

Renter Safety for a Healthy Home

What renters should know about their rights regarding repairs, code violations, etc.

If you rent your home or apartment, enduring subpar, unsafe or unhealthy living conditions should never be part of the deal. As a tenant, you have a right to a safe and healthy home. Laws vary by state, but, in general, renters can expect these legal protections:

Maintenance

Your landlord is expected to address all major repairs that affect your health, safety and quality of life. Major repairs may include: fixing broken appliances, repairing structural problems and installing working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Compensation

If your property owner refuses to fix significant maintenance problems or cover their cost, you may either withhold rent, deduct repair expenses from your rent and/or move without liability.

Privacy

Though your landlord is the ultimate caretaker of the property, he or she must respect your privacy and notify you before entering your home or unit.

Pest Control

A habitable space is one free from pests and vermin. Your landlord should cover expenses relating to infestation problems.

Just Cause

Property owners cannot evict residents without providing ample notice and justification. If you are being evicted without just cause, your landlord must give you 30 to 60 days to move.

Hazard Protection

Your landlord must rid your space of dangerous environmental hazards, such as lead paint, asbestos, mold and radon (a naturally-occurring radioactive material found in soil).



Representation

A tenant's association can help you understand your rights, provide access to legal assistance and hold your landlord accountable for major repairs.



A Contract

Always read your lease carefully before signing, and invest in renter's insurance to help protect your property from theft or damage.



Safety

A burglary spree in your neighborhood should prompt your landlord to take necessary precautions, such as installing lights, security cameras and reinforcing locks.



Cleanliness

Property owners must provide trash receptacles, arrange for trash pickup and ensure all common areas are reasonably clean and hygienic.