

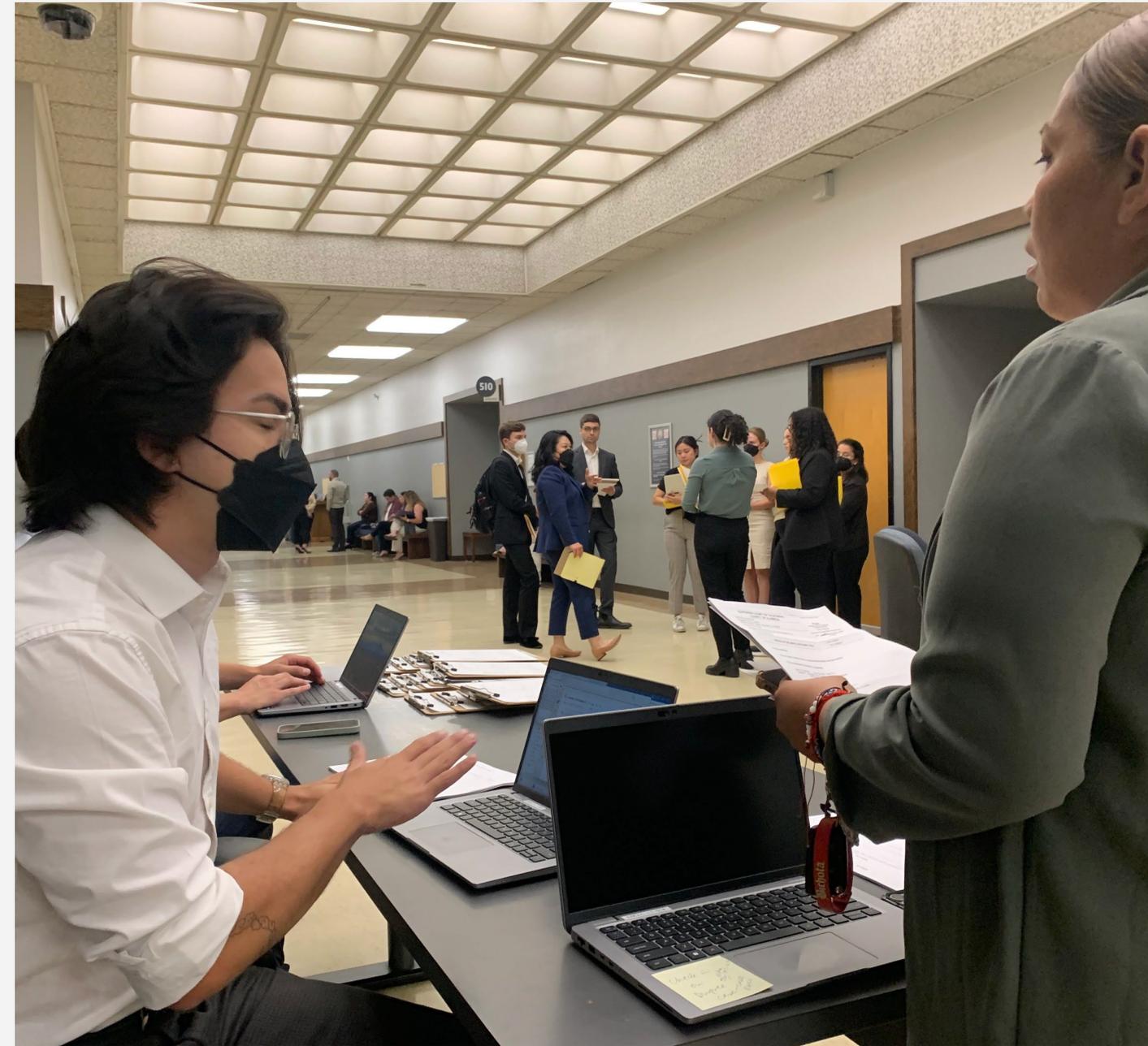


# Berkeley Housing Landscape

## Trends, Activities & Highlights

**Linda Yu Co-Director of Housing Unit & Clinical Supervising Attorney**

**June 16, 2025**

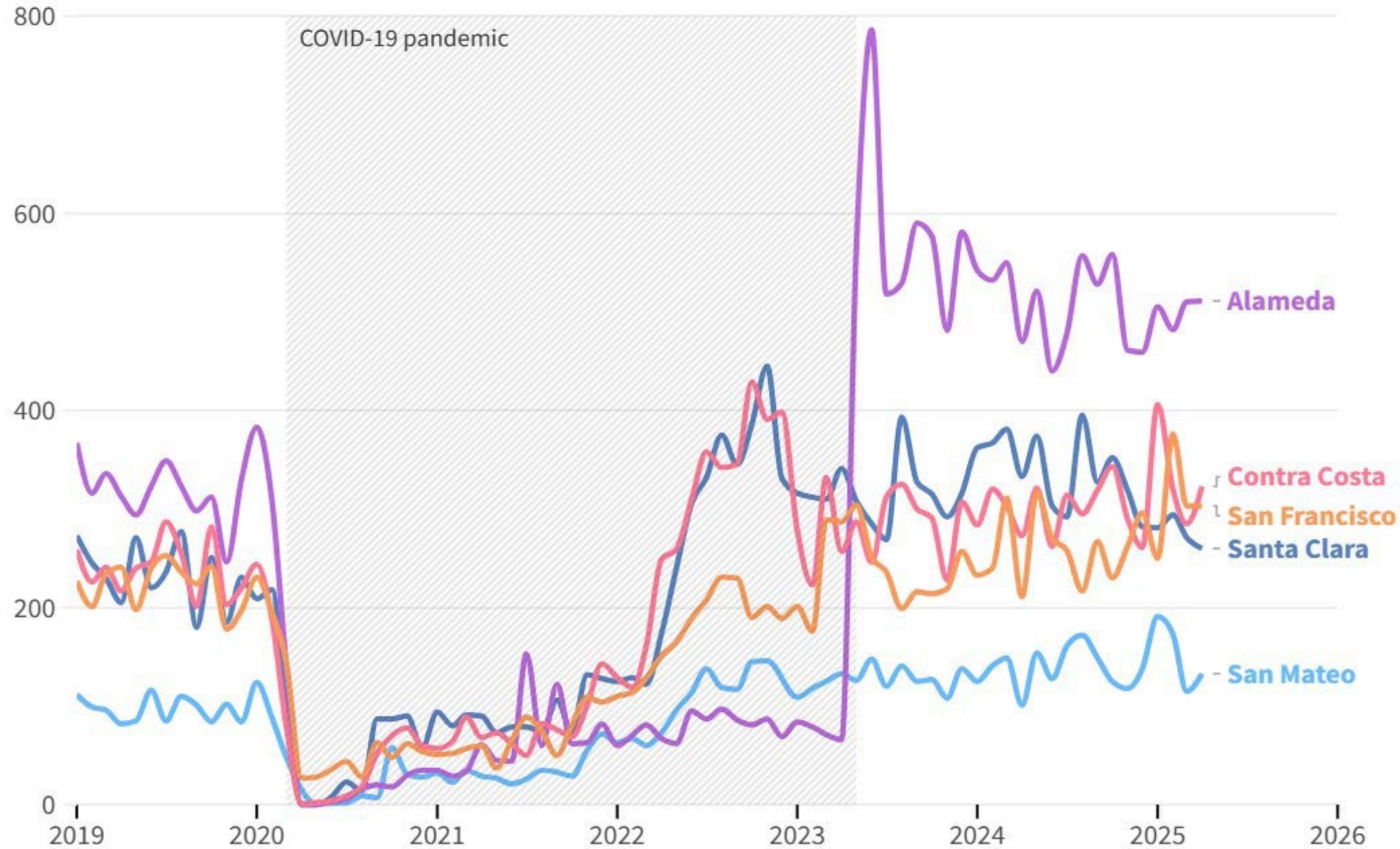


# Housing Trends

Sustained high eviction rates,  
constructive evictions, and tenant right's  
violations



# Alameda County Leads in Evictions



Source: Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara county superior courts.

