Oakland Rent Control in 2026: Rules, Allowable Increases & What Landlords Must Know



Updated September 2026: coverage dates, banking limits, the tenant petition deadline, registration penalties and Just Cause grounds re-checked against the Oakland Municipal Code (O.M.C. 8.22, current through July 2026). Rates shown are for August 1, 2026 – July 31, 2027.

Correction: *Earlier versions of this guide said the rent cap reached buildings built before April 1, 2016, that banking was capped at 3× the AGA “per year” under rules effective January 1, 2026, and that tenants had 90 days to petition. Under the ordinance, the rent cap*

covers buildings with a certificate of occupancy before 1983, the 3× banking cap applies to any one increase, and tenants have 180 days. The sections below are corrected.

> ## Oakland Rent Control Quick Facts for 2026
>
> - **Allowable annual increase (AGA):** 2.3% (effective August 1, 2026 – July 31, 2027)
> - **Rent cap applies to:** Units with a certificate of occupancy before January 1, 1983, including ADUs and individually rented rooms in those buildings
> - **Single-family homes and condos:** Usually exempt from the rent cap under Costa-Hawkins, but must be registered and are subject to the Just Cause ordinance.
> - **Registration required:** Yes — annual renewal due by March 1; register at rentregistry.oaklandca.gov
> - **One increase per 12-month period:** Yes — stricter than AB 1482, which allows up to two increases in 12 months under one cap
> - **Just cause eviction protections:** Yes — applies to units with Certificate of Occupancy issued more than 10 years ago
> - **Banked increases:** Allowed, but any one increase (current plus banked) is capped at 3× the current allowable increase (6.9% at 2.3%); banked amounts expire after five years or when the property is sold
> - **Local rules are stricter than AB 1482:** 2.3% vs. the statewide 8.8% (effective August 1, 2026)

If you own rental property in Oakland, you are operating under one of the most closely regulated rental markets in California. Oakland's Rent Adjustment Program (RAP) sets strict limits on how much you can raise rent each year — and those limits are far below the statewide AB 1482 cap, which rises to **8.8%** beginning August 1, 2026. Through July 31, 2026, Oakland landlords of covered units are limited to **0.8%**; beginning August 1, 2026, that

limit rises to **2.3%**. Getting it right protects your income. Getting it wrong can mean refunding unlawful increases, forfeiting part of a future increase, and losing the ability to file or respond to RAP petitions.

This guide covers everything you need to know about Oakland rent control in 2026: which properties are covered, how the AGA works, registration requirements, the petition process, banked increases, just cause eviction rules — and what happens if you don't comply.

Note: the video below was recorded for the August 2025–July 2026 rate period, when Oakland's AGA was 0.8%. The figures spoken in the video reflect that period accurately. The written figures throughout this page have been updated to the confirmed 2.3% rate for August 2026–July 2027 — use the written figures for current compliance. Three other points in the video are corrected in the written guide: the banking cap applies to any one increase, not to each year; an unregistered owner forfeits six months of a contested increase rather than being barred from raising rent; and the Just Cause new-construction exemption is a rolling 10 years, not a fixed April 1, 2016 date.

Video Transcript

If you own rental property in Oakland, you're operating under one of the most tightly regulated rental markets in California. And if you've been assuming the statewide rent cap applies to your units — you may be leaving yourself exposed to a very expensive mistake.

I'm going to walk you through exactly how Oakland rent control works in 2026 — the allowable increase, registration requirements, what changed this year, and what happens if you get it wrong.

Let's start with the number that matters most. For Oakland units covered by the Rent Adjustment Program, the maximum allowable rent increase right now is zero point eight percent. That's the Annual General Adjustment — the AGA — and it runs from August 1st, 2025 through July 31st, 2026.

To put that in perspective: the statewide AB 1482 cap for the same period is six point three percent. Oakland’s limit is less than one-seventh of that. If you own units in multiple cities and you’ve been applying the statewide rate to your Oakland properties — that’s one of the most common and costly compliance mistakes we see.

