

# My Landlord Enters My Rental Unit Without My Permission

## Who is this for?

A tenant in Washington state whose landlord comes in and out of the rental unit, without written notice or asking permission.

## What will you learn by reading it?

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

## What does the law say?

RCW 59.18.150 states when a landlord can legally enter a rental unit and what kind of written notice the landlord must give you.

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- ❖ Washington's state laws are called the **Revised Code of Washington (RCW)**. The most important laws affecting tenants and landlords are found in the [Residential Landlord-Tenant Act](#) (RCW 59.18).
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[RCW 59.18.150](#) states a landlord can enter a rental unit without the tenant's permission in an emergency (like 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 you 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.

The written notice must state specific dates and times when the landlord wants to enter and include a phone number where you can reach the landlord if you need to negotiate for a different time.

[RCW 59.18.150](#) says that a tenant cannot “unreasonably withhold consent.” You cannot make it impossible for the landlord to enter.

## What can you do if your landlord doesn't give you proper notice?

Write a letter stating the specific times when the landlord entered without proper notice.

A **sample letter** is on the next page.

If your landlord improperly enters your rental unit after getting your written notice, it may be a violation of [RCW 59.18.150](#) and you can sue your landlord later (usually in Small Claims Court) for \$100.00 per violation.

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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 the following 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: \_\_\_\_\_