Philly Tenant Resource Guide

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE PHILADELPHIA EVICTION PREVENTION PROJECT





Brought to you by the Philadelphia Eviction Prevention Project

Clarifi
Community Legal Services
Legal Clinic for the Disabled
SeniorLAW Center
Tenant Union Representative Network
Philadelphia VIP

All of the information provided in this guidebook, as well as additional resources and sample letters, is available at www.phillytenant.org.

Call 267-443-2500 to reach the Tenant Aid Referral Line.

Printing supported by the Office of Community Empowerment & Opportunity (CEO). CEO is Philadelphia's Community Action Agency, funded in part by the PA Department of Community and Economic Development.





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WHERE CAN I GO FOR EMERGENCY SHELTER?

Monday-Friday, 7am-3pm

Single Women & Families

Apple Tree Family Center 1430 Cherry St (near Cherry and 15th) 215-686-7150, 7151, 7152, or 7153

Single Men

Roosevelt Darby Center 802 N Broad St (near Broad & Fairmount) 215-685-3700

After 3pm and Weekends

For Families

The Red Shield 715 N Broad St (near Broad & Fairmount) 215-787-2887

For Single Women

House of Passage Kirkbride Center 111 N 48th St (near 48th & Haverford) 215-471-2017 or 267-713-7778

For Single Men

Station House 2601 N Broad St (near Broad & Lehigh) 215-225-9232

Homeless Outreach Hotline at 215-232-1984

Philadelphia Domestic Violence Hotline at 866-723-3014



WHERE CAN I GO FOR RENT OR SECURITY DEPOSIT ASSISTANCE?

Office of Homeless Services (OHS)

- **1430 Cherry Street** (Center City) Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm
- Low-income tenants only.
 Assistance ranges from \$0 \$1500
- Call 215-686-7177 to see if they have funds.

Philadelphia County Assistance Office (CAO)

- 801 Market Street
 Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm
 215-560-1976
- Very low-income tenants only.
 Assistance ranges from \$0 \$400

What should I bring?

- Photo ID for all household members age 18 and over
- Social Security cards and Birth Certificates for all household members
- Proof of Income
 - Pay stubs (for last thirty days)
 - Employment letter (hrs, pay date(s), wages/salary)
 - o Award Letter from Social Security office
 - Any other documentation of income
- Lease Agreement
- Eviction Notice and/or Court Documents

What should I get from my landlord?

- Rental License also called a Housing Inspection License
- Completed IRS W-9 form signed by landlord
- Letter with current balance owed signed and dated by landlord



HOW DO I GET MY LANDLORD TO MAKE REPAIRS?

Docu	ment t	he repair issues.
	Make a	repair request in writing. See a sample letter on
	page 6	
	Take Pi	ictures.
	Get wit	tnesses.
Bring	attent	ion to the repair issues.
	Reques	st an Inspection
	0	Licenses & Inspections. Call 311.
	0	PHA Section 8 Inspection. Call 215-684-3860.
	File a F	air Housing Commission Complaint.
	0	Call 215-686-4670 or go to 601 Walnut St, Ste 300
		South
	Withho	old rent. For serious repair issues only.
	0	Send rent withholding letter to landlord.
	0	Escrow your rent. Open a bank account to deposit
		your rent or keep the rent in a money order.
	Repair	& deduct.
	0	Contact a repair person and ask for an estimate in
		writing for the cost of repair.
	0	Send a letter to landlord with a copy of the
		estimate.
	0	Hire the repair person if the landlord does not
		complete the repairs in a reasonable amount of
		time. Keep the invoice and receipt of payment.
		Make sure the invoice includes a separate line item

Visit www.PhillyTenant.org for more information and sample letters.

for labor and repairs.