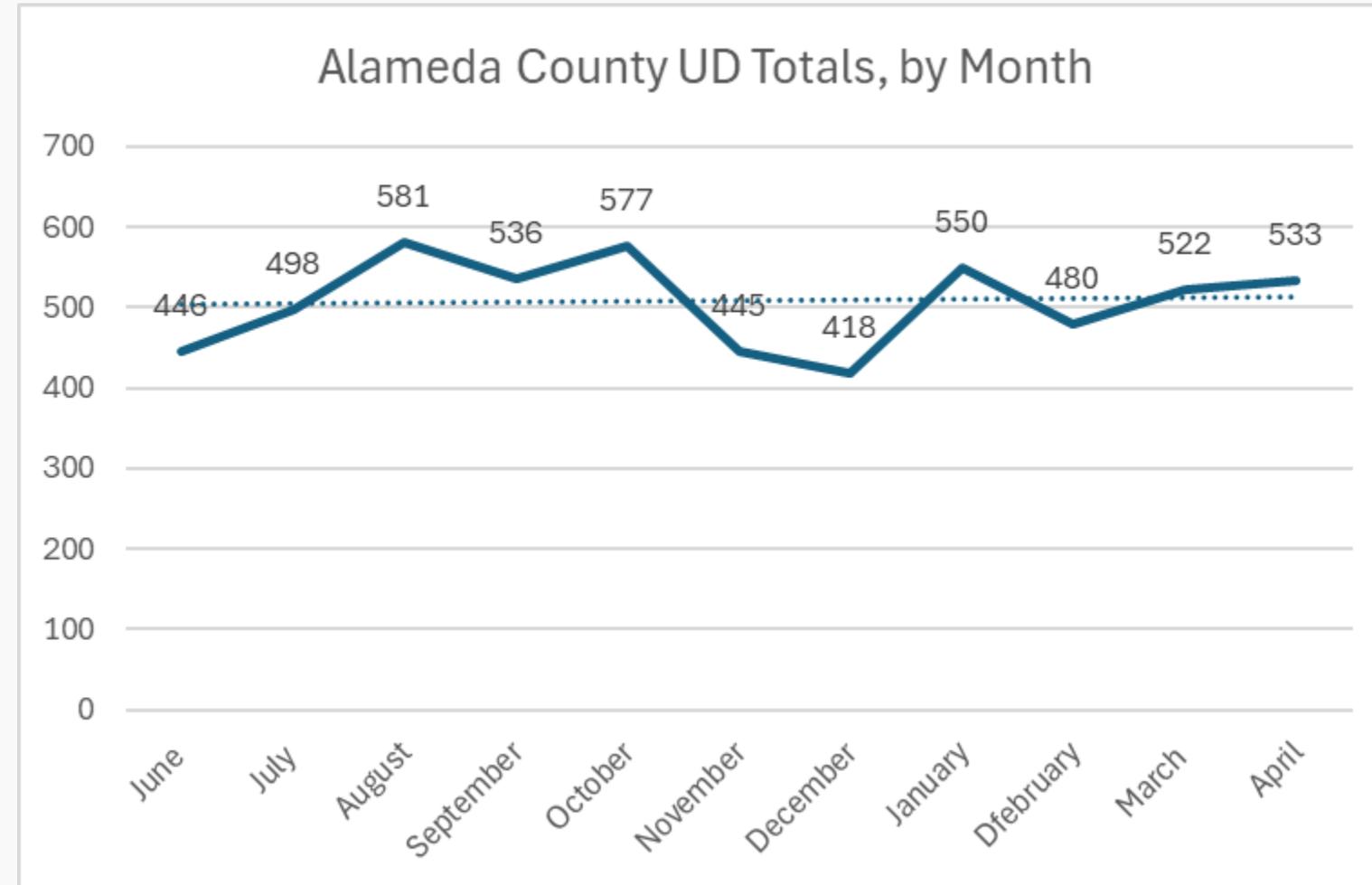
Chart by Jovi Dai - Bay Area News Group



# A Sustained Eviction Wave

**Nearly 2 years after the lifting of the Alameda County Eviction Moratorium, eviction lawsuit numbers continue to surge and sustain**

- Majority of County tenants are unrepresented.
- In Berkeley, we see nonpayment and eviction issues related to elders living independently.
- The number of cases set for settlement conference has also ballooned to calendars of 60-100+ cases, compared to pre-pandemic calendars of around 30-50.