Now — does this apply to your property? Oakland’s rules are broader than most landlords realize. The Rent Adjustment Ordinance and Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance cover most residential rentals in properties built before April 1st, 2016. That includes multi-family buildings, single-family homes, condos, ADUs, and even individually rented rooms.

Here’s the key distinction to understand. The rent cap — that 0.8 percent limit — applies specifically to units in buildings with a Certificate of Occupancy before 1983. But the registration requirement and just cause eviction protections apply to most properties built before 2016 — even if they’re not subject to the rent cap itself. So even if your property is newer or a single-family home, you may still need to register and comply with just cause rules.

When in doubt, call the RAP office directly. Their housing counselors are available Monday through Thursday at 510-238-3721.

Speaking of registration — this is non-negotiable. All covered units must be registered through Oakland’s Rent Registry and renewed every year by March 1st. If you miss that deadline, here’s what happens. You cannot lawfully implement a rent increase. You cannot file a landlord petition with the RAP. And failure to register can be raised as an affirmative defense against you in eviction proceedings.

As of April 15th, 2025, every rent increase notice you serve must have a current Business Certificate attached. If that certificate is missing or lapsed — the notice is legally void. You have to start over.

One more thing worth flagging — the banked increase rules changed on January 1st of this year. Now banked increases are capped at three times the current AGA per year. At 0.8

percent — that’s a maximum of 2.4 percent annually from banked increases.

Oakland rent control has real consequences when it’s handled incorrectly — refunds, triple damages, and complications on future tenancy actions. Our team manages more than 600 units across Oakland and the East Bay. We track these rates so our clients never have to wonder if they got it right.

If you’d like to talk through your portfolio, the link is below. Our full Oakland Rent Control guide for 2026 is on the website. We’ll see you in the next one.

What Is the Oakland Rent Adjustment Program (RAP)?

The Oakland Rent Adjustment Program is the city agency that administers Oakland’s Rent Adjustment Ordinance (O.M.C. 8.22). The Ordinance sets a ceiling on annual rent increases for covered units, establishes a petition process for landlords and tenants to seek adjustments, and — together with Oakland’s Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance — provides a comprehensive framework of tenant protections.

Oakland’s rent control law predates AB 1482 by decades. Where both laws apply, Oakland’s local rules govern — they are stricter. AB 1482 functions as a backstop for units that fall outside Oakland’s RAP coverage. Through July 31, 2026, the allowable increase under Oakland’s ordinance is **0.8%**, compared to **6.3%** under the statewide law. Beginning August 1, 2026, those caps rise to **2.3%** for Oakland and **8.8%** statewide.

The RAP is administered at 250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Suite 5313. Housing Counselors are available Monday through Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at rap@oaklandca.gov or (510) 238-3721.

Which Properties Are Covered — and Which Are Exempt?

