

Your landlord can try to evict you, but they must get the court's permission first. Only a marshal with a court order from a judge can evict you.

Tips to Help You Stay in Your Apartment

- ▶ Always get a receipt for rent you paid with cash or a money order. Keep your receipts in a safe place for at least one year.
- ▶ Keep all emails and texts you exchange with your landlord about rent payments.
- ▶ Pay your rent by the 10th of each month (or by the 5th day if you pay rent weekly).
- ▶ Do not stop paying rent, even if there are problems with the apartment or the landlord.
- ▶ Never ignore or tear up notices or legal papers from your landlord or the court.

The law says some people must not be evicted except in limited cases

A special law called *good cause* can protect you from eviction in some cases. Get legal help right away so you can tell the court that you are protected by good cause.

Who qualifies for good cause protection?

To qualify for good cause, you must

- live in a rental unit that has at least 5 units, and
- have a physical or mental disability or be a senior (62 or over).

Even if you qualify for good cause, you can still be evicted if: you don't pay the rent; you don't agree to a *fair and equitable* rent increase; you don't keep your unit clean and safe; you don't follow your lease, your landlord's rules for the building, and state law; the landlord wants to stop renting the apartment altogether; or the landlord wants to move into the unit.

Need help?

Statewide Legal Services

www.slscct.org

1-800-453-3320 or 860-344-0380

SLS provides free advice to low-income people who have legal problems in Connecticut. For some legal problems, they may send you to another legal aid program or to a volunteer attorney.



Got a housing problem?

1-800-559-1565

www.EvictionHelpCT.org

How to contact your local legal aid office:

New Haven Legal Assistance Association

203-946-4811

Greater Hartford Legal Aid

860-541-5000

Connecticut Legal Services

Bridgeport

203-336-3851

New London

860-447-0323

Waterbury

203-756-8074

New Britain

860-225-8678

Stamford

203-348-9216

Willimantic

860-456-1761

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Evictions and Lockouts



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Statewide Legal Services
1-800-453-3320

Can my landlord evict me?

Your landlord can try to evict you, but they must get the court's permission first. Your landlord must NOT remove your belongings from your apartment or change the locks—even if you owe back rent—unless they win an eviction case against you in court. **Only a marshal with a court order from a judge can evict you.** Your landlord must not

- shut off your heat or lights,
- lock you out, or
- try to make you leave before the court decides your case.

Visit www.CTLaw.help/eviction to learn about eviction and illegal lockouts.

What must my landlord do if they want to evict me?

If your landlord wants to evict you, you may get a *Kapa Notice* or a *Notice to Quit*. These are legal documents that ask you to move out or fix a problem by a certain date. **You do not have to leave on the date listed on the notice.**

- Talk to your landlord and try to solve the problem.
- Talk to a lawyer. Call Statewide Legal Services at 1-800-453-3320.

What happens if I can't work things out with my landlord?

If the problem is not solved and you don't leave, your landlord may ask the court to evict you. If this happens, a marshal will give you two papers: a *Summons* and a *Complaint*. If you get these papers, you will need to respond by filing two forms with the court: an *Appearance* and an *Answer*. If you don't fill your forms out completely, correctly, and file them on time, you could lose your case without ever going in front of the judge. This is called *default*.

If you get a *Summons* and *Complaint*, call Statewide Legal Services at 1-800-453-3320 or visit www.EvictionHelpCT.org.

Where can I get court forms and information to defend myself?

Get the forms at www.jud.ct.gov/webforms or visit the court clerk's office or a Court Service Center. You can also ask someone at the Court Service Center for help with the forms. Detailed information about how to defend yourself against eviction is available at www.CTLaw.help/eviction.

After you file your forms with the court, the court will schedule a hearing at the courthouse. If you don't go to court for your trial, your landlord will probably win and you will be evicted. A marshal can make you move out with 24 hours' notice.

How can I get ready for my hearing?

- Get to court early, and have your papers and witnesses ready.
- Be polite and follow all instructions.
- Stand up when you speak to the judge, and call the judge "Your Honor."
- Turn off your cell phone. Do not chew gum, use earphones, or read in the courtroom.
- Wear your best clothes.

What happens at the hearing?

Most hearings are scheduled to begin at a specific time, which will be stated in the notice. The clerk generally calls all the cases at that time. If you don't hear your name called, speak to the clerk. If the court does not have a record of your presence at the hearing, a default judgment could be entered and you will lose automatically.

After the cases are called, everyone will be sent to mediation. Mediation gives you and the landlord a chance to resolve the eviction case with a court *mediator* without going in front of a judge. If you can make an agreement with your landlord at mediation, the mediator will write it up as a court order and the judge will sign it.

Important: Make sure you fully understand the agreement, because once it becomes a court order, it generally cannot be changed. Visit www.CTLaw.help/mediation to learn more.

Need legal help?
Call Statewide Legal Services
at 1-800-453-3320 or visit
EvictionHelpCT.org.

What if the landlord and I can't make an agreement in mediation?

If you can't make an agreement with your landlord, you will have a hearing with a judge. If you win your case, you can stay in your apartment.

If you lose your case, you will have to move out in as few as five days. Your landlord will get permission from the court to hire a marshal. If you don't move out before the marshal comes, the marshal will take your belongings from the apartment and the landlord can lock you out.

You can be evicted even if you have small children, you have a subsidy such as Section 8, or it is the middle of the winter.

What if I get evicted and lose my belongings?

- Contact your DSS worker if you have one.
- Call 2-1-1. Ask about programs that can help you find a place to live.
- You can get your belongings back from your town if you ask for them within 15 days.

Can I ask for more time to move?

You can ask your landlord for more time, but they do not have to give it to you. You must file something with the court within five days of the judgment if you want more time to move, time to appeal the judgment, or you want the judge to reopen the case.

For more detailed info, go to:

www.CTLaw.Help/eviction

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