

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:

Rental Housing Basics

Training handout

About the Canadian Centre for Housing Rights (CCHR)

CCHR is Canada's leading organization working to advance the right to housing.
We do this through:



SERVICES

Empowering renters to claim their rights and stay housed.



EDUCATION

Sharing knowledge and tools that transform lives.



POLICY ADVOCACY

Engaging with communities and proposing realistic solutions.



RESEARCH

Creating knowledge and informing evidence-based solutions.



LAW REFORM

Advancing housing rights legal frameworks.

About this handout

This handout was developed for participants of CCHR's training session "Know Your Rights: Rental Housing Basics."

It is intended for use by renters in Ontario, to inform them about their rights in housing and to help them connect with resources to protect their rights.

This document is intended to be used for information purposes only.

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Laws

create

Rights

protected
through

Enforcement

Starting a tenancy

What are some alarms that go off with this advertisement?

“Clean basement apartment, suitable for a married couple with no children.

Tenants must provide 3 months' rent upfront, a \$200 damage deposit, and a \$100 key deposit.

Tenants must also provide a letter from their employer, as proof of income.

Tenants take on all maintenance responsibilities and will make all repairs.

No pets allowed.”

Starting a tenancy

Key takeaways

- Landlords cannot discriminate based on who is in a family or if they are married.
- The only deposits allowed are first and last months' rent and a reasonable key deposit.
- Income is income. Landlords cannot require a certain source of income.
- Landlords must maintain the unit and make all repairs.
- Pet rules are a bit complicated, but generally must be allowed.

Ending a tenancy

What are some alarms that go off with this scenario?

Jasmin enters in a rental agreement for a year.

Her ex finds out where she lives.

Jasmin fears for her safety and tells her landlord that she needs to move.

The landlord says if she leaves she will be on the hook for rent for the rest of the year.

Ending a tenancy

Key takeaways

- Penalties usually apply to broken leases.
- Tenants must always give notice, even if not breaking a lease.
- There are special rules when there is domestic violence or abuse.

Maintenance

What are some alarms that go off with this scenario?

Your friend Sohrab calls you, totally frustrated:

“I need to move! This is such a bad apartment. I have mould in my bathroom and the landlord refuses to clean it. My fridge stopped working and my landlord took six weeks to fix it. The landlord is doing super loud renovations next door at all hours. And my apartment is freezing!”

Maintenance

Key takeaways

- Landlords must do maintenance and repairs in a reasonable amount of time.
- There are rules about heat depending on the time of year.
- Landlords should follow local noise bylaws.

Rent increases

What are some alarms that go off with this scenario?

Sara has been living in her apartment for thirty years.

She pays \$800/month.

Her landlord runs into money problems and tells Sara he needs to increase her rent to \$1600/month, starting next month.

Rent increases

Key takeaways

- For most rentals, landlords can only raise the rent:
 - Once per year
 - With 90 days' notice
 - By the amount set by the province. In 2024 and 2025 that is 2.5%.
- Rental units in buildings occupied *after* November 15, 2018 do not have the 2.5% cap.

Privacy

What are some alarms that go off with this scenario?

Gustav's landlord enters his apartment at 11pm, without warning, to do a "cleanliness inspection."

While he's there, the landlord sees Gustav's brother is staying over. The landlord tells Gustav his brother can't stay overnight in the future because his name is not on the rental agreement.

Privacy

Key takeaways

- Landlords must give 24 hours' written notice of entry.
- Landlords must have reasonable purpose to enter.
- Landlords cannot control who visits your apartment.*

Discrimination

What are some alarms that go off with this scenario?

Yasmeena and Kelly share an apartment but are considering moving. Yasmeena is troubled by their neighbour, who comments on her body and her clothing every time they run into each other on the elevator.

Kelly, who uses a wheelchair, is frustrated that she has to enter the building at the back, near the garbage cans, because there is no ramp at the front.

Discrimination

Key takeaways

- Landlords may be responsible for harassment/discrimination from other tenants.
- Landlords have a “duty to accommodate” needs you have relating to human rights grounds.

Evictions

What are some alarms that go off with this scenario?

Your landlord tells you that you need to move out in two weeks.

He says you don't have any protections against eviction because you never signed a rental agreement.

Plus, he says his daughter is moving back to Ontario and needs somewhere to live.

