



Housing Rights: What you need to know if you are a victim of domestic violence, sexual violence, dating violence, or stalking

Under an Illinois law called the Safe Homes Act, you can...

→ End your lease early

If you or any member of your household is a victim of domestic or sexual violence, you can end your written or oral lease early, even when the abuser is a member of the household, as long as:

- There is a credible imminent threat of future harm on the premises; AND
- You give written notice to your landlord 3 days before or after you leave your apartment or house.

If you are a victim of sexual violence, you DO NOT have to show credible imminent threat of harm on the premises, as long as:

- You provide written notice to your landlord 3 days before or after you leave your apartment or house (and within 60 days of the assault); AND
- You provide evidence (e.g., medical/court/police evidence OR statement from a victim services/domestic violence/rape crisis agency).

→ Change your locks

You can request a lock change from your landlord when you have a written lease and when the abuser is NOT a leaseholder if:

- There is a credible imminent threat of domestic or sexual violence; AND
- You give a written request to your landlord with evidence (medical/court/police evidence OR statement from a victim services/domestic violence/rape crisis agency).

Oral and written leaseholders who SHARE a lease with the abuser must obtain a court order granting exclusive possession of the premises. To request a lock change, you must give your landlord written notice as well as a copy of the court order.

→ Protect your privacy

A landlord cannot disclose to a prospective landlord:

- You exercised your rights under the Safe Homes Act; AND
- Any information that you give your landlord about the violence or stalking (e.g., medical record/statement from a victim services/domestic violence/rape crisis agency).

If you provide evidence in support of your claim of violence, you do not waive your right to confidentiality of that information or the confidentiality that may exist between you and your counseling agency. If a landlord discloses to a prospective landlord that you have exercised your rights under the Act, or any supportive evidence that you provided, the landlord is liable for actual damages resulting from the disclosure up to \$2,000.

For all PRIVATE MARKET HOUSING and all SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

CALL FOR HELP

In Cook County

Domestic Violence Help Line: 877-TO END DV
Rape Crisis Hotline: 888-293-2080
Legal Assistance Foundation: 312-341-1070
CARPLS Legal Services: 312-738-9200

Outside Cook County

Land of Lincoln Legal Help: 800-252-8629
Prairie State Legal Services: 800-531-7057
Domestic Violence Assistance: 217-789-2830
Sexual Assault Assistance: 217-753-4117

For more information, please contact katewalz@povertylaw.org, 312-263-3830 ext. 232
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