

# Philly Tenant Resource Guide







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BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE  
PHILADELPHIA EVICTION PREVENTION PROJECT





# PHILLY TENANT RESOURCE GUIDE

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**Brought to you by the  
Philadelphia Eviction  
Prevention Project  
May 2018**

Clarifi  
Community Legal Services  
Legal Clinic for the Disabled  
SeniorLAW Center  
Tenant Union Representative Network  
Philadelphia VIP

**All of the information provided in this  
guidebook, as well as additional  
resources and sample letters, is  
available at [www.phillytenant.org](http://www.phillytenant.org).**

# HOUSING



## WHERE CAN I GO FOR EMERGENCY SHELTER?

### **Monday-Friday, 7am-3pm**

#### **Single Women & Families**

Apple Tree Family Center  
1430 Cherry St (near Cherry and 15<sup>th</sup>)  
215-686-7150, 7151, 7152, or 7153

#### **Single Men**

Roosevelt Darby Center  
802 N Broad St (near Broad & Fairmount)  
215-685-3700

### **After 3pm and Weekends**

#### **For Families**

The Red Shield  
715 N Broad St (near Broad & Fairmount)  
215-787-2887

#### **For Single Women**

House of Passage Kirkbride Center  
111 N 48<sup>th</sup> St (near 48<sup>th</sup> & Haverford)  
215-471-2017 or 267-713-7778

#### **For Single Men**

Station House  
2601 N Broad St (near Broad & Lehigh)  
215-225-9232

**Homeless Outreach Hotline at 215-232-1984**

**Philadelphia Domestic Violence Hotline at 866-723-3014**

# HOUSING



## WHERE CAN I GO FOR RENT OR SECURITY DEPOSIT ASSISTANCE?

### Office of Homeless Services (OHS)

- **1430 Cherry Street** (Center City)  
Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm
- **Low-income tenants only.**  
Assistance ranges from \$0 - \$1500
- **Call 215-686-7177** to see if they have funds.

### Philadelphia County Assistance Office (CAO)

- **801 Market Street**  
Monday-Friday 8am-5pm  
215-560-1976
- **Very low-income tenants only.**  
Assistance ranges from \$0 - \$400

### What should I bring?

- Photo ID for all household members age 18 and over
- Social Security cards and Birth Certificates for all household members
- Proof of Income
  - Pay stubs (for last thirty days)
  - Employment letter (hrs, pay date(s), wages/salary)
  - Award Letter from Social Security office
  - Any other documentation of income
- Lease Agreement
- Eviction Notice and/or Court Documents

### What should I get from my landlord?

- Rental License also called a Housing Inspection License
- W-9 signed by landlord
- Letter with current balance owed signed and dated by landlord

# HOUSING



## HOW DO I GET MY LANDLORD TO MAKE REPAIRS?

### Document the repair issues.

- Make a repair request in writing.
- Take Pictures.
- Get witnesses.

### Bring attention to the repair issues.

- Request an Inspection**
  - **Licenses & Inspections.** Call 311.
  - **PHA Section 8 Inspection.** Call 215-684-3860.
- File a Fair Housing Commission Complaint.**
  - Call 215-686-4670 or go to 601 Walnut St, Ste 300 South
- Withhold rent.** For serious repair issues only.
  - **Send rent withholding letter to landlord.**
  - **Escrow your rent.** Open a bank account to deposit your rent or keep the rent in a money order.
- Repair & deduct.**
  - **Contact a repair person** and ask for an estimate for the cost of repair.
  - **Send a letter to landlord** with a copy of the estimate.
  - **Hire the repair person** if the landlord does not complete the repairs in a reasonable amount of time. Keep the invoice and receipt.

Visit [www.PhillyTenant.org](http://www.PhillyTenant.org) for more information and sample letters.

# HOUSING



## HOW DO I GET MY SECURITY DEPOSIT BACK?

You can only request your full security deposit after you move.