Evictions

The eviction process

1. Warning
2. Notice of Eviction
3. Application to the Landlord and Tenant Board to Evict
4. Hearing
5. Eviction Order
6. Enforcement by the Sheriff

Evictions

Key takeaways

- You are still protected by the RTA, even if don't have a written lease.
- Landlords can only evict for certain (genuine) reasons.
- Don't sign an agreement to end your tenancy before you get advice.



Getting help

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Preparing to get help

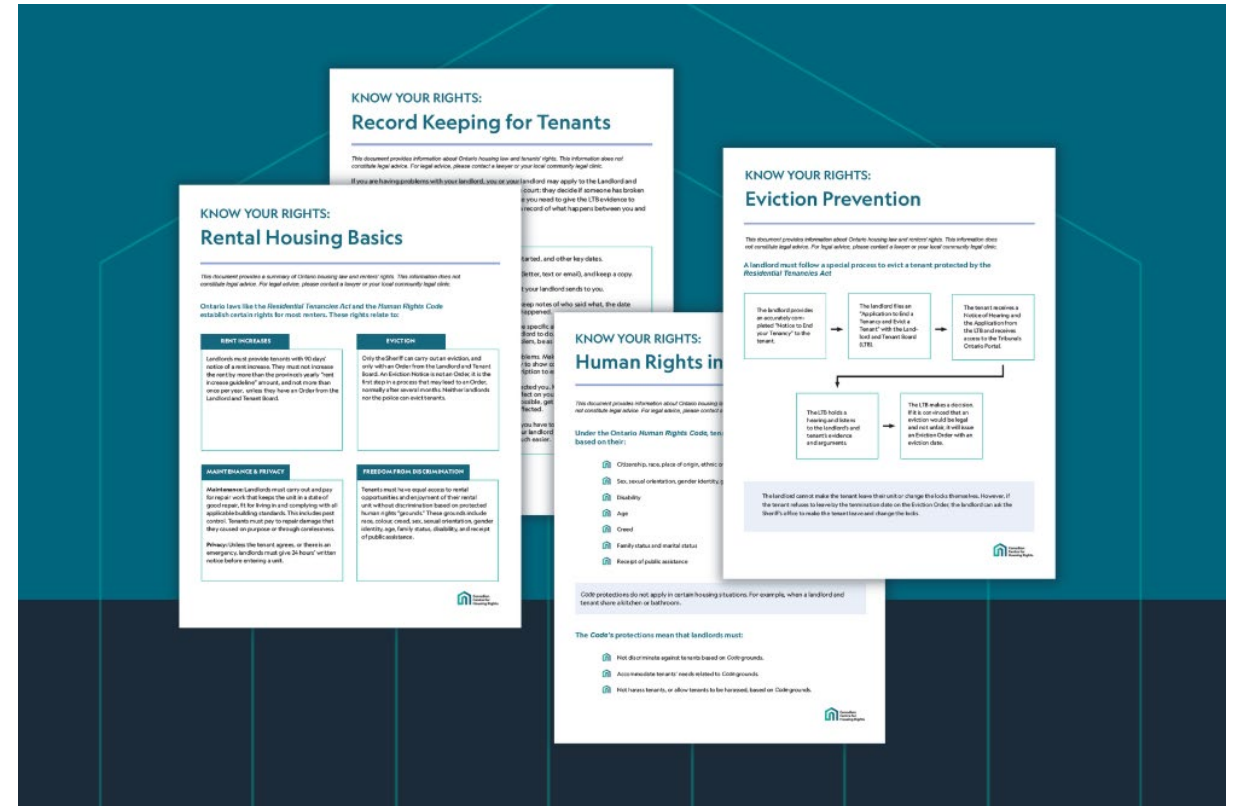
Collect evidence

- In writing
- In photos
- In a timeline

Getting help

Our collection of printable resources provide basic information about Ontario housing law, human rights in rental housing, and renters' rights when facing eviction.

Get the resources



Getting help

Property Standards

- Phone: 311

Canadian Centre for Housing Rights

- Website: housingrightscanada.com
- Phone: 416-944-0087

Rental Housing Enforcement Unit

- Phone: 416-585-7214

Local legal clinic and resources

- Website: legalaid.on.ca/legal-clinics

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Why it's worth it

- Landlords might change course
- Early enforcement might work
- The Landlord and Tenant Board or the Human Rights Tribunal might order:
 - Rent abatements
 - Repair orders
 - Early lease termination (if desired)
 - Other financial compensation

Keep in touch



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