RE: REPAIR REQUEST LETTER _____ (Landlord's Name) _____ (Landlord's Address) (Landlord's City, State Zip) ______ (today's date) Dear _____ (landlord name), I am writing to you about repairs and services that are needed in the property I rent from you at: (property address). Here are the problems that need to be fixed: These conditions are serious and a breach of your legal responsibility to keep the unit in safe, sanitary and livable condition. Please complete the requested repairs as soon as possible. If the repairs are not made by ______(future date), I intend to exercise my legal right to: ☐ **Withhold Rent** until the repairs are made. ☐ **Repair and Deduct** by hiring a repair person to complete the repairs and deducting the cost of repairs from my rent. I appreciate your prompt attention to this matter. Sincerely,

Send one copy by Certified Mail/Return Receipt Requested. Send one copy by Regular Mail.

Keep one copy for your records.



HOW DO I GET MY SECURITY DEPOSIT BACK?

The landlord does not have to return your security deposit until 30 days after you move. Here are some recommendations:

Before you move out

- Send landlord a letter with the date that you are moving. Keep a copy.
- Leave the unit as clean as possible.
- Take pictures of each room.
- Do a walkthrough, if possible.

After you move out

- o Return the keys to the landlord.
- Send landlord a Security Deposit Request Letter that includes your forwarding address. Keep a copy of the letter. See a sample letter on page 8.
- Your landlord has 30 days to respond to your request in writing and provide a list of itemized damages your deposit was applied to.
 - If you disagree with your landlord's response, you can sue for your security deposit.
 - If your landlord does not respond at all, you can sue for <u>double</u> your security deposit.

HOW DO I SUE FOR MY SECURITY DEPOSIT?

Be careful! Before you sue your landlord, be sure that you do not owe for rent or damages greater than your security deposit. Here is the process:

- Go to Municipal Court at 1339 Chestnut Street, 10th floor
- Ask to File a Small Claims Complaint. State how much money you are claiming. Include your lease and letters.
- If you are low-income, ask to file a Petition to Proceed In Forma Pauperis (IFP). If the IFP is granted, you will not have to pay filing fees. You may still be responsible for a service fee.

RE: SECURITY DEPOSIT LETTER

	(Landlord's Name)
	(Landlord's Address)
	(Landlord's City, State Zip)
	(today's date)
Dear	(landlord name),
I vacated the property at _	(address
on	(date you moved out). My security
deposit was \$ (sec	curity deposit amount).
money order. ☐ Apply my security	ty deposit to me in a check or deposit as a credit towards a
	that you respond to this request for your attention to this matter.
	(your signature)
	(your name printed)
	(your mailing address1)
	(your mailing address2)
	(your phone)

Send one copy by Certified Mail/Return Receipt Requested. Send one copy by Regular Mail. Keep one copy for your records.



HOW DO I APPLY FOR SUBSIDIZED HOUSING?

What are the main types of subsidized housing?

- 1. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Project-Based Housing
- 2. Low Income Housing Tax Credit Housing (LIHTC)
- 3. Public Housing
- 4. Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher

How can I apply for HUD Project-Based or Low Income Housing Tax Credit Housing?

- Go to www.PAHousingSearch.com and select your county.
- Call each site or go in person to see if they are accepting applications. Many sites have their own waiting lists and applications.
- Submit an application and if you are placed on a waiting list follow up at least once per year. Inform the site if you change your address or phone number.

How can I apply for Public Housing?

- Go to Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) Admissions at 712 N 16th St or call 215-684-4000.
- The waitlist for conventional PHA public housing is **closed**.
- The waitlist for PHA public housing for seniors and people with disabilities is **open**.
- The waitlists for non-PHA public housing are **open**.

How can I apply for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher?

 The waitlist for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program is closed. The waitlist has been closed since March 2010.



WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT DISCRIMINATION?

In matters related to housing, it is illegal in Philadelphia to discriminate on the basis of any of these categories:

Age, Ancestry, Color, Disability, Domestic or Sexual Violence Victim Status, Ethnicity, Familial Status, Gender Identity, Marital Status, National Origin, Race, Religion, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Source of Income

If you believe someone has discriminated against you in a matter related to housing, you can make a complaint.

Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations

601 Walnut St, Suite 300 South 215-686-4670 www.phila.gov/humanrelations

Fair Housing Commission

601 Walnut St, Suite 300 South 215-686-4670 www.phila.gov/fairhousingcommission

Fair Housing Rights Center

444 N 3rd St, Suite 110 215-625-0700 www.fairhousingrights.org

Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission

110 N 8th St, Suite 501 215-560-2496 www.phrc.pa.gov

HUD Discrimination Hotline

1-888-799-2085



WHAT IS THE EVICTION PROCESS?

1. Eviction Notice

You may receive an eviction or lease termination notice telling you when your landlord wants you to move out. If you do not move out by that date, your landlord must take you to court in order to evict you. You are responsible for rent until you move out and return keys.

2. Court Complaint

If you do not move out, the landlord must file an Eviction Complaint against you in Municipal Court to evict you. The Complaint should state the reason your landlord is evicting you and the date and time of the court hearing. The Complaint will be sent to you by the court by mail. It should also be posted to your door **OR** hand delivered by a process server.

3. Hearing

Eviction hearings are in Municipal Court at **1339 Chestnut St**, **6**th **Floor**. You must arrive on time to court, or you may lose. At the hearing you can sign an agreement or speak to the judge. If you are late or miss your hearing, you may file a **Petition to Open** at 1339 Chestnut St, 10th floor.

4. Appeal

If you lose at the hearing, you will have 10 calendar days to file an appeal in the Court of Common Pleas, City Hall, Room 296. The appeal stops an eviction from taking place until the court rules on the case, as long as you pay ongoing rent to the court. If you want to appeal only the **money judgment** (meaning you no longer want to stay in the property), you will have 30 calendar days to file an appeal.

5. Eviction

If you lose in court and do not appeal, or if you break your agreement, then your landlord can legally evict you. Your landlord must file eviction papers with the court (writ of possession and alias writ of possession). The landlord tenant officer cannot change your locks sooner than 21 days after the judgment. If your judgment was for money only, then you may have the right to pay the judgment and stay in the property.



WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO EVICTION COURT?

Any documents that relate to the reason your landlord is trying to evict you. Example: lease, rent receipts, documents related to repair issues, utility bills, photos, letters or texts to or from the landlord.

WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS IN EVICTION COURT?

1. Ask for a continuance.

- You can get the hearing postponed if you need an interpreter.
- You can ask for the hearing to be postponed to get a lawyer, but the landlord may object.

OR

2. Have a hearing in front of a judge.

- You have the right to have a hearing in front of a judge instead of signing an agreement.
- You can present your evidence and defenses to the judge.
- If you lose, you must appeal within 10 days of the judgment if you want to stop the eviction.

OR

3. Sign a Judgment by Agreement.

- Do not sign an agreement unless you agree and can keep it.
- If you sign an agreement, it is final. You cannot appeal.
- If you break the agreement, the landlord can evict you.

If you are late or miss your hearing, you may file a Petition to Open at 1339 Chestnut St, 10th floor.

HOW DO I GET LEGAL HELP?

Call (267) 443-2500 for Tenant Legal Aid Referral Line.

For free legal advice & representation for low-income tenants.

- Live housing counselor 11am-7pm
- · Weekend call backs for emergencies.
- Referrals to:
 - o Tenant Union Representative Network
 - o SeniorLAW Center
 - o AIDS Law Project
 - o Legal Clinic for the Disabled
 - Community Legal Services

Walk-In at one of the following locations:

Community Legal Services – Advice, Referral & Representation 1424 Chestnut St Monday-Thursday, 9am to 12pm

Landlord/Tenant Legal Help Center – Advice, Referral &

Representation

1339 Chestnut Street, 10th floor Monday-Thursday, 9:30am to 2pm

SeniorLAW Center — Walk-in for emergencies only, Age 60+ 2 Penn Center, 1500 JFK Blvd, Suite 1501 Tuesday & Thursday, 9am to 12pm

Elder Justice & Civil Resource Center - Provides services for seniors and the general public in need of legal resources.

