

Evictions in the Nine-County Bay Area

July 2025



ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Acknowledgments

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Introduction

The Bay Area Housing Finance Authority (BAHFA) commissioned the Bay Area Eviction Study to better understand the current eviction landscape across the region as part of its mandate to advance affordable housing across Production, Preservation and Protections (the “3Ps”)¹. The research team collected and studied data from county Superior Courts, sheriffs’ offices, local agencies (as available by jurisdiction), the California Judicial Council and legal service organizations. Tenant legal services organizations provided in-depth data through a survey, and other tenant serving organizations provided information through interviews from across the region. The findings are organized into multiple regional and local reports and an interactive data tool that are available on the BAHFA website.

There are no national requirements for how courts maintain or share data.² Eviction data is known to be difficult to obtain in California due to state law that protects tenants by automatically sealing most eviction court records unless the landlord obtains a judgment in their favor within 60 days of filing.³ This means that eviction filings where the tenant prevailed or reached a settlement, or where the landlord dropped the case, cannot be discovered during background or credit checks. This protects tenants from being denied housing simply because a case has been filed against them.⁴ It also means that such cases are generally not available in the public record. While these protections are vital for tenants to secure new housing, they complicate the ability of researchers to analyze the trends and impacts of evictions based on court records.⁵

There have been several efforts to obtain eviction data in a few counties within the Bay Area.⁶ However, this report is the first known attempt to bring together eviction data from state, county and local data sources across the nine-county Bay Area.

Overall, the study found that rates of court evictions have returned to or surpassed pre-pandemic levels in eight of the nine counties. Such formal evictions are only part of a broader landscape of housing instability that encompasses both court proceedings as well as informal evictions. The study also found that tenants' need for support significantly outstrips legal services capacity regionwide. These findings reinforce the importance of tenant protections as a regional issue affecting housing stability and as a core part of BAHFA's founding mission.

Key Findings

- **Approximately 21,767 eviction lawsuits (formal court evictions) were filed in the region from July 2023-June 2024, meeting or exceeding pre-pandemic levels in eight of the nine counties.** The data indicate a sustained increase beyond the spikes seen when pandemic-era eviction moratoria ended in 2022-23.⁷
- A key research question was to understand variation across the nine counties. At a regional level, **the eviction rates in fiscal year 2023-24 were variable, with the highest rates in Solano, Contra Costa and Alameda counties.** Eviction rates were particularly high in gentrifying urban areas and eastern suburban areas that have seen increasing rates of poverty over the past decade.
- Regionwide data about the causes of eviction could not be obtained. However, data available from some cities and counties show that **inability to pay rent is cited as the legal cause of eviction in 85-97% of eviction notices.** This finding highlights the role of the region's housing affordability challenges in eviction risk.
- Similarly, regional data about default judgements in eviction lawsuits where a court rules in favor of a landlord because a tenant failed to respond — rather than based on the merits of the case — is difficult to obtain in consistent and reliable formats. Nonetheless,

after reviewing default rates from multiple data sources, the study found default rates in nearly every county between 30-50%. This indicates that **roughly one-third to half of tenants lose their eviction cases without the opportunity to present a defense.**

- While also unavailable for the region, two counties' data on tenant and landlord representation show a large gap. In San Francisco, which is the only jurisdiction in the region with a tenant "right to counsel," 45% of tenants were represented compared to 96% of landlords. In San Mateo County, only 4% of tenants facing eviction were represented compared to 93% of landlords. **This generally follows the rate found at the national level, where on average 4% of tenants and 83% of landlords are represented in eviction cases.**⁸
- Consistent with local and national research, **census tracts with high proportions of renters of color, households with children and female headed households faced higher rates of eviction across the region.**

These findings contribute to a growing body of research at the national level to understand the prevalence, causes and consequences of evictions.⁹ At the same time, the study highlights limitations on the availability and quality of eviction data, including the lack of consistent and detailed case-level data across geographies. This points to a need for structural improvements to enhance eviction data collection and management systems. The findings also suggest an ongoing role for BAHFA to support cross-jurisdictional efforts that enable data-driven policy and investment decisions to address housing instability across the Bay Area.

About the Eviction Process

Eviction lawsuits, legally known as “unlawful detainers,” follow a process primarily governed by state law.¹⁰ Each step in this process generates specific documentation (bolded below):

- 1.** The landlord sends a **notice of termination of tenancy** to the tenant. State law does not require tracking of eviction notices. Ten jurisdictions in the Bay Area collect some data about eviction notices at the local level and seven of these collect all notice data.¹¹ Not all eviction notices result in eviction lawsuits. The tenant may resolve the issue stated in the notice, for example, by paying the rent they owe within the specified period (typically three days). Alternatively, tenants may move out upon receiving an eviction notice, before the matter proceeds to the court process.
- 2.** Following the notice deadline, landlords can file an **eviction lawsuit** with the county Superior Court. Eviction lawsuits are accelerated proceedings that typically move through the court system in a matter of weeks, with a median duration of six weeks (including default judgments) in the Bay Area based on court records. This is significantly faster than other types of court cases, which often take years rather than weeks.
- 3.** Upon receiving formal lawsuit notification, tenants have a brief window to file an **answer or other responsive pleading**. Historically, tenants had only five days to respond; state law was amended recently to extend the timeline to 10 days, effective January 1, 2025.¹² Failure to respond results in a **default judgment** against tenants, and they generally lose the opportunity to contest the eviction.¹³
- 4.** If the tenant files an answer or other pleading, the case will make its way through the legal process and will ultimately be resolved by a **trial, dismissal or settlement agreement** (settlement agreements are the most frequent outcome). Settlements can be either move-out or stay agreements that resolve the case through negotiation rather than a judicial decision.¹⁴

5. If a case is decided against the tenant — via a default judgment or a judgment later in the process — the court rules to return possession of the unit to the landlord and issues a **writ of possession**.
6. If the tenant does not move out, the **sheriff will execute the writ** and lock the tenant out.

There is little officially collected data on what happens to tenants following an eviction court proceeding. Previous research has found that when tenants must move out due to eviction, there are long-term negative effects on the household's social and economic status, health, housing quality and housing stability, up to and including homelessness.¹⁵

Informal Evictions

The court system only includes formal eviction lawsuits. However, national studies have found that informal evictions are two to three times more common than court evictions.¹⁶ Informal evictions can take many forms: abusive or harassing behavior from property managers, refusal to repair health and safety violations like severe leaks and mold, or illegally shutting off utilities like hot water. What makes them informal is that they do not follow the required court process, making them difficult to track.

According to Judicial Council data between July 2023 and June 2024, 21,767 eviction lawsuits were filed across the Bay Area. Combining local eviction data with the national studies of informal eviction rates, an estimated 43,000 to 65,000 informal evictions may have taken place in the Bay Area in the same period. As such, **court eviction data may represent a significant undercount of the total scale of displacement occurring across the region.**

Methods

BAHFA requested eviction data from January 2001 through December 2023 through email and public record requests to each county Superior Court, county sheriff's office, and where available, local city agencies. However, the quality of data from before 2015 was not high enough to conduct reliable analyses at the regional level.

Methodology Report

For more details on methods and limitations, view the separate report on the [BAHFA website](#).

The study team was unable to secure usable eviction lawsuit data from the Superior Court in Santa Clara County. The study team received only limited data from the courts in Marin, Napa and Solano counties. BAHFA and the study team attempted to secure data from every court through repeated requests and outreach over a period of nine months. Given the lack of adequate court data from Marin, Napa, Santa Clara and Solano counties, some analyses in this report that require specific fields and case data do not include these counties.