- **Before you move out**
  - Send landlord a letter with the date that you are moving. Keep a copy.
  - Leave the unit as clean as possible.
  - Take pictures of each room.
  - Do a walkthrough, if possible.
- **After you move out**
  - Return the keys in person or by certified mail.
  - Send landlord a Security Deposit Request Letter. Keep a copy.
  - Your landlord has 30 days to respond to your request in writing.
    - If you disagree with your landlord's response, you can sue for your security deposit.
    - If your landlord does not respond at all, you can sue for double your security deposit.

## HOW DO I SUE FOR MY SECURITY DEPOSIT?

Be careful! Before you sue your landlord, be sure that you do not owe for rent or damages greater than your security deposit. Here is the process:

- **Go to Municipal Court at 1339 Chestnut Street, 10<sup>th</sup> floor**
- **Ask to File a Small Claims Complaint.** State how much money you are claiming. Include your lease and letters.
- **Ask to File a Petition to Proceed In Forma Pauperis (IFP).** If the IFP is granted, you will not have to pay filing fees.
- **Choose type of service.** Pay a service fee or choose private service, which means a person who is over 21 and not a family member must serve the court papers on the landlord.

# HOUSING



## HOW DO I APPLY FOR SUBSIDIZED HOUSING?

### What are the main types of subsidized housing?

1. HUD Project-Based Housing
2. Low Income Housing Tax Credit Housing
3. Public Housing
4. Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher

### How can I apply for HUD Project-Based or Low Income Housing Tax Credit Housing?

- Go to [www.PAHousingSearch.com](http://www.PAHousingSearch.com) and select your county.
- Call each one or go in person to see if they are accepting applications.
- Submit an application and follow up at least once per year.

### How can I apply for Public Housing?

- Go to Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) Admissions at 712 N 16<sup>th</sup> St (near 16<sup>th</sup> and Fairmount Ave) or call 215-684-4000.
- The waitlist for conventional PHA public housing is **closed**.
- The waitlist for PHA public housing for seniors and people with disabilities is **open**.
- The waitlists for non-PHA public housing are **open**.

### How can I apply for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher?

- The waitlist for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program is **closed**. The waitlist was open for 3 weeks in the March 2010 and has not been open since.



# HOUSING



## WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT DISCRIMINATION?

**In matters related to housing, it is illegal in Philadelphia to discriminate on the basis of any of these categories:**

Age, Ancestry, Color, Disability, Domestic or Sexual Violence Victim Status, Ethnicity, Familial Status, Gender Identity, Marital Status, National Origin, Race, Religion, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Source of Income

**If you believe someone has discriminated against you in a matter related to housing, you can make a complaint.**

**Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations**

601 Walnut St, Suite 300 South  
215-686-4670

[www.phila.gov/humanrelations](http://www.phila.gov/humanrelations)

**Fair Housing Commission**

601 Walnut St, Suite 300 South  
215-686-4670

[www.phila.gov/fairhousingcommission](http://www.phila.gov/fairhousingcommission)

**Fair Housing Rights Center**

444 N 3<sup>rd</sup> St, Suite 110  
215-625-0700

[www.fairhousingrights.org](http://www.fairhousingrights.org)

**Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission**

110 N 8<sup>th</sup> St, Suite 501  
215-560-2496

[www.phrc.pa.gov](http://www.phrc.pa.gov)

**HUD Discrimination Hotline**

1-888-799-2085

# EVICTION



## WHAT IS THE EVICTION PROCESS?

### 1. Eviction Notice

You may receive an eviction notice telling you when your landlord wants you to move out. You do not have to move out by that date. Your landlord must take you to court in order to evict you.

### 2. Court Complaint

If you do not move out, the landlord must file an Eviction Complaint against you in Municipal Court to evict you. The Complaint should state the reason your landlord is evicting you and the date/time of the court hearing. The Complaint should be sent to you by mail, attached to your door or hand delivered.

### 3. Hearing

Eviction hearings are in Municipal Court at **1339 Chestnut St, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor**. You must arrive on time to court, or you will likely lose. At the hearing you can sign an agreement or speak to the judge.

### 4. Appeal

If you lose at the hearing, you will have 10 calendar days to file an appeal in the Court of Common Pleas, City Hall, Room 296. The appeal stops an eviction from taking place until the court rules on the case, as long as you pay ongoing rent to the court.

