



City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, FL 33139, [www.miamibeachfl.gov](http://www.miamibeachfl.gov)

OFFICE OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS, Tel: 305.673.7575

Melissa Berthier, Email: [melissaberthier@miamibeachfl.gov](mailto:melissaberthier@miamibeachfl.gov)

Matt Kenny, Email: [mattkenny@miamibeachfl.gov](mailto:mattkenny@miamibeachfl.gov)

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 13, 2023

## **Miami Beach Allocates Funds for the Tenant Defense Project**

*— Funding will come from a federal HUD grant for eviction defense and to prevent homelessness —*

**Miami Beach, FL** – The Miami Beach City Commission unanimously agreed to set aside \$230,667 in federal housing funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to pay legal expenses related to vulnerable Miami Beach tenants.

“These funds will help remove barriers to housing access and stability throughout our city with a focus on the North Beach neighborhood,” explained Miami Beach Commissioner Alex Fernandez, who sponsored the Tenant Defense Project measure at the commission’s Nov. 16 meeting. “Not having access to legal representation to protect a tenant’s rights has created a troubling disparity.”

The money will include \$183,801 to Legal Services of Greater Miami for eviction defense and \$46,866 for North Beach homeless prevention.

“There could be no better use of public funds than to help residents stay in their homes and prevent displacement,” Fernandez said.

Legal services will be provided to qualifying low- and moderate-income residents to address issues associated with tenant rights, including evictions, necessary repairs not completed by the landlord, 60-day notices before rent increases, and instances when landlords refuse to cover temporary housing expenses when a tenant’s unit is deemed unsafe and uninhabitable. Legal Services of Greater Miami will be responsible for conducting intake and client education.

Residents needing this service may contact the city’s Office Housing and Community Services Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. by calling 305.673.7491.

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