

# The New York Times

## Maintenance Rises After Units Are Combined

Q & A

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**Q.** *We recently bought a small studio apartment next to our one-bedroom and created a two-bedroom. We are paying maintenance on the two units as if they had never been combined. There is a similar apartment in the building that has fewer shares — and pays less maintenance — for the same-size apartment as ours. Can we get our maintenance reduced?*

**A.** “The short answer is no,” said **Leonard Ritz**, a Manhattan co-op and condo lawyer. Maintenance payments are based on the number of shares allocated to each apartment, he said, and the share allocations were made when the co-op was formed by the sponsor. “While the size of an apartment is one factor in making the allocations,” **Mr. Ritz** added, “it’s not the only criterion that the sponsor would have used.”

Because shares were issued for the two apartments before they were combined, they cannot be simply eliminated now, even if the total number of shares for the combined apartment is more than the shares allocated to a similarly sized two-bedroom in the building.