

Tenants Have Rights



Our Work



Moving In and Out



In Your Apartment

- UPLC believes that all people deserve safe, decent, and affordable housing.
- Our work focuses primarily on helping people who live in public housing, project-based Section 8 Housing, and the Chicago Housing Authority's voucher program.
- For complaints about the condition of your apartment, lack of heat, requests for inspection, and other services, first call 311.
- Landlords can't discriminate against tenants on the basis of race, sex, having children, or their source of income (Section 8, public aid, etc).
- Moving In: Landlords must give you a receipt for your security deposit and a summary of the Landlord Tenant Ordinance.
- Moving Out: Landlords must return your security deposit, or give a receipt of deduction they make for repairs. Take pictures to prove you left the apartment in good condition.
- You can't be evicted unless your landlord takes you to court.
- Landlords must make repairs if the apartment is not up to code and provide heat from September 15 to June 15.
- Landlords can't evict you because you ask for repairs, or because you call the City inspectors. They also can't shut off your lights, turn off your heat, or change the locks on your apartment as a way to make you move out.



Bad Apartment Conditions:

If your apartment conditions are bad, you can write a “14 Day Letter” to your landlord. In the letter, explain the poor conditions to your landlord, and ask they be fixed within 14 days.

Say in the letter that if repairs are not done, you will reduce the rent you pay to the decreased property value or the costs of repairs. Keep a copy of the letter and proof of its delivery (it can be used in court as evidence.)



If You Are Being Evicted:

- You must be served with a summons and given a Notice of Termination.
- If you're behind in rent, you must be given 5 days to pay before you're taken to court.
- If you violated your lease, you have the right to fix the violation within 10 days.
- If you are a month-to-month tenant, you have the right to 30 days notice. If you have a written lease, you must be given 60 days notice if the landlord will not renew your lease.
- You have the right to one extra week (a continuance) so you can find a lawyer.
- You have the right to go to court and tell the judge why you shouldn't be evicted.
- You have the right to a jury trial (go to the desk on the 6th floor of the Daley Center).
- If the judge orders you to move, the landlord must wait for the Sherriff to evict you.
- If an order of possession is entered against you, you can file a motion for additional time to move (called a “stay of eviction”).



Rights at Trial:

You can present witnesses and provide documents (such as receipts, photos, letters) if you bring them to court. You can ask the landlord and witnesses questions, and review the landlord's documents. If you have low-income/affordable housing (Section 8, Voice of the People, etc.) you have additional rights- talk to a lawyer!