



TENANT RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS DURING COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Can I be evicted during the Coronavirus Outbreak?

Currently, there is no federal or state requirement to stop evictions. Some courts in Ohio have temporarily stopped holding evictions. Some courts are holding eviction hearings according to the normal schedule.

If you would like to find out if your county has stopped eviction hearings, please contact your local municipal or county court or contact your local Legal Aid for updated information. If an eviction is filed against you, the court must tell you in writing when your eviction hearing will be scheduled.

Do I still have to pay my rent?

Yes. You are still responsible for paying your rent, even if the court in your area has temporarily stopped eviction hearings. Landlords still have the right to file an eviction against a tenant for nonpayment of rent and an eviction hearing will be scheduled as soon as the current health emergency is over or the court decides it is appropriate. Landlords are not required to accept late rent.

If your landlord agrees to take rent late, ask your landlord to put the agreement in writing. A text message from your landlord will count as writing.

If you get the agreement in a text message, be sure to screenshot the message and save it on a computer, email it to yourself or send it to another electronic database that you can retrieve if you no longer have access to your phone.

? Are landlords allowed to throw away my things or lock me out?

No. Even if your court has temporarily stopped evictions, landlords are not allowed to remove your belongings, change the locks, turn off utilities or do anything to make you leave without first going to court. If a landlord is changing locks, removing belongings, or turning off utilities during this time and no court has ordered you out of your home, you should immediately contact your local law enforcement to report the illegal activity. You can also contact your local Legal Aid office for help.

? What should I do if I need something repaired during the Coronavirus Outbreak?

Landlords are still required to make your property safe and complete necessary repairs. If you need something repaired, you should make your request to your landlord in writing. Save a copy of that request. Your landlord must make the repair within a reasonable time.

“Reasonable time” depends on the situation, but most repairs must be made within 30 days of the request. If your landlord refuses or fails to make the necessary repair, you may have the right to pay your rent into the court using the rent escrow process. Tenants can only use the rent escrow process if they are current on their rent.

If the property is not safe to live in because of the needed repair, and the landlord refuses to make the repair, you may be able to file a claim against your landlord asking for an emergency order.

To talk to an attorney about using the rent escrow process or filing for an emergency order for repairs, please contact The Legal Aid Society of Columbus or Southeastern Ohio Legal Services. Services are free to those who qualify.

We provide free legal services for low-income Ohioans and seniors.

Call us Monday-Friday 9 am - 3:30pm

614.241.2001 (Central Ohio)

800.686.3669 (Southeastern Ohio)

740.383.2161 and 888.301.2411 (Delaware, Marion, Morrow & Union counties)

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