Room 278 City Hall Office Hours: Monday-Friday Walk-in or by Appointment 9:00 to 5:00 p.m

(215) 686-7027, (215) 686-7028, (215) 686-7029

https://www.courts.phila.gov/ejc

Get Help from a Paid Lawyer.

Philadelphia Bar Association - Lawyer Referral and Information Services (215) 238-6333 https://lris.philadelphiabar.org

Get Other Help and Information.

Tenant Union Representative Network – Daily tenants' rights workshops (215) 940-3900 www.ourturn.net



HOW DO I GET FREE OVER-THE-PHONE BUDGET COUNSELING FOR TENANTS?



Monday – Thursday 9am-11am

Call 267-765-2711

Schedule a session by phone or at sites all over the city.

Get help improving your credit, creating a budget or reducing your debt.

To prepare for your call:

How much do you ow	e your landlord?
Have you signed a Jud	Igment by Agreement yet in court?
☐ Yes ☐ No	
What is your monthly	income?
•	r check during the month?
How much do you pay	each month for:
Rent	
Car/SEPTA	
Food	
Cellphone	
Electric	
Gas	
Water	
Clothes	
Loans	
Medical	
Credit Cards	
Other costs	

Clarifi help is confidential.

UTILITIES



UTILITY COMPANIES

Gas

Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW)
CRP program can help with gas bills
Emergency 215-235-1212; Non-emergency 215-235-1000
www.pgworks.com

Electric

Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)
CAP rate program can help with electric bills
Non-emergency 800-494-4000; Assistance Programs 800-774-7040
www.peco.com

Water

Water Revenue Bureau (WRB)
TAP program can help with water bills
Emergency 215-685-6300; Non-emergency 215-686-6880

UTILITY ASSISTANCE

Utility Emergency Services Fund (UESF)

215-972-5170

www.uesfacts.org/our-programs/utility-grant-program

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging Emergency Fund

215-765-9040

www.pcacares.org/service_provider/pca-emergency-fund

Low Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Grants to help pay for heating bills from November through March. 215-560-1583

www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/heatingassistanceliheap

UTILITY COMPLAINTS

Pennsylvania Utility Commission (PUC)

PA residents can file complaints against electric and gas utilities. 1-800-692-7380

www.puc.state.pa.us

UTILITIES



Neighborhood Energy Centers

Neighborhood Energy Centers serve as "one-stop shops" for energy services and provides comprehensive approach to energy problems for low-to moderate-income consumers (Call first to confirm site is open).

ACHIEVEability

215-748-8838, fax# 215-748-8800 59 N 60th St/19139 Service Area: West Philadelphia, Overbrook and West Park

CENTER IN THE PARK

215-848-7722, fax# 215-848-0979 5818 Germantown Ave. /19144 Service Area: Northwest Philadelphia

CONGRESO DE LATINOS UNIDOS, INC.

215-763-8870 , fax# 215-291-5597 216 W. Somerset Street / 19133 Service Area: North Philadelphia, East of Broad Street

DIVERSIFIED COMMUNITY SERVICES

215-336-3511, fax# 215-551-4327 1920 South 20th Street / 19145 (The Dixon House) Service Area: South Philadelphia, West of Broad Street

GERMANTOWN CRISIS MINISTRY

215-843-2340, fax# 215-843-6020 35 W. Chelten Ave., / 19144 Service Area: Northwest Philadelphia

GREATER PHILADELPHIA ASIAN SOCIAL SERVICE

215-456-1662, fax# 215-456-1664 4943 North 5th Street / 19120 Service Area: North Philadelphia, Olney, Logan and Nicetown

Neighborhood Energy Centers

HACE

215-426-8025, fax# 215-437-7864 4660 Frankford Avenue / 19124 (INTAKE CENTER) 167 W. Allegheny Ave / 19140 (MAIN OFFICE) Service Area: Frankford, Kensington and Northeast Philadelphia

HUNTING PARK NAC

215- 225-5560, fax# 215- 225-4960 3760 N. Delhi Street / 19140 Service Area: North Philadelphia, Nicetown, Logan and Olney

NEW KENSINGTON CDC

215-427-0350, fax# 215-427-1302 2513 Frankford Avenue / 19125 Service Area: Kensington, Frankford and Northeast Philadelphia

NICETOWN CDC Community Center

215-329-1824 fax# 215-329-1825 4300 Germantown Ave./19140 Service Area: West Oak Lane, North Philadelphia, Nicetown, Olney and Logan

SOUTHWEST CDC

215-729-0800, fax# 215-726-5719 6328 Paschall Avenue / 19142 Service Area: Southwest Philadelphia

STRAWBERRY MANSION NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION CENTER, INC.