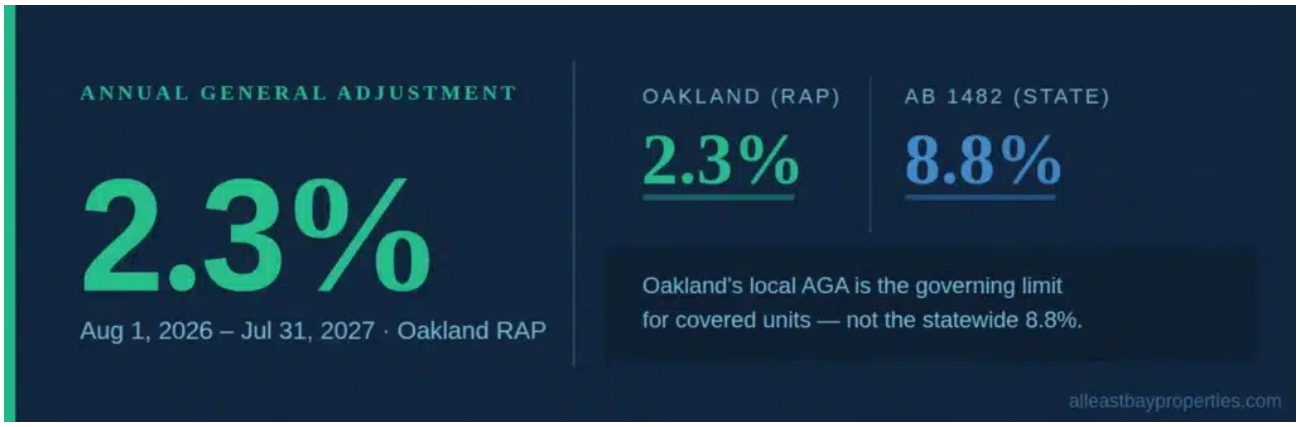
Understanding whether your property is subject to Oakland's RAP is the essential first step. There are two separate ordinances with different coverage rules: the Rent Adjustment Ordinance (which controls rent increases) and the Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance (which governs terminations). A unit can be subject to one, both, or neither.

✓ **Covered by Oakland RAP (Rent Cap)**	✗ **Exempt from Oakland Rent Cap**
Units in buildings with a certificate of occupancy before January 1, 1983 — includes all dwelling units in the building	New construction: units that received a certificate of occupancy on or after January 1, 1983 (must be entirely new, or created from formerly nonresidential space)
Single-family homes — usually exempt from the cap under Costa-Hawkins, but must register and follow the Just Cause ordinance	Owner-occupied units (no room rented) — must provide proof of residency; subject to verification
Condominiums — same as single-family homes: usually exempt from the cap, but must register and follow Just Cause	Hotels/motels not occupied by the same tenant for 30+ consecutive days
ADUs, junior ADUs and in-law units in pre-1983 buildings, created from existing residential space, or lacking a certificate of occupancy	Units vacant and unavailable for rent for the entire fiscal year (July 1–June 30) — written explanation required

✓ Covered by Oakland RAP (Rent Cap)	✗ Exempt from Oakland Rent Cap
Individually rented rooms in a single-family home under separate leases (30+ day tenancies) — each room registers as a separate unit	Publicly owned/operated units (City of Oakland, Oakland Redevelopment Successor Agency, or Oakland Housing Authority)

Important: Even if a unit is exempt from the Oakland rent cap, it may still be subject to Oakland's **Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance**, which applies to most units with a Certificate of Occupancy issued more than 10 years ago. And if a unit isn't covered by Oakland's local ordinance, it may still be subject to AB 1482's statewide protections.

Oakland's 2026 Allowable Rent Increase: 2.3% (Effective August 1, 2026)



Oakland's 2026 Annual General Adjustment rises to 2.3% effective August 1, 2026 (from 0.8%), compared to the statewide AB 1482 cap of 8.8%

The Annual General Adjustment (AGA) for Oakland RAP-covered units is **0.8%** for the period **August 1, 2025 through July 31, 2026**. Beginning **August 1, 2026**, the AGA rises to **2.3%** for the period through July 31, 2027. This figure is set by the City of Oakland based on a formula tied to 60% of the change in the Consumer Price Index, with a maximum of 3%.

For comparison: the statewide AB 1482 cap is 6.3% through July 31, 2026, rising to 8.8% beginning August 1, 2026. Oakland landlords operating under the RAP are limited to a small fraction of what the statewide law would allow for non-Oakland properties. This gap is the single most common source of costly compliance errors for landlords who own in Oakland alongside properties in other jurisdictions.

Worked Example: Maximum Increase on a $2,200/Month Oakland Unit

Step	Calculation	Result
Current monthly rent	—	**$2,200.00**
Oakland AGA (effective Aug 1, 2026 – Jul 31, 2027)	60% of CPI, max 3%	**2.3%**
Confirm 12-month lookback (no prior increase)	Clear ✓	Eligible
Dollar amount of increase	$2,200 × 2.3%	**$50.60**
New maximum monthly rent	$2,200 + $50.60	**$2,250.60**

This is the maximum — you are not required to take the full increase. However, you may not exceed it on a RAP-covered unit in any 12-month period without triggering the petition process.

