

Form 28: Sample Tenant Organizing Flier

Important information for residents of buildings owned by the ABC Corporation in Mattapan and Hyde Park

Guess what? You live in a building with a *tenant association*. That's old news for some of you, who have been involved in our struggles for many years. Newer tenants may not know about it. This letter will give an important update for older members of ABC Tenant Association. We hope it will explain to new people why a tenant association is so important and what our goals are.

Why does a tenant association matter?

Tenant associations negotiate "collective bargaining agreements" with landlords. It is like a labor union. Our slogan is "A union at work AND a union at home!" Where the labor union negotiates wage increases and prevents unjust firings during a "contract," a tenant association negotiates limits to rent increases and prevents unjust evictions during a contract. A contract is very important. Under state law, landlords can increase rents as often as they like, and they can evict without cause. But under our contracts, tenants are protected and many tenant associations around the City are united in a network through City Life/Vida Urbana.

What about tenant associations in ABC buildings?

The ABC Corp. has negotiated collective bargaining contracts with tenant associations in 8 buildings since 2000. Those contracts limited rent increases to levels like \$30 per year or 5%. They protected Section 8 tenants by limiting tenants' share of the rent to 30% of income. Our contracts protected residents, but they did not hurt ABC. Since 2000, ABC has grown into a huge real estate corporation, with thousands of apartments in five states and major development activities. Recently, researchers report that they took out a big mortgage on their Mattapan and Hyde Park properties, which they can use to further build their real estate holdings.

Three years ago, ABC stopped negotiating with its tenant associations. During those 3 years, there have been many letters, rallies and hearings. ABC Corp. has brought eviction actions against many tenant leaders and sought large rent increases. Because we are organized evictions and rent increases failed.

Our tenant associations remain strong. Tenant leaders from different buildings have been meeting every other week since May, 2006, to plan campaigns. But although we are strong, we are still seeking to negotiate new contracts in 19 of ABC's 20 buildings in Mattapan and Hyde Park. We want a contract! We continue to build support in the community to get a contract signed to protect YOU. Meanwhile, both ABC Corp. and our tenant associations are observing an informal "truce." Since Nov. 1 of last year, they have not pursued evictions and we have not held any public protests.

Our tenant associations also support community improvements, like a new subway stop on the Fairmount Line to serve our neighborhood. But we want tenant protections through collective bargaining agreements so large landlords can't take advantage of the new stop and raise the rent

All tenants together! Don't forget, a landlord cannot retaliate against you for participating in a tenant association.

This flyer distributed by _____

For more information, call _____