

HOW TO PREVENT EVICTION

TIPS FOR MAINTAINING A
GOOD LANDLORD / TENANT
RELATIONSHIP AND
PREVENTING EVICTION



2 WHAT DO LANDLORDS WANT FROM THEIR TENANTS?

People who...

- Pay the rent on time every month



- Keep the property clean



- Don't damage the property



- Are respectful of other tenants



- Don't have people who are not on the lease coming in and out of the unit frequently or living there.



A positive experience for your landlord provides a positive reference for future renting opportunities.



3 KNOW WHAT YOUR LEASE SAYS



A lease is a legal contract between you and the landlord in **WRITING** and signed by both of you.

- Know the rules for
 - Monthly rental payments*
 - Guests staying with you
 - Damage to the property



When you sign the lease, *you are agreeing to abide by these rules.*

Take pictures of the property before you move in to document its condition. This is the condition you are responsible for maintaining.

In order to maintain a positive relationship with your landlord, don't break the rules. If you break any of the rules for any reason, be honest with your landlord and offer to make it right.

****If you are having trouble paying your rent, contact Potter County Human Services at 814-544-7315 – HOUSING to find out if you are eligible for Emergency Rental Assistance.***




4 DISPUTES WITH YOUR LANDLORD



- If you feel that your landlord is not living up to their end of the lease, what can you do?
 - First, document everything. Take pictures that show the date. Write down dates when any incidents occurred and descriptions of who did or said anything.
 - Communicate your concerns with your landlord in writing and give them a reasonable time to respond.
 - If your landlord does not respond or refuses to resolve the problem, there are agencies that can assist you.
 - Potter County Human Services – 814-544-7315 - HOUSING
 - The Fair Housing Law Center - Toll Free Hotline: 1.877.725.4472
<https://www.palawhelp.org/organization/fair-housing-law-center>
 - Northwestern Legal Services - 814-452-6949
<https://www.nwls.org/>

5 WHAT IF YOU ARE THREATENED WITH EVICTION?

- Any eviction notice must be communicated *in writing*. 
- ***At the end of this presentation*** is a picture and video on how the eviction process works in Pennsylvania and what you can do to stop the process.
- As a tenant, you can file a cross complaint if there are outstanding issues with the landlord. This complaint will be heard at the same hearing as the eviction hearing.
- If you do not show up at the hearing, the judge will most likely rule in favor of the landlord.
- If the landlord does not show up at the hearing, the judge will most likely rule in your favor.



6

HAVE A BACKUP PLAN

- If you are at risk for being evicted, you need to have a backup plan



1. If you were to lose your current living arrangement, where would you go next and how would you get there?



2. Who are people you trust and can reach out to for help?



3. Pack a suitcase or bag with essential clothing, personal care items, and medications for you and your family.



4. Make a list of phone numbers to have handy, for example: doctor, schools, legal aid, emergency shelter services, food pantry, etc.






5. Gather all important documents for you and your family such as:

1. Social Security cards
2. Birth certificates
3. Financial records
4. Passports / Identification cards
5. School records
6. Medical records (including vaccinations and med lists)
7. Medical insurance card
8. Public assistance card
9. Bank cards



7 WHAT A LANDLORD CAN AND CANNOT DO

- A landlord can legally evict you for violating any of the terms of the lease and/or non-payment of rent.
- A landlord **cannot** 
 - Evict you for having an emotional assistance animal
 - Evict you for having a child or becoming pregnant
 - Evict you in retaliation for reports of Fair Housing violations
 - Discriminate against protected classes
 - Change locks or shut off utilities
- What about any belongings left behind? 
 - Landlords are required to hold belongings in the unit for **at least 10 days after tenant vacates.**
 - Tenant must provide WRITTEN notice that their belongings were not abandoned and a time frame for when they are going to pick them up. 
 - **Only then** is the landlord required to hold belongings for at least an additional 30 days
 - Landlords can charge you storage fees after 10 days

PA Eviction Process

Self-Determination Housing of PA, a Program of Inglis Community Services



610-873-9595



SDHPInfo@inglis.org



A Program of Inglis
Community Services

Step 1:
Landlord serves tenant with **Notice of Intent** to terminate lease

Step 2:
Tenant is served with **Summons and Complaint**, which details the reason for eviction and informs of the process to file and answer to—summons

Step 3: Court **Hearing** must be between 7 and 10 days from date of Summons

Step 4: If landlord wins, the judge will issue the Notice of Eviction to Tenant and judgment for any money owed to the landlord for back rent or damages

Step 7:
Ejectment
Tenant must leave within 10 days of being served the writ of possession

Step 6: If the eviction is due to nonpayment of rent, at any time within the 10 days before lock out, tenant can still **pay** all the money owed **and stay** in the property.

Step 5: If the tenant does not vacate by deadline, the landlord can get a **Writ of Possession** to physically remove tenant from property

To view a **video** that describes the eviction process and what you can do to prevent eviction, click on the link below:

<https://www.palawhelp.org/resource/eviction-process-in-alleghey-county>