To supplement or replace data provided to the research team by county courts, the study uses aggregate data from 2015 through the first half of 2024 on eviction lawsuits collected by the California Judicial Council (CJC). In addition to filling in gaps in court-provided data, CJC data from 2023-24 allows analysis that gives a fuller picture of evictions after the end of pandemic-era eviction moratoria. These data account for limited unlawful detainer cases (cases involving less than \$35,000) and do not include unlimited cases.

Data available from the Superior Courts and CJC do not include information about the causes of eviction lawsuits. For this study, the only available data on the reported causes of eviction come from city administered programs in Berkeley, Hayward, Mountain View, Oakland, Richmond and San Jose.¹⁷

The findings collected from the survey of tenant legal service providers and interviews with tenant-serving organizations are documented in companion reports found on the BAHFA website. These data are referenced in this report as appropriate to add context and nuance to the court eviction findings.

Evictions in the Bay Area

Evictions Post COVID-19 Pandemic

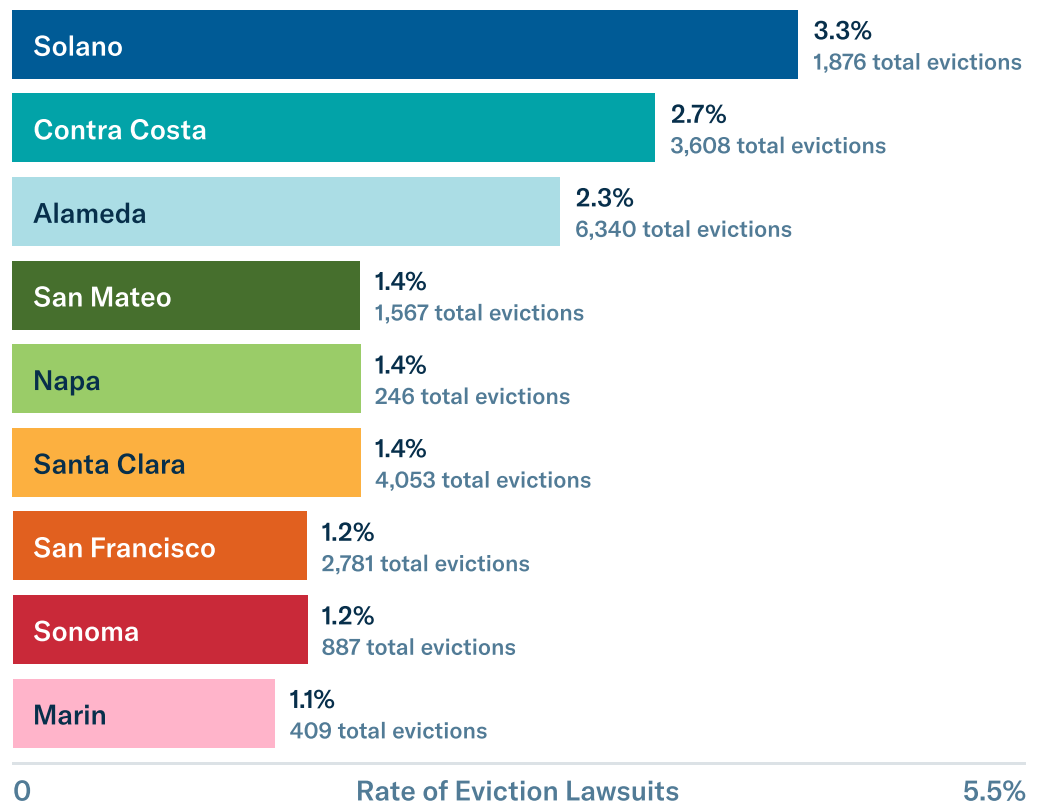
Approximately 21,767 eviction lawsuits were filed in the region from July 2023 through June 2024.¹⁸ Contra Costa and Alameda were among the top three counties for the highest rates and highest absolute numbers of eviction. When adjusted for renter population, Solano, Contra Costa and Alameda counties had the highest rates of eviction lawsuits compared to other counties. Alameda, Santa Clara and Contra Costa counties had the highest absolute numbers of evictions, closely followed by San Francisco, Solano and San Mateo counties (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1

Eviction Lawsuit Rates and Totals by County: Jul 2023-Jun 2024

Sources: California Judicial Council 2025 Court Statistics Report, 2019-2023 American Community Survey Census

Rate is calculated by dividing the number of eviction lawsuits by the total number of renter households in each county. For example, a rate of 3.3% means that 1 in 30 renter households faced an eviction.



Eviction Rates Over Time

Trends over time show a dramatic drop in evictions when various COVID-19 eviction moratoria and emergency rental assistance programs were in effect, followed by a rapid increase as these moratoria phased out and available rental assistance has declined (Figure 2).

In the period from July 2023 to June 2024 evictions matched or exceeded pre-pandemic levels in eight of the nine counties (Figures 2 and 3). Sonoma was the only county with a lower rate and the difference is small. San Mateo, Santa Clara and Napa counties had higher post pandemic rankings compared with other counties. Figure 3 below illustrates the differences between years and counties.

FIGURE 2

Eviction Lawsuit Filed by County: Jul 2015-2016 to Jul 2023-Jun 2024

Sources: California Judicial Council Court Statistics Reports

Top to bottom:

- Napa
- Marin
- Sonoma
- San Mateo
- Solano
- San Francisco
- Contra Costa
- Santa Clara
- Alameda