Need help calculating your allowable Oakland rent increase? We track RAP rates and registration deadlines for every unit we manage — so our clients never exceed legal caps and never miss a deadline.

Reach Out Today!

How Oakland’s Rules Layer on Top of AB 1482

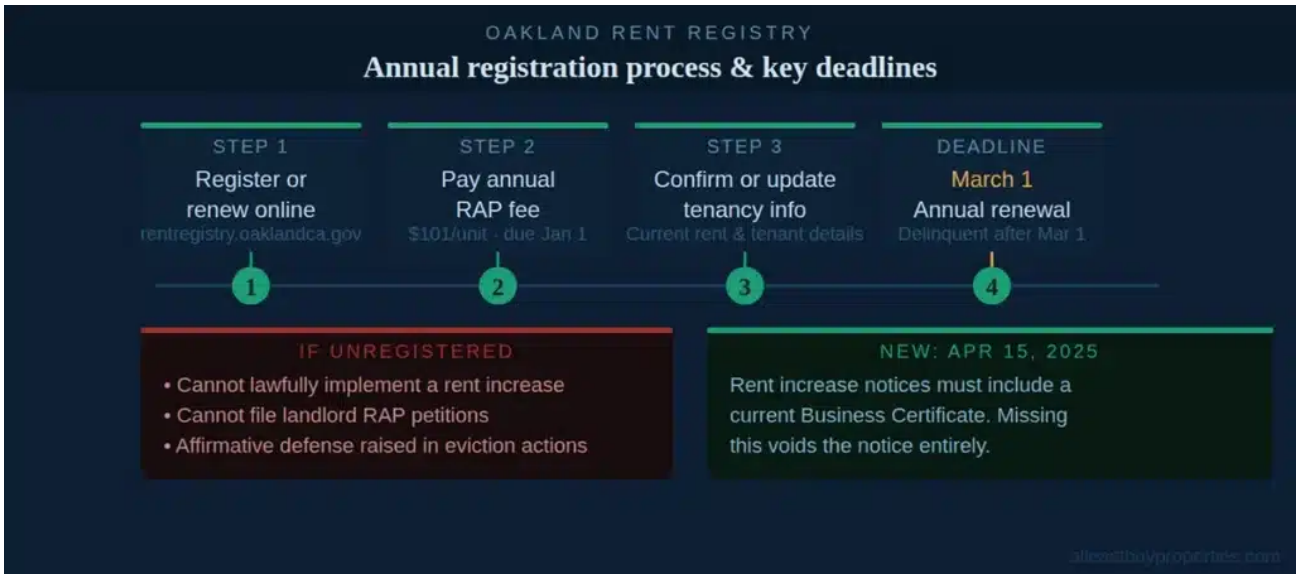
Oakland's RAP and California's AB 1482 are separate laws with different coverage rules. The interaction between them can be confusing — here is how it works in practice:

- **If a unit is covered by the Oakland RAP:** Oakland's AGA governs, not the AB 1482 cap — currently 0.8% vs. 6.3% through July 31, 2026, and 2.3% vs. 8.8% beginning August 1, 2026. The local rule is stricter, so it takes precedence.

The most common and costly mistake Oakland landlords make is applying the AB 1482 rate to a RAP-covered unit. If your building's certificate of occupancy is more than 10 years old, it is very likely subject to Oakland's Just Cause and registration rules — and if it predates 1983, Oakland's rent cap (0.8% through July 31, 2026; 2.3% beginning August 1, 2026) applies on top of Just Cause protections. Confirm your property's exact status with the Oakland RAP office.