### 5. Eviction

If you lose in court and do not appeal or break your agreement, your landlord can legally evict you. Your landlord must file eviction papers with the court (writ of possession and alias writ of possession). The landlord tenant officer can change your locks 21 days after the judgment.

# EVICTION



## WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO EVICTION COURT?

Any documents that relate to the reason your landlord is trying to evict you. Example: lease, rent receipts, utility bills, photos, letters or texts to or from the landlord.

## WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS IN EVICTION COURT?

### 1. Ask for a continuance.

- You can get the hearing postponed if you need an interpreter.
- You can ask for the hearing to be postponed to get a lawyer, but the landlord may object.

OR

### 2. Have a hearing in front of a judge.

- You have the right to have a hearing in front of a judge instead of signing an agreement.
- You can present your evidence and defenses to the judge.
- If you lose, you must appeal within 10 days of the judgment if you want to stop the eviction.

OR

### 3. Sign a Judgment by Agreement.

- Do not sign an agreement unless you agree and can keep it.
- If you sign an agreement, it is final. You cannot appeal.
- If you break the agreement, the landlord can evict you.

# EVICTION



## HOW DO I GET LEGAL HELP?

### **Call (267) 443-2500 for Tenant Legal Aid Referral Line.**

For free legal advice & representation for low-income tenants.

- Live housing counselor - 11am-7pm
- Weekend call backs for emergencies.
- Referrals to:
  - Tenant Union Representative Network
  - SeniorLAW Center
  - AIDS Law Project
  - Legal Clinic for the Disabled
  - Community Legal Services

### **Walk-In at one of the following locations:**

**Community Legal Services** – *Advice, Referral & Representation*

1424 Chestnut St  
Monday-Thursday, 9am to 12pm

**Landlord/Tenant Legal Help Center** – *Advice, Referral & Representation*

1339 Chestnut Street, 10th floor  
Monday-Thursday, 9:30am to 2pm

**SeniorLAW Center** – *Walk-in for emergencies only, Age 60+*

2 Penn Center, 1500 JFK Blvd, Suite 1501  
Tuesday & Thursday, 9am to 12pm

### **Get Help from a Paid Lawyer.**

**Philadelphia Bar Association** - Lawyer Referral and Information Services

(215) 238-6333

<https://iris.philadelphiabar.org>

### **Get Other Help and Information.**

**Tenant Union Representative Network** – *Daily tenants' rights workshops*

(215) 940-3900

[www.ourturn.net](http://www.ourturn.net)

# UTILITIES



## UTILITY COMPANIES

### Gas

Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW)

CRP program can help with gas bills

Emergency 215-235-1212; Non-emergency 215-235-1000

[www.pgworks.com](http://www.pgworks.com)

### Electric

Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)

CAP rate program can help with electric bills

Non-emergency 800-494-4000; Assistance Programs 800-774-7040

[www.peco.com](http://www.peco.com)

### Water

Water Revenue Bureau (WRB)

TAP program can help with water bills

Emergency 215-685-6300; Non-emergency 215-686-6880

## UTILITY ASSISTANCE

### Utility Emergency Services Fund (UESF)

215-972-5170

[www.uesfacts.org/our-programs/utility-grant-program](http://www.uesfacts.org/our-programs/utility-grant-program)

### Philadelphia Corporation for Aging Emergency Fund

215-765-9040

[www.pcacares.org/service\\_provider/pca-emergency-fund](http://www.pcacares.org/service_provider/pca-emergency-fund)

### Low Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Grants to help pay for heating bills from November through March.

215-560-1583

[www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/heatingassistanceliheap](http://www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/heatingassistanceliheap)

## UTILITY COMPLAINTS

### Pennsylvania Utility Commission (PUC)

PA residents can file complaints against electric and gas utilities.