215-235-7505, fax# 215-235-3122 2829 West Diamond Street / 19121 Service Area: North Philadelphia, West of Broad Street

UNITED COMMUNITIES

215-467-8700, fax # 215-468-5914 2029 South 8th Street / 19148 Service Area: South Philadelphia, East of Broad Street

WE NEVER SAY NEVER

215-452-0440, fax# 215-452-0151 4427 Lancaster Avenue / 19104 Service Area: West Philadelphia, Overbrook and West Park

FOOD



WHERE CAN I FIND FOOD PANTRIES AND SOUP KITCHENS?

Coalition Against Hunger

215-430-0556

www.hungercoalition.org/food-pantries

WhyHunger

1-800-548-6479

Philabundance

www.philabundance.org/find-food

HOW DO I APPLY FOR SNAP/FOOD STAMPS?

Apply by phone

BenePhilly 1-800-236-2194 Coalition Against Hunger 215-430-0556

Apply in person

Call 215-560-7226 to find the County Assistance Office nearest you.

Apply online

www.compass.state.pa.us



WHERE CAN I GET HEALTH INSURANCE?

Medical Assistance (Medicaid)

Apply by phone

BenePhilly at 1-800-236-2194 Consumer Service Center at 866-550-4355

Apply online

www.compass.state.pa.us

Private Health Insurance

Apply by phone

Pennsylvania Health Access Network 877-570-3642

Apply online

www.Healthcare.gov

Children's Health Insurance

Public Citizens for Children and Youth (PCCY) 215-563-5848

https://www.pccy.org/

HOW DO I FIND A DOCTOR?

Contact your health insurance provider or go to a Community Health Center.

PA Association of Community Health Centers

866-944-2273

www.pachc.org/PA-Health-Centers/Find-a-Health-Center

City Health Centers

311 or 215-685-6769

beta.phila.gov/services/mental-physical-health/city-health-centers





HOW DO I GET HELP WITH MENTAL HEALTH?

Emergency Response

Call 911 or contact the Mental Health Delegate at 215-685-6440

Crisis/Suicide Counseling

215-686-4420 or 800-273-8255

Crisis Response Centers

Center City Pennsylvania Hospital - 245 S 8th St (8th & Locust St)

215-829-5249

West Mercy Hospital - 501 S 54th St (54th & Cedar Ave)

215-748-9525

North Episcopal Hospital – 100 E Lehigh St (Lehigh & A St)

215-707-2577

Northwest Germantown Community Health Services – 1 Penn Blvd

(Olney & Wister St) 215-951-8300

Northeast Friends Hospital – 4641 Roosevelt Blvd

215-831-2600

Children Only Children's Crisis Response Center

3300 Henry Ave (Henry & Roosevelt Blvd)

Two Building, 3rd Floor

215-878-2600

Outpatient Services

Contact your health insurance provider. If you have Medical Assistance (Medicaid), contact Community Behavioral Health at 888-545-2600.



HOW DO I GET HELP WITH ADDICTION?

Inpatient Services

Contact your health insurance provider. If you have Medical Assistance (Medicaid), contact Community Behavioral Health 888-545-2600.

Additional Resources

Office of Addiction Services	215-685-5403
Alcoholics Anonymous	215-923-7900
Narcotics Anonymous	215-440-8400
Problem Gamblers Helpline	800-848-1880
Prevention Point Syringe Exchange	215-634-5272

HOW DO I REPORT NEGLECT OR ABUSE?

