



## Evictions from Public Housing (Housing Owned by a Housing Authority)

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- ❖ Read this *only* if you live in the state of Washington.
  - ❖ Eviction law continues to change. Read about the latest changes to the law at [WashingtonLawHelp.org/resource/eviction](https://www.WashingtonLawHelp.org/resource/eviction)
  - ❖ You can find all the fact sheets we link to here at [WashingtonLawHelp.org](https://www.WashingtonLawHelp.org).
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### Introduction

If you live in a Public Housing Project, your landlord is a Housing Authority. The eviction process from Public Housing is a little different from the process for tenants with private landlords. For example, you have the right to ask for a hearing to explain your side of the story if the Housing Authority believes you have broken a rule in your lease.

Keep reading to find out more about the eviction process from Public Housing.

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- ❖ If you have a section 8 voucher, read How to [Protect Your Section 8 Voucher](#). If some other HUD program is in charge of your housing, read [HUD Housing Evictions](#). Both are available at [WashingtonLawHelp.org](https://www.WashingtonLawHelp.org).
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## Can I be evicted from Public Housing?

Maybe. The Housing Authority may evict you if any of these is the case:

- You do not pay your portion of the rent on time every month.
- You break a serious rule in the lease.
- You break a rule in the lease repeatedly.
- You, someone living with you, or your guest causes “criminal activity” that threatens the safety or health of other tenants.
- You, someone living with you, or your guest causes “drug activity.”
- The Housing Authority has other “good cause” to evict you.

## The Housing Authority gave me a notice that says I am breaking a rule in the lease. What can I do?

In most cases, the notice will give you a deadline (like ten days) to stop breaking the rules. The notice may say you can ask for a meeting or a “**grievance hearing**” with the Housing Authority to explain your side.

**Read the notice very carefully.** If you do not think you are breaking the lease, or you do not understand what the notice says, try to talk to a lawyer.

If you do nothing, the Housing Authority may try to evict you using the court eviction process called an “Unlawful Detainer Action.” **Act fast** if you get a written notice saying you are breaking the rules.

DO THIS if you do not agree with the notice:

- Write the landlord to ask for a grievance hearing before the deadline (usually ten days).
- Keep a copy of your letter with your important papers. You will need it later.
- Try to talk to a lawyer.



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## **What is a grievance hearing?**

It is your chance to bring witnesses and evidence to show that you are not breaking the rules of the lease. [Public Housing Grievance Procedure](#), available on [WashingtonLawHelp.org](http://WashingtonLawHelp.org), explains how to get ready for your hearing.

## **What if the Housing Authority's notice says I committed a crime?**

In some very serious cases, the Housing Authority will not give you a grievance hearing. Usually, this is because they believe that you, someone in your household, or your guest has committed a crime, or is involved with drugs on the property.

Try to talk to a lawyer if the Housing Authority accuses you of allowing crime or drug activity to happen at the Public Housing project.

## **What if I lose at the grievance hearing? Or the Housing Authority doesn't even give me a grievance hearing?**

The Housing Authority may file a lawsuit to evict you, called an "Unlawful Detainer Action." You will get served with court papers, a "Complaint" and a "Summons." You will have a very short time to respond in writing to the lawsuit and explain your defenses.

[Eviction and Your Defense](#), available on [WashingtonLawHelp.org](http://WashingtonLawHelp.org), has more about how to respond to the Unlawful Detainer Action. You should also try to talk to a lawyer as soon as possible.





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## Get Legal Help

- **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.
- **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.

CLEAR and 2-1-1 will provide interpreters.

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