



IMPORTANT LEGISLATION BENEFITTING SENIORS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WHO RENT PASSES BOTH THE ASSEMBLY AND THE SENATE

The New York City Department of Finance, the Agency overseeing the administration of the NYC Rent Freeze Programs was successful in getting two critical bills passed in the Assembly and the Senate that will benefit seniors and persons with disabilities who have received the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption and the Disability Rent Increase Exemption better known as SCRIE and DRIE, respectively.

The first bill sponsored by Assemblymember Steven Cymbrowitz (A7914) and State Senator Diane Savino (S5721) will provide the following:

- Allow current Rent Freeze recipients to be grandfathered in for renewal applications, and evaluated according to the same criteria as in previous years.
- New SCRIE & DRIE recipients, applying on or after July 2, 2015, will have their rent compared to one-third of their household income as required by state law.
- The bill will also allow certain tenants who became briefly ineligible for the Rent Freeze Program to have their frozen rent decreased to its previous level.

The second bill sponsored by Assemblymember Aravella Simotas (A7247) and State Senator Andrew Lanza (S5826-A) allows for the following:

- Household members will be able to take over the benefit of a deceased tenant or a tenant who permanently leaves the household.
- Household members will be required to take over the benefit within six months of the date of death or 90 days from being notified by the Department of Finance, whichever is longer.

"I am very pleased that we have secured legislative relief for seniors who, without this legislation, would have seen their benefits reduced or revoked," said Finance Commissioner Jacques Jiha. "We want to thank the sponsors of these bills who understood the urgency and acted in a timely manner."

SCRIE was established by New York State law in 1970 for tenants in rent-controlled and rent-stabilized apartments. In 1976, eligibility was extended to tenants in Mitchell-Lama apartments. The Department of Finance began administering the SCRIE program for rent-controlled and rent-stabilized apartments in 2009. The Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) has administered the program for Mitchell-Lama properties since its inception. DRIE was established in New York City in 2005 through an amendment of the SCRIE law. The Department of Finance administers DRIE for all qualifying properties.

In May 3, 2014, Mayor Bill de Blasio signed a bill passed by the New York City Council increasing the SCRIE income limit to \$50,000 from \$29,000 after the State Legislature amended the SCRIE law in March 2014. Shortly thereafter, the DRIE law was also amended by the State to permit the income limit to be increased to \$50,000. In August 2014, the Mayor signed a bill passed by the New York City Council that increased the DRIE income limit to \$50,000. Aside from the requirement to live in rent-controlled, rent-stabilized or Mitchell-Lama apartments, those eligible must have a total household income of less than \$50,000 and pay more than one-third of their total household income toward rent.

For more information on the New York City Rent Freeze Programs visit www.nyc.gov/rentfreeze.