



Can my landlord raise my rent? By how much?

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- ❖ Read this *only* if you live in Washington State.
 - ❖ 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 at WashingtonLawHelp.org.
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Tenants in Washington State: Read this!

The eviction moratorium in Washington State ended on June 30, 2021. During the moratorium, landlords in Washington were not allowed to raise the rent.

Now that the moratorium has ended, tenants may have received rent increase notices starting July 1, 2021. Keep reading to find out what the law says about rent increases.

I recently got a 60-Day Notice of a rent increase. Is this legal? Can my landlord raise my rent?

Yes, if you got the notice on or after July 1, 2021. Any notice of the rent going up needs to be delivered to the tenant at least 60 days in advance.

Example: Your landlord wants to raise the rent starting October 1. The landlord must send you the notice by August 1.

Can my landlord send me the rent increase notice by text or email?

Maybe. The law only requires written notice but does not specify whether that means on a piece of paper or electronically.

If your rental agreement specifies, you should follow that. If it does not, then you should talk with a lawyer about whether an email or text increase of rent is legal.

I got a rent increase notice. It was given to me with only 30 days advance written notice. Do I still have to pay the new amount?

State law clearly states that the landlord must give you 60 days' notice ([RCW 59.18.140](#)). The only exception is if your rent is set based on how much money you make and changes when your income changes.

If you get a rent increase notice that gives you less time, talk to a lawyer right away. Contact info is below.

I'm in the middle of a lease or written contract with my landlord. I just got a notice of rent increase. Do I need to pay the new amount?

No. If your contract or written lease was for a certain amount of rent per month, your landlord cannot try to raise your rent during the middle of the contract. Your landlord must wait until your contract is almost over.

Example: Your contract ends in December. Your landlord needs to notify you by October 1 to raise your rent starting in December.

My landlord is raising my rent more than \$200 per month. Is this legal?

There is no rent control in Washington State. A landlord may raise the rent as much as they want in most situations.

However, if you miss a rent payment after March 2020, you have the right to a payment plan. Some counties also require the landlord to offer you a chance for mediation. In any situation, **you can try to negotiate with the landlord not to raise the rent for a certain period of time. If you and the landlord do agree to this, try to get it in writing.**

I cannot afford the rent increase my landlord sent me. What can I do?

You should **talk to a lawyer right away** about the following options:

- **If you owe rent after March 2020**, you have the right to a payment plan. Some counties also require the landlord to offer you a chance for mediation. In any situation, you can try to negotiate with the landlord not to raise the

rent for a certain amount of time. If you and the landlord do agree to this, try to get it in writing.

- You can also **ask the landlord to change the date your rent is due** if it would help sync when you get income with your ability to pay rent. This will also limit the landlord's ability to charge you late fees. Read [Can I change the date my rent is due?](#) to learn more.
- If you believe **the landlord is raising your rent to try to get you to move out because your income comes from government assistance**, you may have grounds to sue the landlord and ask for four and one-half times the monthly rent of the place, and court costs and attorneys' fees ("Government assistance" here means SSI, TANF, and so on.) [RCW 59.18.255](#).

❖ **You might also have other options.** Ask a lawyer if the Washington Law against Discrimination ([RCW 49.60](#)), the [Fair Housing Act \(42 U.S.C. 3601\)](#), or the good faith requirement in the state Landlord Tenant Act ([RCW 59.18.020](#)) can help you at all.

I got a rent increase during the moratorium. Can I get some of my money back?

Maybe. The state eviction moratorium banned rent increases. Talk to a lawyer right away.

You can also seek help from the Washington State Attorney General's Office by visiting the [WA Office of the Attorney General](#) and filling the [COVID-19 Tenancy Proclamation](#) form: bit.ly/3QiVXFf.

I complained about my landlord not repairing my rental. Then I got a rent increase. Is this retaliation?

It could be.

If your landlord takes an adverse action against you **within 90 days** of legal action you took against the landlord, it may count as retaliation and be illegal.

Talk to a lawyer right away. Read [Can My Landlord Do That?](#) to learn more.

Get Legal Help

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