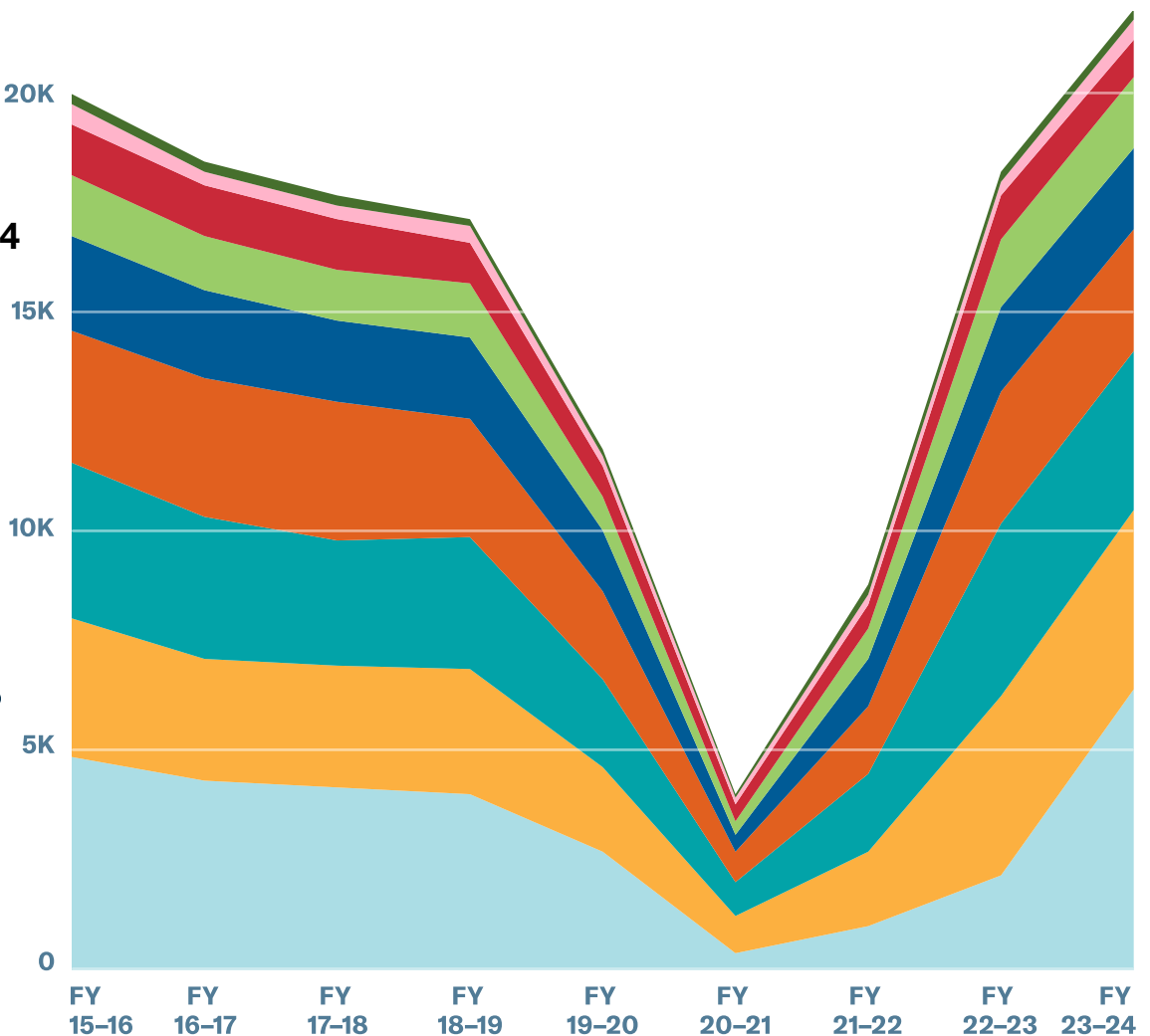
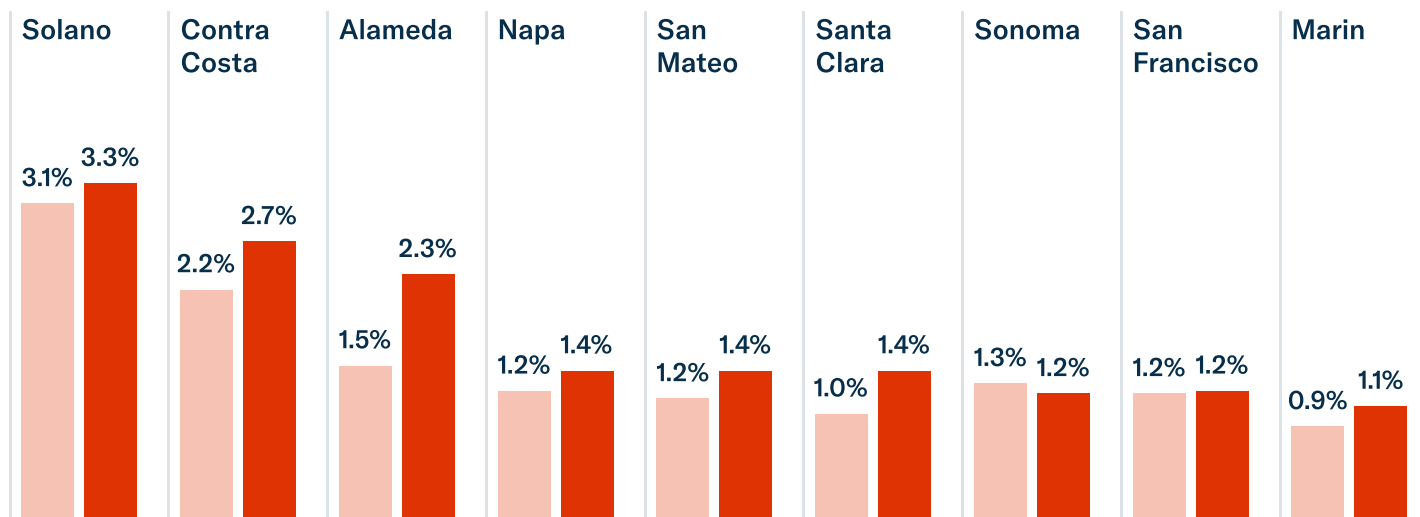


FIGURE 3

Eviction Lawsuit Rates by County: Jul 2018–Jun 2019 vs Jul 2023–Jun 2024

Sources: California Judicial Council 2020, 2025 Court Statistics Reports, CJC Court Statistics Dashboard; 2019–2013 American Community Survey Census

■ Jul 2018–Jun 2019
■ Jul 2023–Jun 2024



It remains unclear whether the spike in eviction lawsuits represents a continuation of a post-pandemic adjustment due to temporarily suppressed evictions or a longer-term trend. However, tenant legal service providers surveyed for this study reported that in most counties, eviction patterns have changed beyond landlords “catching up” on evictions post moratoria. Tenant legal aid organizations reported that many tenant households they serve have not recovered financially from the pandemic, and that some landlords are less willing to negotiate if a tenant falls behind on rent than they were prior to the pandemic. Rental assistance and emergency housing vouchers, which became more widely available during the pandemic due to federal emergency funds, are running out throughout the state.¹⁹ Legal aid providers report that together these factors make it more challenging to help tenants who are behind on rent to remain in their homes. The long-term effects of these pandemic-related disruptions continue to evolve.

Geographic Distribution of Evictions

A goal of this research was to understand the prevalence of eviction lawsuits based on location. As referenced above, BAHFA received limited data from the courts in Marin, Napa, Santa Clara and Solano counties — and thus cannot track eviction lawsuits in these counties by ZIP code. This lack of standardized locational data limits the ability to fully understand regional geospatial trends in eviction lawsuits.