Child Protective Services

Report abuse or neglect of a child age 0-17 215-683-6100 or 800-923-0313

Adult Protective Services

Report abuse or neglect of an adult with a disability age 18-59800-490-8505

Older Adult Protective Services

Report abuse or neglect of an adult age 60 and up 215-765-9040

WORK



WHERE CAN I GET HELP WITH EMPLOYMENT?

CareerLink

1-833-750-JOBS (5627) www.pacareerlinkphl.org/events

Philadelphia Unemployment Project (PUP) 215-557-0822

www.philaup.org

Urban League Career Center

215-985-3220

www.urbanleaguephila.org/what-we-do/career-services

Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians

9 week job orientation for immigrants https://welcomingcenter.org

WHERE CAN I GET SMALL BUSINESS HELP?

Office of Business Services

215-683-2100

www.phila.gov/commerce/businessSupport/Pages/default.aspx

Wharton Small Business Development Center

215-898-4861

https://whartonsbdc.wharton.upenn.edu

WHERE CAN I GO FOR HELP WITH UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION?

PA Office of Unemployment Compensation

888-313-7284

www.uc.pa.gov

EXTRA HELP



WHERE CAN VETERANS GO FOR HELP?

Veterans Multi Service Center

Including the Perimeter and Women Veterans Center 213-217 N 4^{th} St 215-923-2600

www.vmcenter.org

Impact Services Corporation

147 W Allegheny Ave 215-739-0243

www.impactservices.org

UESF Veterans Program

1608 Walnut St, Suite 600 215-814-6888

www.uesfacts.org

Project HOME

4133 Chestnut St 215-232-7272

www.projecthome.org

The Veterans Group

3209 Baring St 215-222-4379

www.theveteransgroup.org

WHERE CAN IMMIGRANTS GO FOR HELP?

HIAS Pennsylvania

2100 Arch St 215-832-0900 www.hiaspa.org

Esperanza

4261 N 5th St 215-324-0746

www.esperanza.us/eils

Nationalities Service Center

1216 Arch St, 4th Floor 215-893-8400

www.nscphila.org

EXTRA HELP



WHERE CAN PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES GO FOR HELP?

Disability Rights PA

1315 Walnut St, Suite 500 215-238-8070 www.disabilityrightspa.org

Mental Health Partnerships

1211 Chestnut St, Suite 1100 215-751-1800 www.mentalhealthpartnerships.org

Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health 215-685-6440

www.dbhids.org

Mayor's Office on People with Disabilities 215-686-2798

WHERE CAN SENIORS GO FOR HELP?

Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of the Elderly 800-356-3606 www.carie.org

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging 215-765-9040 www.pcacares.org

Mayor's Commission on Services to the Aging 215-686-8450

Elder Justice Resource Center
Room 278 City Hall Office Hours: Monday-Friday Walk-in or by
Appointment 9:00 to 5:00 p.m
(215) 686-7027, (215) 686-7028, (215) 686-7029
https://www.courts.phila.gov/ejc/

EXTRA HELP



WHERE CAN PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ GO FOR HELP?

Mazzoni Center

1348 Bainbridge St 215-563-0652

www.mazzonicenter.org

Galaei

149 W Susquehanna Ave 267-457-3912 www.galaei.org

William Way House

1315 Spruce St 215-732-2220 www.waygay.org **Trans Equity Project (TIP)**

149 W Susquehanna Ave 267-457-3912 or 866-222-3871

Attic Youth Center (Ages 14-23)

255 S. 16th Street 215-545-4331

www.atticyouthcenter.org

WHERE CAN VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE GO FOR HELP?

Philadelphia Domestic Violence Hotline 866-723-3014

Congreso de Latinos Unidos

215-763-8870

www.congreso.net

Lutheran Settlement House Bilingual Domestic Violence Program (BDVP)

215-426-8610

www.lutheransettlement.org

Women Against Abuse

215-386-1280

www.womenagainstabuse.org

Women in Transition

215-751-1111

www.helpwomen.org

Women Organized Against Rape

215-985-3333

www.woar.org