



RESOURCES & INFORMATION FOR TENANTS

Updated August 2021

Required by the Housing Stability Notification Act

If you are a Boston tenant, you may be eligible for help from the following agencies. Some income limits and other eligibility criteria may apply.

For legal help, visit COVID Eviction Legal Help Project at evictionlegalthelp.org or call 211.

For help resolving landlord/tenant matters, including evictions, housing search assistance, referrals for legal services, and applications for financial assistance, visit: boston.gov/housing-stability or call (617) 635-4200.

For help with rental assistance, rent arrears, and/or moving expenses, visit:
State Rental Relief Fund (RAFT)
mass.gov/covid-19-getting-help-with-housing-costs or contact 211
City Rental Relief Fund
boston.gov/rental-relief or contact 311

For legal help and advocacy in evictions, contact:
Great Boston Legal Services
(617) 603-1807
Harvard Legal Aid Bureau
(617) 495-4408
Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School
(617) 390-2535

OFFICE OF HOUSING STABILITY TENANTS' RIGHTS IN AN EVICTION CASE

It is important that you consult with a lawyer as soon as possible. As a tenant, you may choose to, **but do not have to**, move by the move out date in the notice to quit. **ONLY THE COURT CAN ORDER YOU TO LEAVE YOUR HOME.** The Office of Housing Stability can refer you to an attorney and provide other eviction resources. Visit boston.gov/eviction-questions for more information. **APPLYING FOR RENTAL ASSISTANCE NOW MAY TEMPORARILY STOP YOUR HOUSING COURT CASE.**

NOTICE TO QUIT

Landlord provides the tenant with a Notice to Quit (in most cases)

- The amount of notice will vary depending on the type of tenancy. In most cases, it will be 14 or 30 days or a rental period notice.

COURT COMPLAINT

Landlord provides the tenant with a summary process Complaint

- The Summons and Complaint will be hand-delivered by a constable/sheriff OR left at the tenant's apartment and sent by first class mail.
- The Summons will list the court location and you will receive a court notice with your hearing date and time at a later time. **PAY ATTENTION TO THESE DATES – MISSING A COURT APPEARANCE MAY RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC JUDGMENT AGAINST YOU.**
- Most hearings will held by Zoom. If you need access to a computer, please call one of the legal resources listed above.
- The tenant will likely have at least 2.5 weeks' notice of the court date. More information about your court date can be found on masscourts.org.
- **During your hearing, you may have access to a free lawyer. YOU MUST ASK TO SPEAK TO THIS LAWYER.**

FILE ANSWER AND DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Tenant has the right to file an Answer and Demand for Jury Trial, and other documents by the deadline ("Answer Date") in the Complaint

- The tenant should file with the court and give the landlord (or landlord's attorney) an Answer and Demand for Jury Trial three days before the first Court event.
- The Answer explains any defenses or counterclaims the tenant has to the landlord's claim for possession, any rent due, and any lease violations. Counterclaims are claims that the tenant has against the landlord such as bad conditions or mishandling a security deposit.
- By the same deadline, the tenant has the right to file and serve discovery requests (requests for information from the landlord about the case) and a Demand for Jury Trial.
- **INFORM THE COURT THAT YOU HAVE APPLIED FOR RENTAL ASSISTANCE. THIS MAY TEMPORARILY STOP YOUR HOUSING COURT CASE.**



Use the QR code or visit boston.gov/tenant-notification to view this document in additional languages.



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