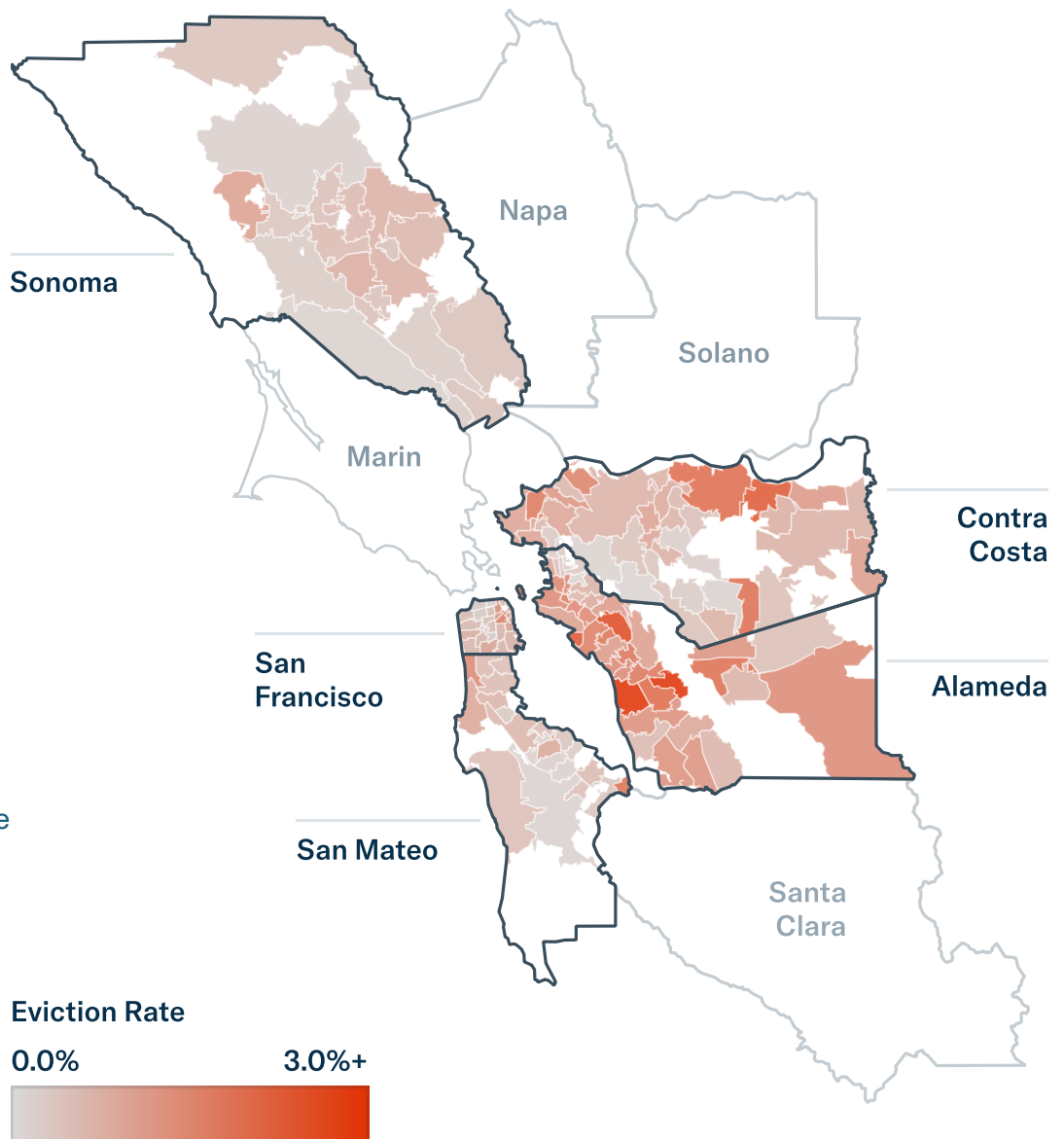
FIGURE 4

Eviction Lawsuit Rates by ZIP Code: Jul-Dec 2023

Sources: County Superior Court Administrative Data

Includes ZIP codes with at least 500 renter households. Time period chosen due to eviction moratoria ending in summer 2023 in Alameda County and San Francisco. Santa Clara, Marin, Solano and Napa counties did not submit requisite data to be included.

White sections of the map correspond to areas where no ZIP codes-level was provided or where a ZIP code contains below 500 renter households.



Data in the counties included in this analysis indicate potential trends that merit further research pending additional data availability. Historically low-income areas such as Richmond, Daly City, East Palo Alto, the South of Market neighborhood of San Francisco and East Oakland show higher rates of eviction in the map above (Figure 4). This finding could reflect a general correlation between eviction rates and ZIP codes with gentrification pressures and lower-than-average incomes.

Separately, there are higher eviction rates in some suburban eastern and northeastern areas of the region that have also experienced increasing suburban poverty rates. Over the past 25 years, poverty rates in some Bay Area suburbs have been on the rise as low-income people have left high cost areas of the region.²⁰ Increasing costs of living have spurred this demographic shift as people seek lower rents in outer areas like Solano, Contra Costa and more affordable parts of Alameda County. However, these areas often have fewer tenant protections and services for tenants. According to Judicial Council data, Solano County has the region's highest eviction rate (3.27%), followed by Contra Costa (2.71%). One quarter of the region's evictions were in Solano and Contra Costa counties from July 2023-June 2024, even though these two counties house only 16% of the region's renter households.

Causes of Eviction Notices

This research sought to understand the rationale for why tenants are being evicted across the region. The “cause” of an eviction is the legal reason cited by the landlord to evict the tenant.²¹ Generally, eviction lawsuits must state the cause for the eviction alleged by the landlord; however, Bay Area courts do not record the stated cause as a separate field in their data management systems and thus regionwide cause data could not be analyzed for this study.

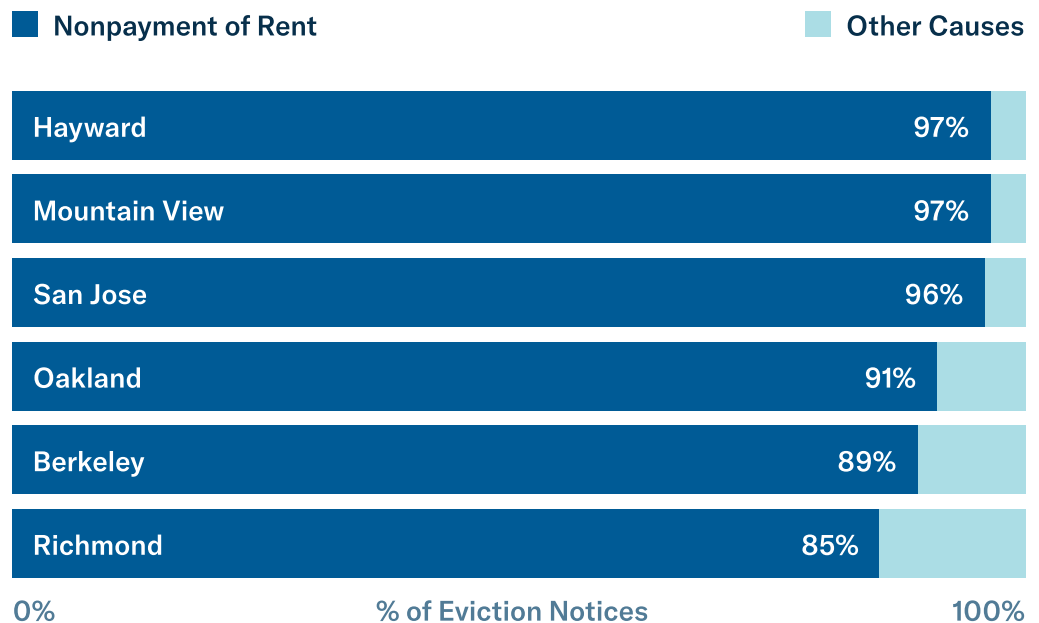
The only comprehensive data on eviction causes obtainable at the time of the study comes from locally administered programs in Berkeley, Hayward, Mountain View, Oakland, Richmond and San Jose.²² These cities require landlords to file all eviction notices with local agencies, who record and track

both the number and causes stated in the notices. Reliable data from all cities was not provided for the pre-pandemic era, and some (but not all) of these jurisdictions had local eviction moratoria that extended until summer 2023; therefore, the data in Figure 5 below encompass only July through December 2023 to ensure appropriate cross-jurisdictional comparison.²³ Given data limitations and the predominance of non-payment notices, this report distinguishes only between nonpayment and all other causes for eviction. Other causes include both at-fault and no-fault evictions such as owner move-ins, removal of a unit from the rental market (Ellis Act) and substantial renovations.

FIGURE 5

Causes of Eviction in City Notice Data: Jul-Dec 2023

Sources: San Jose, Mountain View, Hayward, Oakland, Berkeley, and Richmond Housing Departments



As seen in Figure 5, nonpayment was the cause cited in most eviction notices in these cities, representing 85-97% of all notices. Only two of the cities tracked the amount of rent demanded in nonpayment eviction notices: San Jose and Hayward. The median amount of rent demanded in the nonpayment notices (\$2,469 in San Jose and \$2,307 in Hayward) was slightly less than the median cost of one month's rent in each city. Because not every eviction notice proceeds to an eviction lawsuit, these data do not necessarily demonstrate precise rates for which nonpayment is the cause of eviction lawsuits. These local eviction notice data are, however, some of the best available indicators of the relative causes of eviction activity at a multijurisdictional scale across the Bay Area.

The predominance of nonpayment in local eviction notice data is consistent with a 2025 report from the Stanford Community Law Clinic analyzing eviction lawsuits between 2019 and 2023 in San Mateo county.²⁴ Stanford researchers obtained special permission from the court to confidentially access case-level data for every eviction lawsuit filed in the county. Researchers coded and compared case data from the year prior to COVID-19 (2019) to the year after the expiration of eviction moratoria in the county (2023) to understand pre- and post-pandemic trends. In both years, nonpayment was by far the most common cause of eviction, and the rate of nonpayment cases rose significantly over time: 78.4% in 2019 vs. 85.5% in 2023.