Oakland Rent Registry: Registration Requirements and Deadlines

Since 2023, Oakland requires landlords to register all RAP-covered units through the Oakland Rent Registry. Registration must be renewed annually, with rent and tenancy information confirmed or updated by **March 1st each year**.



Oakland Rent Registry annual registration process and key deadlines — March 1 renewal deadline and 2025 Business Certificate requirement

Registration is not optional — and the consequences of non-registration are significant. Under Oakland's rules, unregistered property owners:

- Forfeit six months of a contested rent increase, unless they registered at least six months before serving the notice
- Cannot file or respond to a RAP petition without proof of registration
- Give the tenant a defense in most eviction cases (O.M.C. 8.22.360) if the owner wasn't in compliance when the termination notice was served
- May face penalties for operating unregistered units

New 2025 requirement: As of April 15, 2025, Oakland landlords must attach a current Business Certificate to any rent increase notice served on a tenant. If the Business Certificate is missing or delinquent, the notice is invalid. This is a frequently missed step — build it into your increase process before serving any notice.

Annual RAP fee: Property owners must pay an annual RAP fee of $137 per covered unit, due January 1 and delinquent after March 1. Landlords who pay on time may pass 50% of the fee to the tenant. Confirm the current fee amount with the RAP Fee and Exemptions page.

Banked Rent Increases: The Current Rules

Oakland lets owners "bank" any part of the annual CPI Rent Adjustment they choose not to take and add it to a later increase. The ordinance (O.M.C. 8.22.070) puts three limits on it, and a notice that includes banking must also attach a current Business Tax Certificate.

Cap per increase: the current adjustment plus banked amounts can't exceed **3× the allowable CPI Rent Adjustment** on the effective date of the notice. At the 2.3% rate in effect through July 31, 2027, that is **6.9%** in any one increase, however many years you have

banked. **Five-year limit:** a banked amount can’t be used more than five years after it accrues. **Sale ends it:** banked amounts expire when the property changes hands, except for certain family inheritances where the heir has owned the property for at least a year.

If you have banked increases from prior years, work with a property management professional to understand exactly what is still available to you before serving any notice.

The Oakland RAP Petition Process

The RAP operates as a petition-based system. Both landlords and tenants can file petitions to seek adjustments beyond the standard AGA.

Landlord Petitions for Increases Above the AGA

Oakland landlords may file petitions to seek approval for increases above the AGA in limited circumstances, including:

- Capital improvement pass-through — for significant improvements to the unit or building
- Increased housing service costs — for documented operating expense increases
- Uninsured casualty loss repairs
- Constitutional fair return petition — based on investment return
- Additional occupant increase — up to 5% per additional occupant beyond the original lease

Any rent increase above the AGA requires a landlord petition filed with the RAP and approved before the increase is served. You cannot simply increase rent above the AGA and notify the tenant after the fact.

Tenant Petition Rights

Tenants in covered units have the right to file petitions to challenge rent increases they believe are unlawful, seek reductions for decreased housing services, or address other rent-related disputes. Tenants have 180 days from service of a rent increase notice to file a petition challenging it. If the owner never gave the RAP notice at the start of the tenancy, the 180 days run from when the tenant first receives it.

Just Cause Eviction Protections in Oakland

Oakland's Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance applies to most rental units with a Certificate of Occupancy issued more than 10 years ago — a broader scope than the rent cap itself. Even if your unit is exempt from the Oakland rent cap (for example, a single-family home or condo), it may still be subject to just cause eviction rules.