1-800-692-7380

[www.puc.state.pa.us](http://www.puc.state.pa.us)

# FOOD



## WHERE CAN I FIND FOOD PANTRIES AND SOUP KITCHENS?

### **Coalition Against Hunger**

215-430-0556

[www.hungercoalition.org/food-pantries](http://www.hungercoalition.org/food-pantries)

### **WhyHunger**

1-800-548-6479

### **Philabundance**

[www.philabundance.org/find-food](http://www.philabundance.org/find-food)

## HOW DO I APPLY FOR SNAP/FOOD STAMPS?

### **Apply by phone**

BenePhilly 1-800-236-2194

Coalition Against Hunger 215-430-0556

### **Apply in person**

Call 215-560-7226 to find the County Assistance Office nearest you.

### **Apply online**

[www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us)

# HEALTH



## WHERE CAN I GET HEALTH INSURANCE?

### Medical Assistance (Medicaid)

**Apply by phone**

BenePhilly at 1-800-236-2194

Consumer Service Center at 866-550-4355

**Apply online**

[www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us)

### Private Health Insurance

**Apply by phone**

Pennsylvania Health Access Network

877-570-3642

**Apply online**

[www.Healthcare.gov](http://www.Healthcare.gov)

### Children's Health Insurance

Public Citizens for Children and Youth (PCCY)

215-563-5848

<https://www.pccy.org/>

## HOW DO I FIND A DOCTOR?

**Contact your health insurance provider or go to a  
Community Health Center.**

**PA Association of Community Health Centers**

866-944-2273

[www.pachc.org/PA-Health-Centers/Find-a-Health-Center](http://www.pachc.org/PA-Health-Centers/Find-a-Health-Center)

**City Health Centers**

311 or 215-685-6769

[beta.phila.gov/services/mental-physical-health/city-health-centers](http://beta.phila.gov/services/mental-physical-health/city-health-centers)

# HEALTH



## HOW DO I GET HELP WITH MENTAL HEALTH?

### Emergency Response

Call 911 or contact the Mental Health Delegate at 215-685-6440

### Crisis/Suicide Counseling

215-686-4420 or 800-273-8255

### Crisis Response Centers

**Center City** Pennsylvania Hospital - 245 S 8<sup>th</sup> St (8<sup>th</sup> & Locust St)  
215-829-5249

**West** Mercy Hospital - 501 S 54<sup>th</sup> St (54<sup>th</sup> & Cedar Ave)  
215-748-9525

**North** Episcopal Hospital – 100 E Lehigh St (Lehigh & A St)  
215-707-2577

**Northwest** Germantown Community Health Services – 1 Penn Blvd  
(Olney & Wister St)  
215-951-8300

**Northeast** Friends Hospital – 4641 Roosevelt Blvd  
215-831-2600

**Children Only** Children’s Crisis Response Center  
3300 Henry Ave (Henry & Roosevelt Blvd)  
Two Building, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
215-878-2600

### Outpatient Services

Contact your health insurance provider. If you have Medical Assistance (Medicaid), contact Community Behavioral Health at 888-545-2600.



# HEALTH



## HOW DO I GET HELP WITH ADDICTION?

### **Inpatient Services**

Contact your health insurance provider. If you have Medical Assistance (Medicaid), contact Community Behavioral Health 888-545-2600.

### **Additional Resources**

Office of Addiction Services	215-685-5403
Alcoholics Anonymous	215-923-7900
Narcotics Anonymous	215-440-8400
Problem Gamblers Helpline	800-848-1880
Prevention Point Syringe Exchange	215-634-5272

## HOW DO I REPORT NEGLECT OR ABUSE?

### **Child Protective Services**

Report abuse or neglect of a child age 0-17  
215-683-6100 or 800-923-0313

### **Adult Protective Services**

Report abuse or neglect of an adult with a disability age 18-59  
800-490-8505

### **Older Adult Protective Services**

Report abuse or neglect of an adult age 60 and up  
215-765-9040

# WORK



## WHERE CAN I GET HELP WITH EMPLOYMENT?

### **CareerLink**

1-833-750-JOBS (5627)

[www.pacareerlinkphl.org/events](http://www.pacareerlinkphl.org/events)

### **Philadelphia Unemployment Project (PUP)**

215-557-0822

[www.philaup.org](http://www.philaup.org)

### **Urban League Career Center**

215-985-3220

[www.urbanleaguephila.org/what-we-do/career-services](http://www.urbanleaguephila.org/what-we-do/career-services)