Research from other parts of the state and nation has found that nonpayment of rent is the most common reason cited for evictions.²⁵ For example, in Los Angeles between February 2023 and November 2024, 94% of eviction notices filed with the city were for nonpayment of rent.²⁶ The high prevalence of nonpayment in the reported data and the consistency with which this finding is made across geographies point to macro socio-economic trends linking the unaffordability of housing to evictions.

Rate of Default Judgments

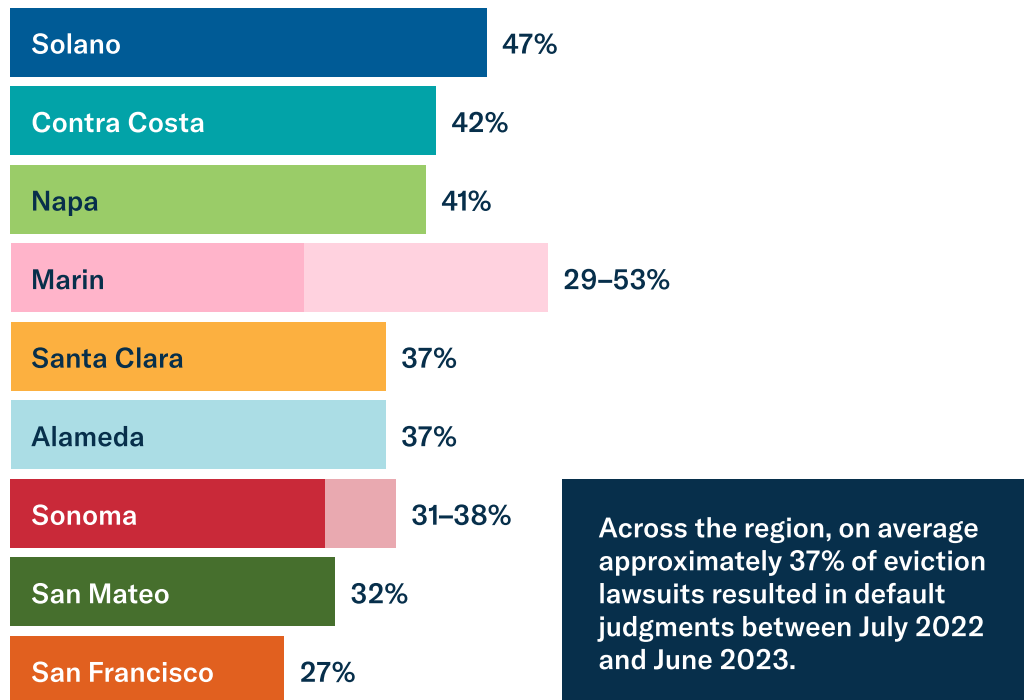
Default judgments occur when a tenant does not formally respond to the notification of an eviction lawsuit. Tenants who fail to respond generally lose the ability to contest the eviction. There are a variety of reasons why a default may occur. Interviewees from legal aid providers and tenant service organizations cited several common reasons, including tenants lacking knowledge of their rights, lacking the resources to respond, fearing engagement with the legal system, or time constraints due to work, childcare or other barriers.²⁷

The primary “outcome” data recorded by courts is whether a judge issues a writ of possession to return the property to the landlord. **According to eviction lawsuit data in five of the nine counties, 95% of default judgments resulted in a writ of possession issued versus 21% of cases where a tenant responded.**²⁸ Because default judgments tend to occur

within 60 days of filing an eviction lawsuit, they are not subject to state eviction sealing laws and are typically reported on the tenant’s record,²⁹ making it more difficult to find new housing.

FIGURE 6
Estimated Eviction Lawsuit Default Rates by County: Jul 2022-Jun 2023

Sources: California Judicial Council (Santa Clara, Sonoma); Stanford Community Law Clinic (San Mateo); County Superior Court Administrative Data (Sonoma, Marin, Solano, Contra Costa, Napa, Alameda, San Francisco). Ranges used where data sources conflict (Sonoma) or are ambiguous (Marin).³⁰



Across the region, on average approximately 37% of eviction lawsuits resulted in default judgments between July 2022 and June 2023. Default rates ranged from 47% in Solano county to 27% in San Francisco.

Tenant legal services capacity appears correlated with the rate of default judgment in each county. San Francisco has the highest investment in tenant counseling and rental assistance in the region, and it is the only jurisdiction in the Bay Area with a “right to counsel” in eviction cases; it also has the lowest default rate.³¹ At the opposite end of the spectrum, Solano County’s default rate is the the highest in the region and Solano has among the lowest percentage of low-income renter households served by tenant legal services. It is beyond the scope of this study to evaluate whether there is a causal relationship between the availability of tenant legal services and default rates in eviction lawsuits, but the strong correlation may warrant future local and regional consideration.

Rates of Landlord and Tenant Representation in San Francisco and San Mateo

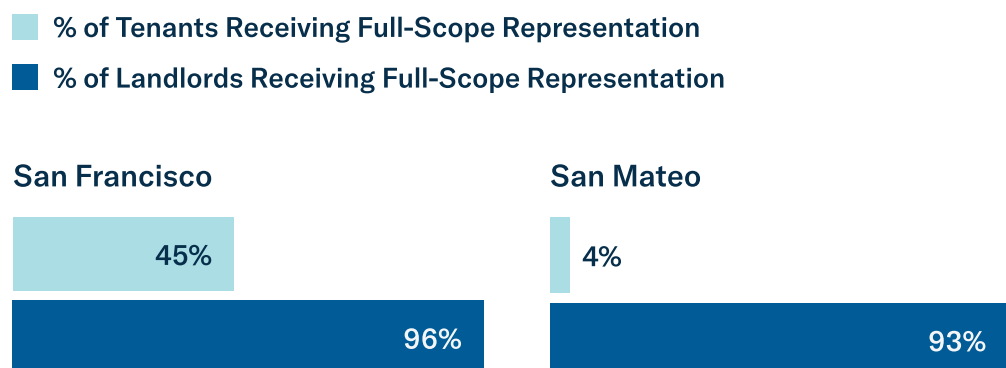
Given the complexity of housing law and accelerated pace of eviction proceedings in California, attorneys are important for both landlords and tenants to navigate the process. Court data in each county theoretically tracks whether tenants and landlords were represented in an eviction lawsuit,³² however the data received for this study generally were not reliable enough to conduct this analysis at the regional level. While five counties — Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo and Sonoma — provided data on representation, this report only used data from San Francisco and San Mateo in this analysis.³³ The data from Alameda, Contra Costa and Sonoma counties were excluded due to issues with inconsistent field values, ambiguous data definitions and procedural differences, respectively.