Oakland's Just Cause ordinance recognizes 10 grounds for eviction, which fall into two broad categories:

At-Fault Just Cause

- Nonpayment of rent
- Substantial violation of a material lease term, continued after written notice to cease (this is where unauthorized subletting or added occupants fall, with limits)
- Willfully causing substantial damage, continued after written notice
- Disorderly conduct that destroys other tenants' peace and quiet, continued after written notice
- Using the unit or common areas for an illegal purpose
- Continuing to deny lawful access after written notice

No-Fault Just Cause

- Owner returning to a unit they previously lived in as their principal residence
- Owner or qualifying relative move-in

- Permitted substantial repairs that can’t be done safely with the unit occupied
- Withdrawal from the rental market under the Ellis Act

No-fault terminations require payment of relocation assistance. The amount varies depending on the no-fault reason and tenant circumstances — confirm current requirements with the RAP before serving any no-fault notice. Note that **sale of the property, lease expiration, and changes in unit status are not valid just cause grounds for eviction in Oakland**.

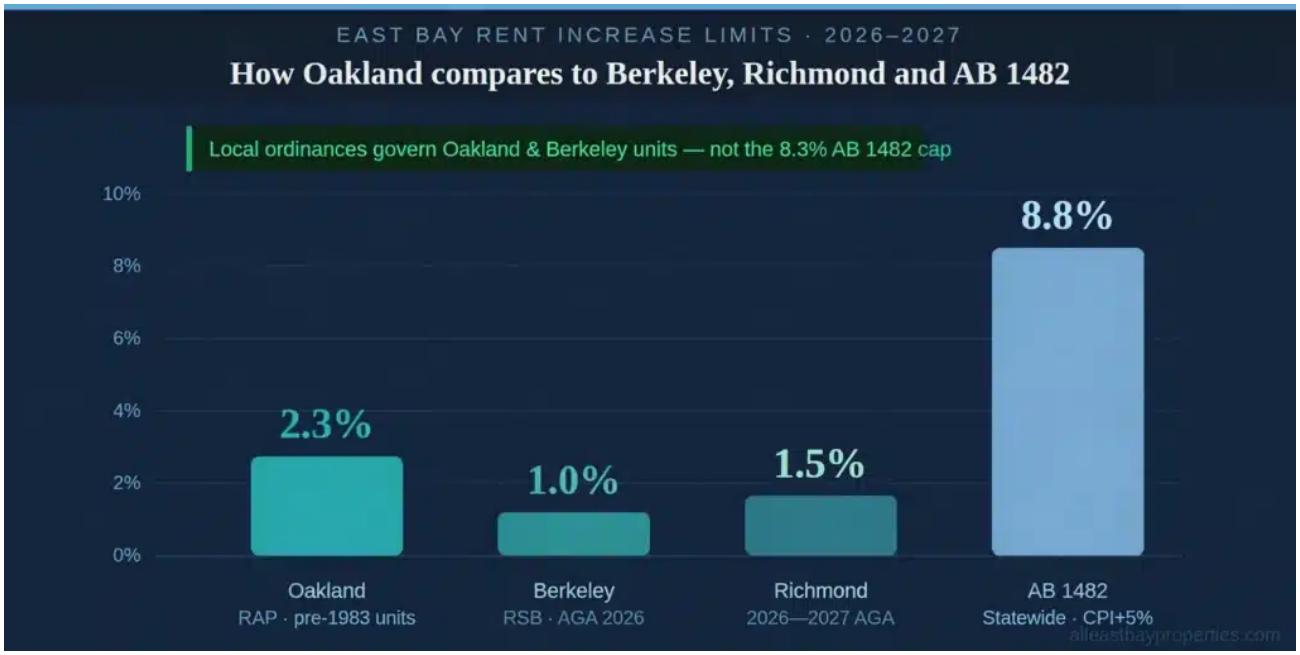
> ⚠ **What Happens If You Get This Wrong?**
>
> Overcharging rent in Oakland can become expensive quickly — and the consequences go beyond a simple refund.
>
> - Refund of all unlawful rent collected — retroactively, for every month it was overcharged
> - Civil penalties the City can assess for ordinance violations
> - RAP petition hearings — time-consuming, costly, and on the public record
> - Registration penalties for unregistered units — forfeiting six months of a contested increase, and no standing to file or respond to petitions without proof of registration, and a tenant defense to most evictions
> - As of April 15, 2025: rent increase notices must have a current Business Certificate attached — missing this invalidates the notice
> - Potential just cause complications on future tenancy actions if increases are challenged

