The Apartment Rent Ordinance (ARO) may be found in San José Municipal Code (SJMC) Chapter 17.23, Parts 1-9. The ARO covers most rental apartments built before September 7, 1979 and among other things, limits rent increases to 5% once every 12 months. A key component to implementing provisions of the Apartment Rent Ordinance is the petition process. This section defines the grounds by which tenants and landlords can submit a Petition.

A tenant can submit a petition on the following grounds:
1. Improper rent increase, unauthorized pass through and fees;
2. Housing service reductions or housing code violations;
3. And other violations of the ARO.

A landlord can submit a petition on the following grounds:
1. Rent increase more than the Annual General Increase to obtain a fair return
2. Pass through charge for Specified Capital Improvements.

The following chart provides a summary of the Petition and Hearing Processes. Additional detail regarding the process can be found in the regulations.