In San Francisco and San Mateo County, landlords were far more likely to be represented than tenants (Figure 7). In San Francisco, 45% of tenants were represented compared to 96% of landlords. The relatively high rate of tenant representation in San Francisco is attributable to the tenant right to counsel program, which is the only such program in the region.³⁴ In San Mateo, only 4% of tenants facing eviction were represented compared to 93% of landlords. This aligns with national rates of representation, where on average 4% of tenants and 83% of landlords are represented in eviction cases.³⁵

FIGURE 7

Tenant & Landlord Representation in Eviction Lawsuits in San Francisco and San Mateo: Jul 2022-Jun 2023

Sources: County Superior Court Administrative Data



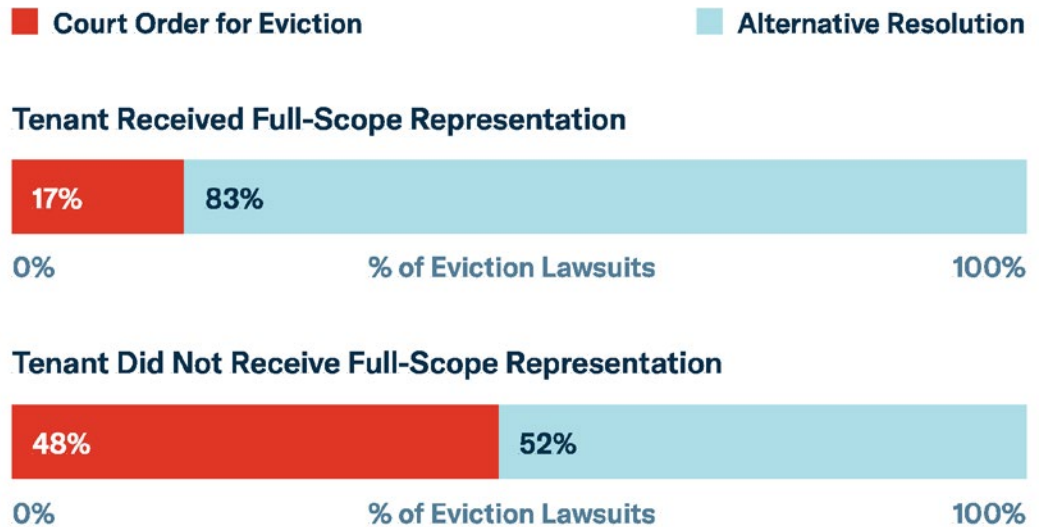
Eviction Outcomes and Tenant Representation

Data from San Francisco and San Mateo reveal a correlation between the likelihood that a judge issues a court order for eviction and whether a tenant receives legal representation (Figure 8). **From July 2022-June 2023, judges in these counties issued court orders for eviction 48% of the time when the tenant was not represented, and 17% of the time when a tenant did have representation.** Most cases that do not end in court orders for eviction are resolved through alternative means, most commonly settlement agreements that either allow tenants to stay in their homes or provide more favorable terms for moving out.

FIGURE 8

Eviction Lawsuit Outcomes by Tenant Representation in San Francisco and San Mateo County: Jul 2022-Jun 2023

Sources: County Superior Court Administrative Data



Such correlation, while notable, does not necessarily prove causation. In San Mateo County, there are not enough tenant legal service providers to offer representation in all eviction cases. Providers report that they often triage by offering full scope representation in cases where tenants have the strongest legal defenses and the efforts of legal aid attorneys are more likely to make a difference in preserving tenancies. This triaging practice could skew the data and contribute to the correlation. In contrast, however, San Francisco data do not contain the same selection bias because the right to counsel program does not prioritize cases based on merit. Further research is warranted to better understand the impact of tenant legal services on eviction case outcomes, diving deeper into the strong correlation found in these data.³⁶

Disproportionate Rates of Eviction in the Bay Area

Bay Area Evictions Disproportionately Occur in Neighborhoods with High Proportion of Tenants of Color, Female-Headed Households and Families with Children.

Prior local and national studies have found that women and people of color are disproportionately impacted by eviction regardless of income. A 2016 San Mateo County study based on case data from local legal aid organizations found that while Latino/a/e/x people comprised 25% of the population, they represented 49% of those who received eviction-related legal services; similarly Black residents comprised 2.5% of the population but represented over 21% of those who received eviction-related legal services.³⁷ Nationally, the Eviction Lab at Princeton University has published evidence that tenants of color, especially Black tenants, are the most disproportionately impacted by evictions, and all indigenous and non-Black people of color are also disproportionately impacted.³⁸ The Center for American Progress has also reported on these trends and found that Black women are at the highest disproportionate risk of eviction.³⁹

The data used for this study does not include per-case demographic information. Instead, the study compares eviction rates in census tracts to the demographic makeup of that census tract, setting thresholds to understand whether eviction rates were correlated with demographic indicators. Sheriff lockout data was used as it is the only source available for all counties with full addresses, allowing for a more precise analysis at the census tract level (more granular than at the ZIP code level). Because not all eviction cases make it to this lockout stage, these data represent a subset.

Findings from this analysis were consistent with previous local and national research. Bay Area census tracts with high proportions of renters of color, female-headed households and households with children face higher rates of eviction by sheriff lockout.

Disparities by Race and Ethnicity	<p>Renters in census tracts with majority renters of color were 78% more likely to experience a sheriff lockout than those in white-majority renter census tracts.</p> <p>Renters in census tracts with a higher proportion of Black renters (more than 14%) were 63% more likely to experience a sheriff lockout than those in other tracts.⁴⁰</p> <p>Renters in census tracts with a higher proportion of Latino/a/e/x renters (more than 40%) were 65% more likely to experience a sheriff lockout than those in other tracts.⁴¹</p>
Disparities by Gender	<p>Renters in census tracts with a higher proportion of female-headed renter households (more than 25%) were 65% more likely to have a sheriff lockout than those in other tracts.⁴²</p>
Disparities by Family Status	<p>Renters in tracts with a higher proportion of renter households with children (more than 30%) were 35% more likely to have a sheriff eviction than those in other tracts.⁴³</p>

Source: Sheriff Lockout Data, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

Evictions in the Bay Area Disproportionately Occur in MTC Equity Priority Communities.

The study also compared eviction rates in and outside of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission’s Equity Priority Communities (EPCs).⁴⁴ EPCs are census tracts that have a significant concentration of underserved populations due to their socioeconomic status or identity. Prevalence of eight demographic variables are combined to construct this index: people of color, low-income, limited-English proficiency, seniors 75 years and over, zero-vehicle households, single-parent families, people with a disability and rent burdened households.

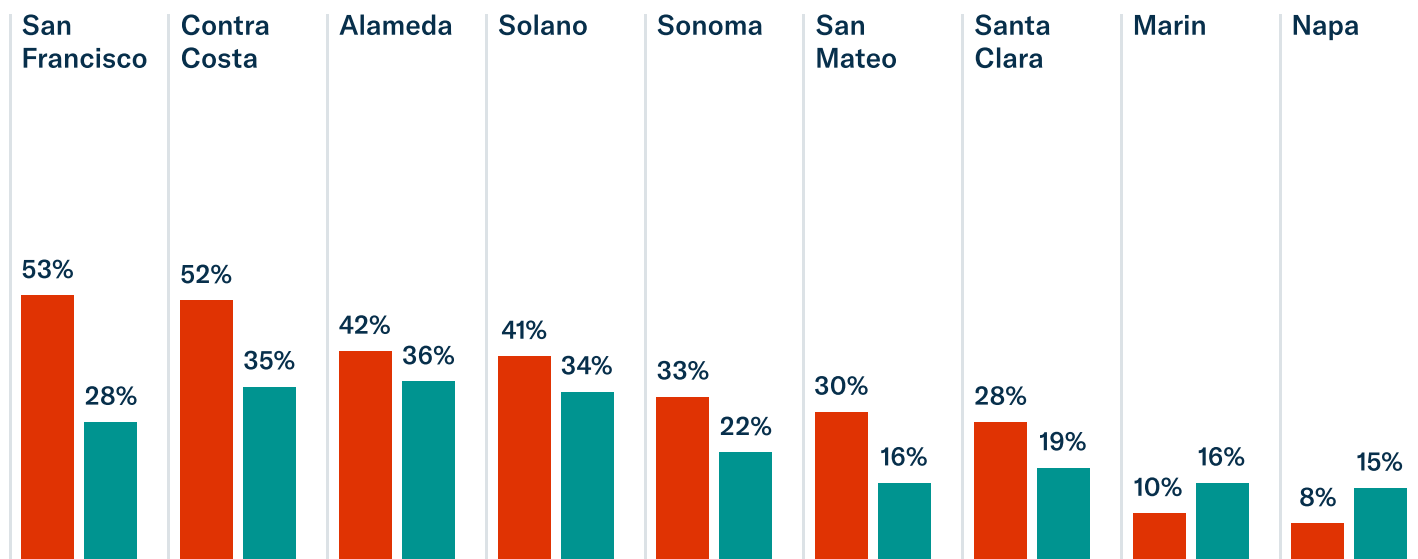
FIGURE 9

Sheriff Lockouts in MTC Equity Priority Communities: 2023*

Sources: MTG Plan Bay Area 2050+ Equity Priority Communities, Sheriff Lockout Data

*2022 data used for San Francisco due to data availability. 2023 data used for all other counties

■ % of Total Lockouts Located in EPC Tracts
 ■ % of Total Renter Households Located in EPC Tracts



Sheriff lockouts are disproportionately located in EPCs in seven of the nine counties — all but Marin and Napa (Figure 9). While only 27% of all Bay Area renter households live in Equity Priority Communities, 39% of sheriff lockouts happened in them. For example, 53% of sheriff lockouts in San Francisco happened in EPCs, where only 28% of renter households live. In Contra Costa County, even though only 35% of renter households live in EPCs, 52% of all sheriff lockouts in the county occurred in these areas.