### **Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians**

9 week job orientation for immigrants

<https://welcomingcenter.org>

## WHERE CAN I GET SMALL BUSINESS HELP?

### **Office of Business Services**

215-683-2100

[www.phila.gov/commerce/businessSupport/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.phila.gov/commerce/businessSupport/Pages/default.aspx)

### **Wharton Small Business Development Center**

215-898-4861

<https://whartonsbdc.wharton.upenn.edu>

## WHERE CAN I GO FOR HELP WITH UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION?

### **PA Office of Unemployment Compensation**

888-313-7284

[www.uc.pa.gov](http://www.uc.pa.gov)

# EXTRA HELP



## WHERE CAN VETERANS GO FOR HELP?

### **Veterans Multi Service Center**

Including the Perimeter and Women Veterans Center  
213-217 N 4<sup>th</sup> St  
215-923-2600  
[www.vmcenter.org](http://www.vmcenter.org)

### **Impact Services Corporation**

147 W Allegheny Ave  
215-739-0243  
[www.impactservices.org](http://www.impactservices.org)

### **Project HOME**

4133 Chestnut St  
215-232-7272  
[www.projecthome.org](http://www.projecthome.org)

### **UESF Veterans Program**

1608 Walnut St, Suite 600  
215-814-6888  
[www.uesfacts.org](http://www.uesfacts.org)

### **The Veterans Group**

3209 Baring St  
215-222-4379  
[www.theveteransgroup.org](http://www.theveteransgroup.org)

## WHERE CAN IMMIGRANTS GO FOR HELP?

### **HIAS Pennsylvania**

2100 Arch St  
215-832-0900  
[www.hiaspa.org](http://www.hiaspa.org)

### **Nationalities Service Center**

1216 Arch St, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
215-893-8400  
[www.nscphila.org](http://www.nscphila.org)

### **Esperanza**

4261 N 5<sup>th</sup> St  
215-324-0746  
[www.esperanza.us/eils](http://www.esperanza.us/eils)

# EXTRA HELP



## WHERE CAN PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES GO FOR HELP?

### **Disability Rights PA**

1315 Walnut St, Suite 500

215-238-8070

[www.disabilityrightspa.org](http://www.disabilityrightspa.org)

### **Mental Health Partnerships**

1211 Chestnut St, Suite 1100

215-751-1800

[www.mentalhealthpartnerships.org](http://www.mentalhealthpartnerships.org)

### **Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health**

215-685-6440

[www.dbhids.org](http://www.dbhids.org)

### **Mayor's Office on People with Disabilities**

215-686-2798

## WHERE CAN SENIORS GO FOR HELP?

### **Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of the Elderly**

800-356-3606

[www.carie.org](http://www.carie.org)

### **Philadelphia Corporation for Aging**

215-765-9040

[www.pcacares.org](http://www.pcacares.org)

### **Mayor's Commission on Services to the Aging**

215-686-8450

### **Elder Justice Resource Center**

(215) 686-7027, (215) 686-7028, (215) 686-7029

<https://www.courts.phila.gov/ejc/>

# EXTRA HELP



## WHERE CAN PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ GO FOR HELP?

### **Mazzoni Center**

1348 Bainbridge St

215-563-0652

[www.mazzonicenter.org](http://www.mazzonicenter.org)

### **Trans Equity Project (TIP)**

149 W Susquehanna Ave

267-457-3912 or 866-222-3871

### **Galaei**

149 W Susquehanna Ave

267-457-3912

[www.galaei.org](http://www.galaei.org)

### **Attic Youth Center (Ages 14-23)**

255 S. 16th Street

215-545-4331

[www.atticyouthcenter.org](http://www.atticyouthcenter.org)

### **William Way House**

1315 Spruce St

215-732-2220

[www.waygay.org](http://www.waygay.org)

## WHERE CAN VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE GO FOR HELP?

### **Women Against Abuse Domestic Violence Hotline**

866-723-3014

[www.womenagainstabuse.org](http://www.womenagainstabuse.org)

### **Women Organized Against Rape**

215-985-3333

[www.woar.org](http://www.woar.org)