

Target Audience:

- Organizers, tenants and lawyers unfamiliar with RTC and the coalition

Goal:

- Overview of the coalition's history
- Contextualizing Right To Counsel as a right—not just a program--and how can it build tenant power
- Logistics of roll out
- Answer questions---clarification!
- Motivate folks to organize and to get involved in the coalition

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Registration

6:00 pm

a. Materials:

- i. One pager on RTC
- ii. FAQ about RTC
- iii. Map of Evictions and rent stabilized Units
- iv. Coalition principles and sign on's
- v. History of RTC one pager and interactive activity
- vi. History of rights
- vii. Sign in Sheets
- viii. Interpretation Equipment

2. Introductions

6:15 pm

- a. Overview and framing--Good evening everyone!!!! Welcome!!! We are so excited to invite you to the citywide teach in on a right to counsel for tenants!!!! Tonight we we are going to give you an overview of the history of the coalition, what this right means for you and tenant power, and where we are today in terms of implementation, answer your questions and commit to the ongoing need to organize!
- b. A couple of quick notes before we get started:
 - i. Bathrooms
 - ii. Interpretation
 1. Language justice
 2. One mic
 3. Please turn off your phones
- c. Ice Breaker: What is a Right
 - i. Now, let's get to know each other!!! Please turn to your neighbor, say your name, where you're from and answer these questions:
 1. What is a right?
 2. What makes a right something special and important?
 - ii. Take a few report backs.

- iii. Roll call--who is here from Manhattan, from the Bronx, from Queens, from Brooklyn....!!!?!
- iv. Welcome!!!! We are excited to be here tonight, as we are able to win the right for tenants to defend their homes---the first law like this in the country! And one of the first laws like this that's been won, not through a lawsuit, but through the power of grassroots organizing!!!! I want to bring up a speaker to say a few words about what the significance of this moment and the significance of having a right.
- v. A few words from the speaker n the meaning of a right

3. On RTC, the History and the Coalition

6:25 pm

- a. So now that we know what a right is--why do we need this right in housing court?
 - i. Show RTC Video, 5 minutes
 - ii. I now want to bring up a few tenant leaders to share their experience in housing court: Testimony about RTC, 2 minutes each
 - 1. Tenant A
 - 2. Tenant B
- b. So, now that we are able to celebrate the passage of this historic legislation, we want to take a few minutes to learn how we got here.

6:35 pm

- i. History Activity--timeline of the campaign
 - 1. Some of you have a piece of bright yellow paper under your chairs! If you do, please find it and pick it up now. Each piece of paper tells a bit of our story as the coalition!!!
 - 2. Each paper is numbered. Who has number 1? Can you please come up and read it out loud? (susanna will tape each paper to the wall as they go). Who has number 2? etc.

4. What Does the Right Mean to You

6:45 pm

- a. What Does the Right Mean to You:
 - i. You are already in your small groups and each small group has a facilitator. In our groups we are going to spend some time looking at how we can make this new law into the right that we need to build power. You'll have about 25 minutes in your small groups. Please designate someone to report back to the larger group at the end. Let's go!!!
 - ii. Small Groups:
 - 1. Facilitators
 - a. How does having and knowing this right help build tenant power for you?
 - b. NYC is going to be the first city in the country having RTC, how do you think this will build tenant power in the city and in the country?

iii. Report Back

7:15 pm

iv. Conclusion

7:25 pm

- 1. There are about 25,000 evictions in this city. 77% of families who were evicted, wouldn't have been if they had had attorneys. That means

landlords evict people not because they are right, but because they have power. RTC shifts that power. Not only will tenants start to win their cases, but we think landlords will stop suing tenants like they have been and this epidemic of evictions that our communities face will start to end. And that creates space for us to fight different battles.

2. Rents are WAY TOO HIGH. Landlords did that. And a lot of us struggle to pay and when we get a little bit behind, we start to think that we lose rights----like the right to live with dignity and respect.
3. RTC reminds us that we have rights. Also, it isn't just about court and evictions. It's about every time you are scared to call 311, to complain to your landlord, to organize in your building. Don't let your landlord threaten you. Don't let yourself think that being behind on your rent is your fault---it's not your fault! It's the fault of a city where housing isn't a right and landlords have too much power. Most everyone's rent is too high---so that's a political problem, not a personal one.
4. Organize your building, know that if your landlord retaliates, you will be defended---not because it's a program but because we, the tenant movement created a NEW RIGHT in this city.
5. Know it. Claim it. And USE it to build tenant power.

5. RTC Roll out

7:30 pm

Ok! So now that we know about the history of the coalition, how we got to where we are today, and how we can use RTC, let's talk a little bit about the logistics of what it will look like.

- a. First, it's being phased in over 5 years, starting on July 1 2017, and by zip code. We don't know what zip codes will be in year 1, but we are negotiating with the city to ensure that RTC has maximum impact and that it starts in the zip codes with the highest amount of evictions and the highest amount of rent stabilized housing.
- b. In addition, we are fighting for there to be an overlay for seniors and for people with disability, regardless of zip code. We are hopeful that might take place in year 2.
- c. By 2022, all NYC tenants will have a right to full legal representation if they make 200% of the poverty line or below, and will have a right to a legal consultation if they make more.
- d. We are still in negotiations with the city about the legislation and making sure that all kinds of cases are covered, like NYCHA administrative hearings, not just the cases that go through housing court. In addition, we are fighting for there to be money for organizing, to support the work in the neighborhoods and make sure all tenants know about this right and how to use it!
- e. We don't know exactly when the bill will pass, but we expect it to pass in June and we are holding June 28th as a possible date for the vote and for the PARTY!
- f. We also want to be clear about expectations:
 - i. It will take time to phase in, work out problems, we want tenants to be actively engaged and giving feedback
 - ii. What it is and what it isn't. It won't solve all displacement issues or all of displacement. It is one tool to combat formal evictions and a strong tool for

- tenants to use to build power to fight informal ones.
- iii. We always still need to organize!

6. Q&A

7:35pm

I know you all must have a few questions. I want to bring up a speaker to help me answer any questions you may have.

7. Call to Action/Closing

7:55 pm

- a. Upcoming Dates/Events
 - i. Sign up on the website for updates!!!!
 - ii. This is just the first of many convenings of this kind

- b. Pledge: Turn to your neighbor and repeat after me (hold hands?):
 - i. I pledge to know my rights, to organize in my neighborhood and to be a good neighbor to you. I pledge to protect you, to fight with you and to build the tenant movement we want and need.