**Pre-pandemic, average number of UD filings were about 300 per month**



# Berkeley Trends: Tenants' Rights Violations Target Elderly Residents

**While the number of Berkeley evictions has not spike as much as neighboring cities, there is a pattern of targeting senior residents in long term, low rent tenancies.**

Some trends we've seen from bad actors include:

- Targeting seniors for "excessive" belongings, framing them as "lease violations" or "nuisance"
- Ongoing and severe harassment, including verbal harassment, unauthorized landlord entries, and non-stop harassing phone calls and texts, create hostile environments that force tenants to self-evict
- Refusing to make repairs which can sometimes lead to failing Section 8 inspections, threatening a tenant's voucher
- Pressuring tenants to accept "buyouts", where tenants are offered money to voluntarily move out
- Illegal rent increases, often banked rent increases, which destabilize long term tenants on fixed or low incomes
- Unilaterally reducing housing services (removing parking, yard or storage access)

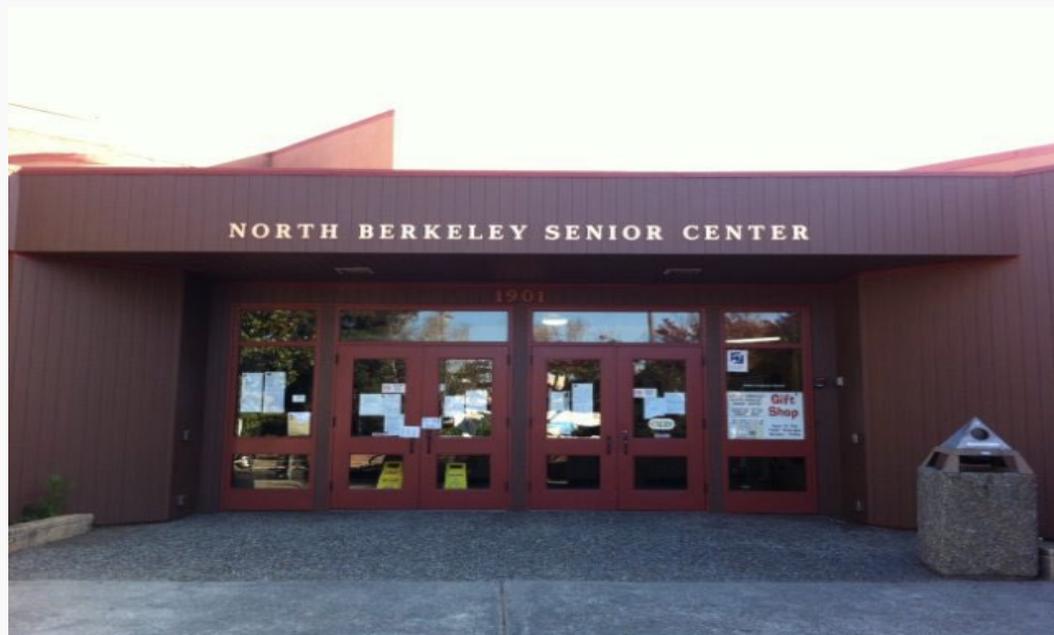


