

# **San Francisco Tenants Union**

## **Guiding Principles**

### **WE BELIEVE:**

1. Housing is a basic human need. Everyone has a right to decent, safe, and affordable housing regardless of ability to pay or other barriers.

Our housing system has failed to meet these needs because it treats housing as a profit center benefiting speculators, developers, landlords, and financial institutions. We cannot ensure everyone has housing unless housing is treated as a human need and not a source of profit.

Lack of affordable housing is the direct cause of homelessness, and we support the struggle to secure stable, safe, and affordable homes for everyone.

2. Housing injustice disproportionately harms people of color. Unequal access to housing stems from the individual, cultural, and structural racism that pervades our society. To achieve housing justice, we must identify and oppose policies and actions that uphold white supremacy.
3. The fight for tenants' rights is inseparable from the broader fight against structural oppression based on race, national origin, immigration status, family composition, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, or economic status. Housing justice will be won by building power among ourselves and with other movements.
4. The welfare of people is our primary concern. We treat each other and those who come to us for help with respect and compassion.

### **WHAT WE DO:**

5. Through tenant counseling we share knowledge to empower tenants to take charge of their home and their city. We educate to liberate, not to just provide a service. As tenants, we know we are experts in our lived experience, and we are owed respect and justice as residents of our communities.

6. We seek to advance policies and choose campaigns based on what matters most to tenants. Policy change is not only the realm of attorneys and legislative advocates, but especially those affected by injustice. Our work is driven by the problems we as tenants have, and the problems that drive tenants to us for help.
7. The SFTU is the advocate for tenants. We oppose evictions and rent increases. We support rent controls and strict code enforcement. We defend the right of tenants to organize and negotiate collectively with landlords.
8. We assist all tenants in need of our help, and we are primarily committed to organizing the most vulnerable tenants in our communities. These include people who face systemic oppression and communities facing gentrification.

#### HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

9. The SFTU is made up of people like you. We are a democratic organization responsible to our active membership in all respects. Any person who agrees and acts in accordance with these principles is welcome to work with the organization as a member and have an equal voice. We use a collaborative, transparent decision-making process.
10. Our volunteers are the heart of the organization. We train, support and mentor tenants and members, and share the resources and skills we have learned to grow our movement. We fully support tenants and members who want to assert leadership in our activities.