



My Landlord Enters My Rental Unit Without My Permission

❖ You can find all the fact sheets we link to here at [WashingtonLawHelp.org](https://www.washingtonlawhelp.org).

Should I read this?

Yes, you should read this if you rent the place where you live (you are a tenant) in Washington state whose landlord comes in and out of your rental unit, without written notice or asking permission.

What will I learn from reading this?

You will learn:

- When a landlord can enter your rental unit without permission
- What notice your landlord is supposed to give you before entering
- What to do if your landlord enters your rental unit without first giving you proper notice

What does state law say about this?

Washington state law at [RCW 59.18.150](#) states when a landlord can legally enter your rental unit and what kind of written notice the landlord must give you. It also states that your landlord can enter your rental unit without your permission in an emergency, such as if a major plumbing leak might flood the whole building.

If it's not an emergency, the landlord should give you a proper written notice. The notice can be handed to you or posted on your door.

How much notice should I get?

Usually, the landlord must give you written notice at least 2 days in advance. But if the landlord wants to enter to show the rental unit to someone who wants to rent or buy the place in the future, the landlord must give you at least 1 day in advance.

What else should the notice say?

It must give the dates and times the landlord wants to enter. It must also give a phone number where you can call the landlord if you need to negotiate for a different day or time.

The landlord gave me written notice about entering the unit. Can I refuse to let the landlord in?

It depends on your reason for doing so. The state law says that you cannot “unreasonably withhold consent.” You cannot make it impossible for the landlord to enter.

My landlord didn't give me proper notice. What can I do?

You should write the landlord a letter stating the specific times when the landlord entered without proper notice. You can use our **sample letter** below.

If your landlord improperly enters your rental unit after getting your written notice, that may violate the state law. You can sue your landlord later (usually in Small Claims Court) and ask for \$100.00 for each violation.

Get Legal Help

- **Apply online:** nwjustice.org/apply-online
- **Facing Eviction?** Call 1-855-657-8387.
- **Facing Foreclosure?** Call 1-800-606-4819.
- **Facing a legal issue in King County** (other than Eviction or Foreclosure)? Call 2-1-1 (or toll-free 1-877-211-9274) weekdays 8:00 am - 6:00 pm. They will refer you to a legal aid provider.
- **Facing a legal issue outside of King County** (other than Eviction or Foreclosure)? Call the CLEAR Hotline at 1-888-201-1014 weekdays between 9:15 am - 12:15 pm or apply online at nwjustice.org/apply-online.
- **Seniors (age 60 and over)** with a legal issue outside of King County can also call CLEAR*Sr at 1-888-387-7111.

Deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired callers can call any of these numbers using the relay service of your choice.

Interpreters provided.

This publication provides general information concerning your rights and responsibilities. It is not intended as a substitute for specific legal advice.

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Sample Letter: Invasion of Privacy

Date: _____

Landlord / Manager's Name:

Landlord / Manager's Address:

Dear Landlord / Manager _____:

The Washington State Landlord-Tenant Act (RCW 58.18.150) requires that landlords give tenants 48 hours' notice before entering the property, or 24 hours' notice if they are showing the property to a prospective new tenant or buyer (except in an emergency).

The written notice must specify dates and times for entry, or specify a time period, listing the earliest and latest possible times for entry on designated dates. The notice must contain a phone number for me to reach you to object or reschedule the entry.

The law also states that landlords may not abuse their right of access or use it to harass tenants, and that they may only enter at reasonable times.

I was **not** given proper notice of landlord entry on these day(s) and time(s):

Date and Time: _____

Date and Time: _____

Date and Time: _____

The law states that if you continue to violate my privacy rights after receiving this letter, you shall be liable for up to \$100 for each violation. I have the right to pursue legal remedy in Small Claims Court.

Please do not enter my unit in the future without providing proper notice.

Sincerely,

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____