Oakland, Berkeley, Emeryville and the wider East Bay, and we're putting written pet policies and updated applications in place before the end of 2026.

Let's Talk About Your Property →

Source: https://alleastbayproperties.com/new-california-landlord-laws-2027/