Conclusion

The Bay Area Eviction Study highlights the need for local and regional solutions to better track evictions across the region and to help tenants secure and remain in safe and affordable housing.

Improvements to Data Collection and Availability

The partial, inconsistent and occasionally unreliable data collected from a variety of sources for this study underscore the need for significant improvements in eviction data collection and management in the Bay Area.⁴⁵ High-quality data is important to ensure that policymakers can evaluate the scale and nature of eviction pressures in their communities. It is also needed to design, implement and evaluate local and state-level tenant protection programs. Two areas for improvement identified through this study include:

- 1. Increase the quality, quantity and availability of court eviction data.** The California Judicial Council already serves as a centralized reporting agency for the County Superior Courts but the data it receives is significantly limited. Efforts could be made to include more detailed and consistent case information including geography (e.g., ZIP code, city, etc.), whether the parties had legal representation, the stated cause of eviction, case dispositions and timing of filings by date or month. Such improvements to data collection and management would require investments to enhance the reporting capabilities of the courts and the Judicial Council, including additional staff positions and/or technology upgrades.

2. Improve coordination and communication across government agencies and courts to support data-driven policy and programs.

For example, improved coordination would allow housing departments formulating anti-displacement interventions to communicate with court administrators (and vice versa) to design and evaluate programs that are appropriate for the unique needs faced by renters in their communities.

Role for Regional Leadership

BAHFA's legislative mandate includes the ability to raise resources through voter-approved ballot measures across the nine counties to advance affordable housing production, preservation and tenant protections. From such a regional measure, at least 5% of revenue would fund tenant protection programs,⁴⁶ including emergency rental assistance, tenant legal services, tenant education, technical assistance and data tracking. Such programs could directly address eviction challenges and gaps identified in this report. Prior to a successful revenue measure, BAHFA can continue to play a leadership role at the regional scale in coordination with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments by providing technical assistance, coordinating across jurisdictions and tracking information.

Endnotes

- 1 The Bay Area Housing Finance Authority (BAHFA) was established by the California Legislature in 2019. See California Government Code section 64500 et seq.
- 2 Fung, L., Remor, I., Fallon, K. & Holland N. (2023). [Masking the Scarlet ‘E’](#). Urban Institute.
- 3 See California Code of Civil Procedure section 1161.2.
- 4 Tenant screening companies commonly scrape public eviction data that include eviction filings, even if a tenant was not found at fault. Such screening companies then package the data and sell it to landlords who are considering applicant pools for a particular rental unit on the market. See: Dada, T. & Duarte, N. (2022). [Tenant Screening Companies Profit from Eviction Records, Driving Housing Insecurity](#). Shelterforce.
- 5 Cheng, F. (2021). [Why It’s So Hard to Gauge the Extent of California’s Eviction Crisis](#). New America; Mello, F. (2025). They tried to pay their overdue rent. Their landlord wouldn’t accept it. CalMatters.
- 6 See, e.g., Brodie, J., & Zack, L. (2025). [Evictions in San Mateo County: 2019 and 2023](#). Stanford Community Law Clinic, Stanford Law School; Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County; Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto, & The Anti-Eviction Mapping Project. (2016). [San Mateo County Eviction Report: 2016](#). San Francisco Foundation; Werth, A. (2022). [Unrepresented: A Report on Eviction Court Watch in Contra Costa County](#). East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy.
- 7 During COVID-19, eviction moratoria were temporarily implemented across the nation as a public health measure to facilitate compliance with “shelter in place” orders and reduce disease transmission that could have been caused by court processes and relocations. See, e.g., Leifheit et al. [Expiring Eviction Moratoriums and COVID-19 Incidence and Mortality](#). American Journal of Epidemiology. 2021 Dec 1; 190(12):2503-2510. In California, this resulted in multiple overlapping eviction moratoria at the statewide, county, and in some cases the city level. The patchwork of pandemic-related eviction moratoria applicable in the Bay Area wound down between 2022 and 2023. Specifically, the statewide eviction moratorium ended in June 2022. The last remaining local eviction moratorium, in Alameda County, San Francisco and Richmond extended until summer 2023. By the end of summer 2023, all pandemic-related eviction moratoria in the Bay Area had ended.

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- 8 National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel. (November 2024). [Eviction Representation Statistics for Landlords and Tenants Absent Special Intervention](#).
- 9 See, e.g., Waldinger, D. (2024). [Regulating Evictions: The Role of Landlords](#). Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research, Gromis, A., Fellows, I., Hendrickson, J. R., Edmonds, L., Leung, L., Parton, A., & Desmond, M. (2022). [Estimating eviction prevalence across the United States](#). Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 119(21).
- 10 The judicial proceedings for “unlawful detainers” have their own special state statutes: California Code of Civil Procedure Sections 1159 to 1179a. Local “just cause for eviction” laws can regulate the substantive bases for eviction but generally cannot alter the state-determined court eviction process. See [Birkenfeld v. City of Berkeley \(1976\) 17 Cal.3d 129](#). Similarly, federal law offers certain rights to tenants who receive some form of federal assistance, though these protections generally do not alter the procedural requirements of state eviction statutes. While the technical legal term of an eviction case is “unlawful detainer,” this report uses the terms “eviction lawsuit” and “court eviction” for ease of understanding.
- 11 The City of Alameda, Berkeley, East Palo Alto, Hayward, Marin County (for unincorporated areas), Mountain View, Oakland, Richmond, San Francisco, and San Jose collect notice data. However, comparable cause of action data from four of these jurisdictions was not available. The City of Alameda and San Francisco do not collect data on nonpayment notices. East Palo Alto digitized their data to share for this study; however, when it was entered electronically cause data were omitted from the notices. Marin County unincorporated area data were too small of a sample size to be used.
- 12 See Assembly Bill 2347 (Kalra, 2024). During the study period, the operative timeline was five days.
- 13 With legal representation it is technically possible to successfully argue a Motion to Set Aside the Judgment, but this is not a typical outcome.
- 14 Less often, a case will be resolved by a dispositive motion before trial.
- 15 Van Dijk, W, Humphries J, Collinson R, Mader N, Reed D, Tennenbaum, D. (2024). [Eviction and Poverty in American Cities](#). Tobin Center for Economic Policy; Ramphal B, Keen R, Okuzuno SS, Ojogho D, Slopen N. (2023). Evictions and Infant and Child Health Outcomes: A Systematic Review. JAMA Network Open. 6(4):e237612; Hoke N, Boen C. (2021) [The health impacts of eviction: Evidence from the national longitudinal study of adolescent to adult health](#). Social Science and Medicine, Elsevier.
- 16 These estimates come from the Milwaukee Area Renters Study, designed by eviction researcher Matthew Desmond, and American Housing Survey, administered by the U.S. Census Bureau. See Sabiha Zinulbhai and Nora Daly. January 20, 2022. [Informal Eviction: Measuring Displacement Outside the Courtroom](#). New America.
- 17 For more information about the local regulatory and administrative landscape for eviction data in the Bay Area, see endnote 11.