Common Mistakes Oakland Landlords Make

- Applying the AB 1482 rate to an Oakland RAP-covered unit — Oakland’s local AGA governs, not the statewide cap (0.8% vs. 6.3% through July 31, 2026; 2.3% vs. 8.8% beginning August 1, 2026)

- Skipping or delaying annual rent registry renewal — an owner who isn’t registered can’t file or respond to petitions and can forfeit six months of a contested increase
- Serving a rent increase notice without attaching a current Business Certificate — required as of April 15, 2025; missing this document voids the notice
- Implementing banked increases without checking the limits — no more than 3× the current rate in one increase, nothing more than five years old, and nothing carried over from a prior owner
- Forgetting the 12-month lookback — one increase per 12-month rolling period, regardless of the reason for the gap
- Filing a termination notice without valid just cause — sale of property and lease expiration are not valid grounds in Oakland

Oakland, Berkeley, and AB 1482 Side by Side



East Bay rent increase limits by jurisdiction, effective 2026–2027: Oakland 2.3% (Aug 1), Berkeley 1.0% (unchanged), Richmond 1.5% (Sept 1), AB 1482 8.8% (Aug 1).

If you own properties across multiple East Bay jurisdictions, each city has its own rules, rates, and deadlines. Here is how Oakland compares:

Jurisdiction	2026–27 Max Increase	Registration Required?	Rate Updates
Oakland (RAP)	2.3% (AGA, effective Aug 1, 2026)	Yes (RAP — by March 1)	July 31 annually
Berkeley (RSB)	1.0% (AGA 2026)	Yes (Rent Board)	June 30 annually
Richmond	1.5% (AGA 2026, confirmed; effective Sept 1, 2026)	Yes (Rent Program)	August 31 annually
Statewide (AB 1482)	8.8% (effective Aug 1, 2026)	No	Annual (CPI, Aug–Jul)

Current rule at a glance

Rental law fact card

Oakland Rent Adjustment Program (RAP): Allowable Rent Increases

Rent increases on most Oakland units in buildings from before 1983 are capped at the city's allowable annual increase, and every increase notice must include the City's RAP Notice.

- **Allowable annual increase (Aug 1, 2026 to Jul 31, 2027):** 2.3%
- **Previous period (Aug 1, 2025 to Jul 31, 2026):** 0.8%
- **How the rate is set:** 60% of the April-to-April CPI change, or 3%, whichever is lower

Oakland Municipal Code ch. 8.22, Art. I (Rent Adjustment Ordinance) · In force · Effective Aug 1, 2026 · Last reviewed Sep 25, 2026

Full rule, sources and what changed →

Rental law fact card

Oakland RAP Fee and Rent Registry

Oakland charges an annual Rent Program Service Fee on units covered by rent control or just cause, due January 1, and requires those units to be registered in the Rent Registry by March 1 each year.

- **RAP fee per unit:** $137 (as of Jul 1, 2025)
- **Tenant pass-through (if paid on time):** Half the fee ($68.50)
- **Fee due / delinquent:** Jan 1 / after Mar 1

Oakland Municipal Code §§ 8.22.500–8.22.520 (Art. IV) · In force · Last reviewed Sep 25, 2026

Full rule, sources and what changed →

Frequently Asked Questions About Oakland Rent Control

How much can I raise rent on an Oakland unit in 2026?

For RAP-covered units, the maximum allowable increase from August 1, 2025 through July 31, 2026 is **0.8%**. Beginning August 1, 2026 through July 31, 2027, the AGA rises to **2.3%**. This is Oakland's Annual General Adjustment. If you want to increase rent above this amount, you must file a petition with the Oakland RAP and obtain approval before serving notice on the tenant.

Which Oakland properties are subject to rent control?

