

# My landlord just gave me a 14-Day Notice to Pay Rent or Vacate

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- ❖ **Renters with low incomes are entitled to a lawyer free of charge before a court may proceed with an eviction.** Call our Eviction Defense Screening line at **1-855-657-8387** or apply online at [nwjustice.org/apply-online](https://nwjustice.org/apply-online) if you think you may qualify.
  - ❖ You can find all the fact sheets we link to here at WashingtonLawHelp.org.
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## I live in Washington State. Should I read this?

**Yes**, if you rent the place where you live and you just got a 14-Day Notice to Pay Rent or Vacate, saying you owe rent and must pay what you owe within 14 days or move out.

**No**, if you own the mobile home you live in, and rent the lot. Read [My manufactured/mobile home park landlord just gave me a 14-Day Notice to Pay or Vacate](#) and talk to a lawyer right away. Contact information is below.

## What will you learn by reading this?

You will learn:

- What this notice is
- What to do if you get this notice from your landlord
- Where to get legal help

## What is a 14-day Notice to Pay Rent or Vacate?

It is a warning from your landlord. If you fall behind in rent and/or your deposit installment plan with the landlord, the landlord may give you this type of notice.

This notice must tell you exactly how much you owe. You must then pay what you owe by the end of the 14 days. If you do not, the landlord may start an eviction court case against you.

## Does the 14-Day Notice have to be delivered in a certain way?

**Yes.** Your landlord (or their employee or another adult) can “**personally serve**” you at home by handing you the notice.

The landlord can also hand it to another adult or older teenager living with you. If your landlord does this “substitute service,” your landlord must also send a copy of the notice to you.

If the landlord tries but fails to have you personally served, the landlord can then “serve” the notice by taping it on your door, but then they must also mail a copy to you.

## Can the landlord email me the 14-Day Notice?

**No.** A 14-Day Notice that is sent by text, voicemail, email, or in person is not a proper notice. It does not start the eviction process.

## Does the 14-Day Notice have to be notarized?

**No.**

## Can the landlord evict me just by giving me this notice?

**No.** Washington law does not let landlords evict tenants without following the proper court eviction process.

The landlord must give you a proper written “**termination**” notice before starting an eviction lawsuit. The 14-day Notice to Pay Rent or Vacate is one type of termination notice.

If you are still living in the place after 14 days, and the landlord believes you are still behind in rent, the landlord can start an eviction lawsuit. The landlord does this by giving you official court papers called a “Summons” and “Complaint.” These papers may require you to send a response to your landlord or their lawyer.

The landlord must win an eviction lawsuit and get a judge to sign an order directing the sheriff to evict you. Only the sheriff can formally evict you or change the locks on the rental.

## **I don’t think I owe the rent. What should I do?**

If you want to fight the eviction lawsuit, **talk to a lawyer right away**. You will need to be able to prove your case in court. This means giving the court evidence proving you do not owe the rent. It can also mean having witnesses with personal knowledge about the facts testify.

**A lawyer can help you with these things.** See contact information below. Read [Getting ready for a court hearing or trial](#) to get an idea of what you will need to do to fight the eviction in court.

## **Can I get help paying the rent?**

Maybe. Visit [washingtonlawhelp.org/resource/eviction](https://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/resource/eviction) to find organizations near you that might have rental assistance.

## Get Legal Help

- **Facing Eviction?** Call 1-855-657-8387.
- **Apply online** with [CLEAR\\*Online](https://www.nwjustice.org/apply-online) - [nwjustice.org/apply-online](https://www.nwjustice.org/apply-online)
- **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](https://www.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.**

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