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- 18 This analysis uses California Judicial Council data for fiscal year 2023-24 (July 2023 to June 2024) to capture the landscape after the end of eviction moratoria, some of which extended into the summer of 2023.
- 19 The California Rent Relief Program closed on March 31, 2022. Other programs continued locally, however as reported in CalMatters in March 2025, emergency housing vouchers and other resources funded by the federal government during the COVID-19 pandemic will not be renewed.
- 20 Soursourian, M. (2012). [Suburbanization of poverty in the Bay Area](#). Community Development Research Brief, San Francisco Federal Reserve. (January), 1-17; Samara, T. R. (2016). [Race, Inequality, and the Resegregation of the Bay Area](#). Urban Habitat. Pan, A. Q., Deakin, E., & Shaheen, S. A. (2023). [Crabgrass confinement: Housing and transportation challenges of low-and moderate-income suburban residents in the San Francisco Bay Area](#). Case Studies on Transport Policy. Vol 14.
- 21 Previously, landlords did not always have to state the rationale for an eviction; absent local just cause for eviction laws, landlords could issue “no cause” eviction notices with 30-60 days’ notice. This changed with the Tenant Protection Act of 2019, which imposed a statewide just cause for eviction requirement on qualifying tenancies.
- 22 For more information about the local regulatory and administrative landscape for eviction data in the Bay Area, see endnote 11.
- 23 At the time of information requests for this study, data from all city programs was only consistently available through the period ending December 2023.
- 24 Brodie, J, & Zack, L. (2025). [Evictions in San Mateo County: 2019 and 2023](#). Stanford Community Law Clinic, Stanford Law School.
- 25 Waldinger, D. (2024) [Regulating Evictions: The Role of Landlords](#). Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research; see also Groomis, A. et al., (2022). [Estimating eviction prevalence across the United States](#). Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 119, e2116169119.
- 26 Cited in Stanford Law School Law and Policy Lab. (2025). [WIN-WIN Paying Landlords & Keeping Californians Housed](#).
- 27 See also Brenner, R, Gould, I, House S, Lochlead E, O’Regan E. (2023). [Half the Battle is Just Showing](#). New York University Furman Center.
- 28 Due to incomplete datasets Marin, Napa, Solano and Santa Clara counties were not included in this analysis.
- 29 See endnotes 4 and 5.
- 30 The Santa Clara Superior Court did not provide a complete dataset (e.g., missing half of expected cases and several key fields) and thus the Judicial Council was the only source available. For San Mateo County, the rate is taken from the 2025 Stanford Community Law Clinic study given the unique dataset their researchers obtained. Note that in fiscal year 2022-23, San Mateo Superior Court reported a 43% default rate to the Judicial Council. For Sonoma County, a range is provided based on the 30% default rate reported in Superior Court data vs. 43% reported to the Judicial Council. In Marin, a range has been estimated from Superior Court data because the court’s

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disposition categorization system could not be easily attributed to default judgments. Rates for all other counties (Solano, Contra Costa, Napa, Alameda and San Francisco) are as reported by the local Superior Courts. All rates are for fiscal year 2022-23 except for San Mateo County, which is for calendar year 2023.

- 31 The impact of right to counsel on default rates has been seen elsewhere. In New York City, default rates decreased 34% from 2013-19; right to counsel was passed in 2017 and was phased in over subsequent years. See [NYC Office of Civil Justice 2019 Annual Report](#). (2019). New York City Human Resources Division, Department of Social Services.
- 32 Representation in this context refers to full scope representation. Many tenant legal services organizations also provide limited scope representation in court for specific aspects of a case, and this more limited form of representation is generally not reflected in court data.
- 33 San Francisco's robust services ecosystem and right to counsel program have enabled more reliable data on representation rates. Representation rates for San Mateo County as provided by the Superior Court were deemed reliable given consistency with independent verification from the 2025 Stanford Community Law Clinic Report. Stanford researchers determined a tenant representation rate of 4.8% in calendar year 2023 (compared to 4% from court-provided data for fiscal year 22-23) and landlord representation rate of 92.7% in calendar year 2023 (compared to 93% from court-provided data for fiscal year 22-23). See Brodie, J, & Zack, L. (2025). [Evictions in San Mateo County: 2019 and 2023](#). Stanford Community Law Clinic, Stanford Law School. The rates provided by the Superior Court are used in Figure 6 to enable consistency of data sources across San Mateo and San Francisco.
- 34 Note that while San Francisco's tenant right to counsel program might suggest near-universal representation, 27% of cases in San Francisco result in default judgments and, based on data from the Eviction Defense Collaborative, most of the remaining 28% of cases received limited scope representation due to lack of capacity for full-scope representation. Limited scope representation is not recorded in court data in San Francisco.
- 35 National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel. [Eviction Representation Statistics for Landlords and Tenants Absent Special Intervention](#). Last updated November 2024.
- 36 The 2025 Stanford Community Law Clinic study of evictions in San Mateo County includes a similar finding that may extend to limited scope (vs. full-scope) legal services. Stanford researchers found that the likelihood of a writ issuing decreased substantially when default judgements were removed. The Stanford study observes that "[t]he implications of this could be significant from an access to counsel perspective, because presumably access to an attorney, even a limited scope attorney who helps only with response paperwork, increases the chance that a tenant will file a response. In turn, that filing of a response dramatically decreases the chances of a writ being issued." Brodie, J, & Zack, L. (2025). [Evictions in San Mateo County: 2019 and 2023](#). Stanford Community Law Clinic, Stanford Law School.

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- 37 Created in collaboration with the Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County, Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto (CLSEPA) and the Anti Eviction Mapping Project. (2016). [San Mateo County Eviction Report: 2016](#). San Francisco Foundation.
- 38 Heburn, P, Louis R, & Desmond, M. (2020). [Racial and Gender Disparities Among Evicted Americans](#). The Eviction Lab.
- 39 The Center for American Progress. (2023). [The Disproportionate Burden of Eviction on Black Women](#).
- 40 Census tracts with more than 14% Black renters are in the top 20th percentile for this demographic in the Bay Area.
- 41 Census tracts with more than 40% Latino/a/e/x renters are in the top 20th percentile for this demographic in the Bay Area.
- 42 Census tracts with more than 25% female-headed renter households are in the top 20th percentile for this demographic in the Bay Area.
- 43 Census tracts with more than 30% renter households with children are in the top 20th percentile for this demographic in the Bay Area.
- 44 The Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Association of Bay Area Governments Executive Board jointly govern the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority. The EPC framework is utilized by both agencies in making policy and funding decisions and is updated every four years based on data from the American Community Survey. Note that the EPCs are being updated as part of Plan Bay Area 2050+; this study utilizes EPC layers developed using the American Community Survey vintages 2014-2018 (for Plan Bay Area 2050 & 2050+) and 2018-2022 (for Plan Bay Area 2050+ only). For more information, review the [2050+ EPC Update website](#).
- 45 The data quality challenges with eviction court data are not unique to the Bay Area. See, e.g., Parton, A., Gromis, A., & Desmond, M. (2020). Inaccuracies in Eviction Records: Implications for Renters and Researchers. *Housing Policy Debate*, 31(3-5), 377-394. doi.org/10.1080/10511482.2020.1748084.
- 46 Funding is contingent upon eligibility in the underlying revenue source. For example, BAHFA has authority to propose a general obligation bond, which, pursuant to the state constitution, cannot be used to fund most services and therefore has limited applicability to the enumerated tenant protection programs.



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