The rent cap (2.3% from August 1, 2026 through July 31, 2027) applies to units in buildings with a certificate of occupancy before January 1, 1983, including ADUs and individually rented rooms in those buildings. Single-family homes and condos are usually exempt from the cap

under Costa-Hawkins. The Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance reaches further: it covers most rental units except ground-up new construction that received its certificate of occupancy within the past 10 years, a rolling cutoff. Units covered by either ordinance must be registered every year. If you are uncertain about your property's status, contact the RAP Housing Counselors at (510) 238-3721.

Do I need to register my Oakland rental unit?

Yes. If your unit is covered by either the Rent Adjustment Ordinance or the Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance, you must register through the Oakland Rent Registry and renew annually by March 1. Owners who haven't registered can't file or respond to RAP petitions, they forfeit six months of a contested rent increase unless they registered at least six months before serving the notice, and non-compliance is a defense to most eviction cases.

Can I still use banked rent increases in Oakland in 2026?

Yes, with three limits in the ordinance. Any one increase, current plus banked, can't exceed 3× the allowable CPI Rent Adjustment on the notice's effective date: **6.9%** at the 2.3% rate in effect through July 31, 2027. Banked amounts can't be used more than five years after they accrue, and they expire when the property is sold (with narrow exceptions for family inheritance). A notice that includes banking must attach a current Business Tax Certificate.

What is the difference between the RAP and Oakland's Just Cause ordinance?

The Rent Adjustment Ordinance (administered through the RAP) governs how much rent can be increased on covered units. The Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance governs the grounds required to terminate a tenancy. The two ordinances have different — though overlapping — coverage rules. A unit can be subject to just cause protections even if it is exempt from the rent cap (for example, a single-family home may not have a rent cap but may still require just cause for eviction).

What if a tenant files a RAP petition against my rent increase?

Tenants generally have 180 days from service of a rent increase notice to file a petition with the RAP challenging the increase. If a petition is filed, you will need to respond through the RAP process, which can include mediation and formal hearings. This is one reason accurate documentation of every increase — including the calculation basis, notice date, and delivery method — is essential. Landlords who cannot demonstrate compliance face having the increase invalidated and potentially refunding amounts collected.

Is Oakland rent control the same as AB 1482?

No — they are separate laws. Oakland's Rent Adjustment Ordinance is a local ordinance, and it is stricter than California's statewide AB 1482 Tenant Protection Act. For Oakland RAP-covered units, Oakland's limit applies, not AB 1482's — 0.8% vs. 6.3% through July 31, 2026, and 2.3% vs. 8.8% beginning August 1, 2026. AB 1482 provides a backstop for Oakland properties that fall outside local RAP coverage.

Ready to implement a compliant Oakland rent increase?

Our team monitors Oakland RAP rates, tracks registration deadlines, and structures every increase correctly — we do this for hundreds of units so our clients don't have to.

We manage 600+ units across Emeryville, Oakland, Berkeley, and the East Bay — we navigate these rules for clients every day.

Reach out for a FREE property evaluation →

Related Articles

← AB 1482 Rent Cap Explained: California's Statewide Rent Increase Limits for 2026 [March 9, 2026]

← Rent Increases in the East Bay: What Landlords Can (and Cannot) Do in 2026 [March 2, 2026]

→ California Rent Increase Notice Requirements in 2026 (And How to Raise Rent Without Creating Problems) [March 23, 2026]

Related video: Oakland Rent Control in 2026: RAP Rules, Allowable Increases & What Landlords Must Know

Sources

- Oakland Rent Adjustment Program — City of Oakland
- Oakland Rent Adjustment Ordinance (O.M.C. 8.22)
- Oakland Rent Registry
- Oakland RAP Fee and Exemptions
- California AB 1482 — Tenant Protection Act of 2019 (Civil Code §§1946.2, 1947.12)
- Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board — Annual General Adjustment
- Richmond Rent Increase Program

Source: https://dev.alleastbayproperties.com/oakland-rent-control-2026/