# Tenant Centered Activities

Tenants' Rights Workshops, Community Outreach & Legal Representation



# Community Based Workshops and Targeted Outreach

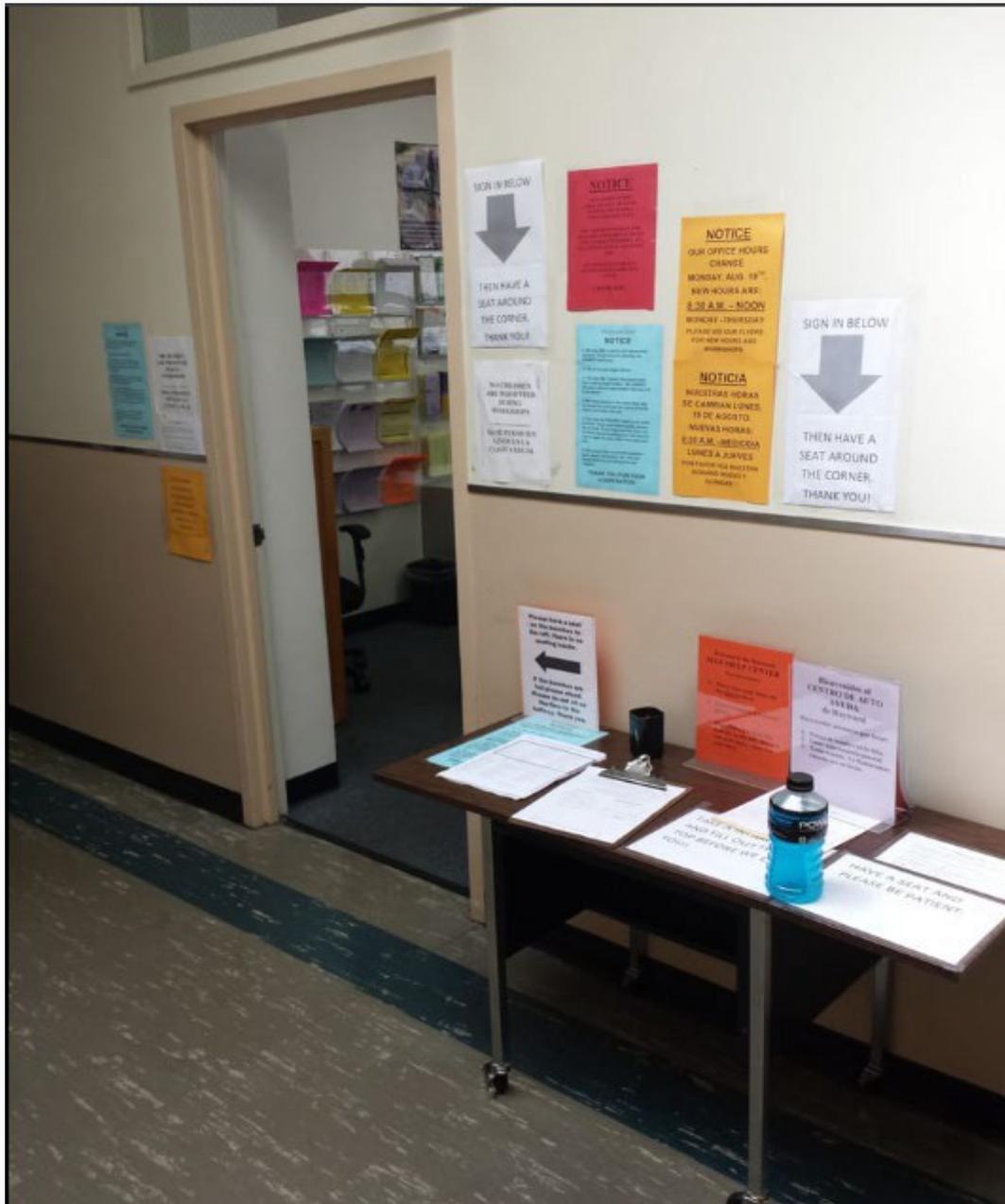


**By going directly to our clients' communities, we make our services more accessible.**

- In 2024-2025, our team conducted tenants' rights presentations in the community.
- We reached **50 tenants** across two different senior centers with the purpose of supporting elderly tenants in defending their rights. In addition to these presentations our staff also provided brief consultations for attendees.
- Building relationships with property management staff at subsidized **senior housing developments** to bring trainings to tenants onsite and to train staff
- Building relationships on campuses to **educate students**



# Training Mediators & Providers



## By training the county's mediators on tenant protections, we're putting protections to work

- In 2024-2025, our team trained Alameda Superior Court's volunteer mediators, Congress of Neutrals, and Rental Mediation Services on local protections and leverage that tenants have in eviction suits

