

Know Your Rights to Pest-Free Housing: Tenants' Rights Resources

Fears of rent increases or eviction can make it scary to request repairs from your landlord. Understanding your rights as a renter may help you make an informed decision.

State law

Under California law, landlords are responsible for keeping their property free of pests and eliminating infestations if they occur. Tenants should report signs of pests to their landlord or property management. If the infestation is not addressed in a reasonable amount of time, tenants can contact their local code enforcement agency to report the problem (see "What to do if landlords don't make needed repairs" section for more advice). Code enforcement will then inspect the property and require the owner to address the infestation as well as any other code violation that contributes to the infestation, such as plumbing or other water leaks.

More broadly, California law outlines the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants beyond housing conditions, including caps on annual rent increases, limits on eviction, and protections against retaliation. You can find details through the resources from the CA Dept. of Justice Know Your Rights as a California Tenant and the CA Dept. of Justice Housing Conditions in both English and Spanish at the QR code below.

Local laws

You may have additional protections from your city and/or county. You can contact a local legal aid organization to find out what, if any, additional rights you may have where you live. You can search for organizations providing free legal aid services through Law Help California and the State Bar of California through links at the AR code below. You can also call the statewide Tenants' Rights Hotline at (888) 495-8020 run by Tenants Together, a statewide tenants' rights organization.

What to do if landlords don't make needed repairs

While state law requires landlords to make repairs in a reasonable time, there still may be instances where landlords refuse to make the repairs, make inadequate repairs, or delay repairs. In this situation, we strongly recommend contacting a local legal aid organization through the links above. These organizations have housing attorneys available for free legal advice. Additionally, Tenants Together created a useful guide for renters in both English and Spanish at the QR code below.