## By training tenant providers, we're expanding the reach of tenant protections

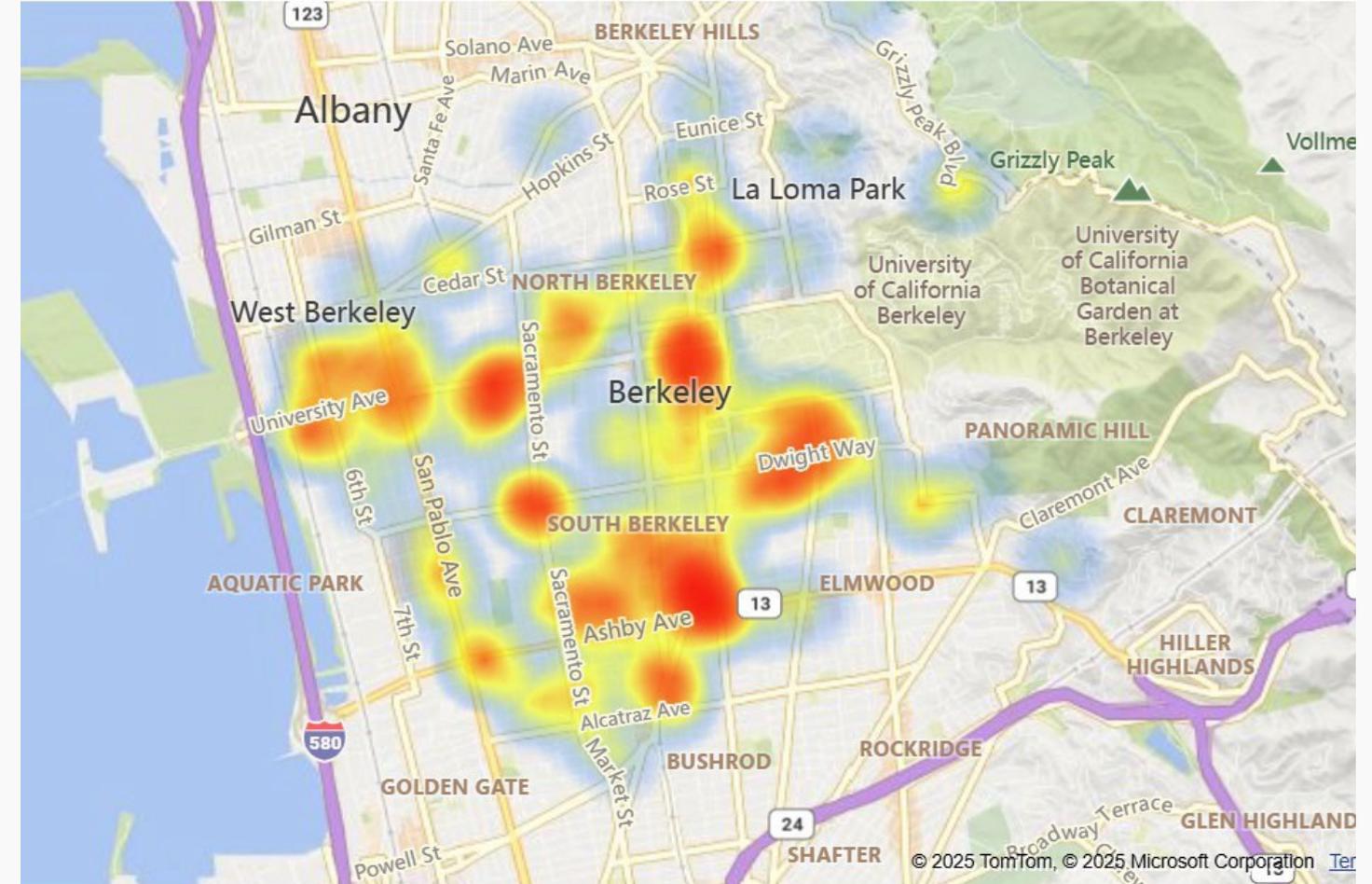
- Our team has trained Adult Protective Service workers, Legal Assistance for Seniors, Family Violence Law Center on tenant protections in Berkeley
- Our team provides materials to Self-Help office at County Courthouse



# Tenants' Rights Workshop

**By informing and empowering tenants on their housing rights, we address issues before they escalate to eviction lawsuits and constructive evictions.**

- Our weekly tenants' rights workshop is an opportunity for tenants to receive one-on-one legal advice on a broad range of housing issues.
- In this workshop, we find that many Berkeley tenants seek advice concerning harassment, lease violations, repairs requests, reasonable accommodation requests, and Section 8 and subsidized housing terminations, and illegal rent increases.



Heatmap of Berkeley Services, showing highest need near South Berkeley



# Full Legal Representation

## Trends for our full representation of Berkeley Tenants

- **Berkeley Evictions:** Increase in the number of seniors in subsidized housing facing evictions.
- **Rent Board Hearings:** EBCLC has increased our counseling and representation in rent board hearings.
- **Section 8 Advocacy:** Increase in our clients' need for support in transferring their subsidies.
- **Social Work:** We have seen primarily disabled seniors who reside alone, seeking high level case management due to their complex needs. While many of them are well-connected (to Lifelong, the Regional Center of the East Bay, etc.), it is a challenge to find sustainable and long-term case management to hand them off to.
- **Housing Navigation:** Increased demand for intensive housing search, transfer applications, and planning for moving costs.



# Full Legal Representation

## EBCLC's Monetary Outcomes 2024-2025

**\$128,890** rent waived for Berkeley Tenants

**\$42,150** in move-out payments to Berkeley Tenants



# Tenant Centered Policy Advocacy

Empowering Tenant's Self Advocacy; Putting Stronger Eviction Protections Into Action; Long-lasting Impacts of the Longest and Strongest Eviction Moratorium in the country



# Measure BB In Action

## Empowering Tenant Unions and Stronger Eviction Protections

- **Non-payment of Less Than One-Months' Fair Market Rent.**
  - Referring to rental assistance
  - Corporate landlords refusing partial payments
- **Correcting breach of leases that cause no actual harm.**
  - Incentivizing mediation
- **Refusal to sign new fixed term leases, despite corporate policies**
- **More tenants interested in starting their own unions**



# EBCLC Eviction Moratorium Report

## Roadmapping EBCLC's Tenant Protection Plan

- Pausing court & changing court policies
- Pausing sheriff enforcement at tenant doors
- Advocating policy makers for long standing changes
- Securing rental assistance to prevent rental debt lawsuits

## Fortifying the Future

- Proactively adopt automatic eviction moratoria during public health emergencies
- Expand rights for tenants to unionize and requiring landlords to negotiate in good faith
- **Countywide universal basic income for low-income tenants**



Grounded in client informed legal advocacy and organizing and mobilizing coalitions across housing organizations in the Bay, EBCLC's Housing team effectively intervened with local, regional and state government officials to route resources to those most at risk of losing their homes.





# Highlights: Our Impact

**Preserving Long-Term Tenancies with Holistic  
Services**

# Preserving Long Term Rent Controlled Tenancies

## Holistic approach to tenant advocacy

A senior Berkeley tenant who has been in subsidized housing for 15 years was being evicted shouting at property management staff, who she believed stole her belongings and the senior allegedly took a walker that belonged to someone else. As our team met with this senior, we quickly realized there's an underlying and untreated mental health decline that accounted for her behavior. Our social worker jumped in to help the senior navigate urgent medical attention, connecting her to long-term case management, and accompanying the senior to many doctor's appointments to ensure they understood complicated concepts leading to a diagnosis similar to dementia.

After litigating this case for several months and unable to convince the landlord to consider reasonable accommodations for the senior's disabilities, EBCLC successfully got the case dismissed by filing a motion in front of the trial judge. This allowed the senior to not only stay in her sustainable unit, but the location of the unit means she continues to attend her church that provided ongoing support for her and access her doctors nearby.

Our social worker's collaboration with our legal team at such a crucial time in the case provided critical support and long-term resources that stabilize this senior in her long-term home. Because of Measure BB, this senior is not at risk for another eviction based on this disability-related conduct because it doesn't actually harm the landlord, giving us time to file disability discrimination complaints.



**Thank you!**



**EAST BAY  
COMMUNITY  
LAW CENTER**