

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

AS A NEW YORK CITY TENANT

NYC law protects your right to a safe, livable apartment — regardless of immigration status. Here are the basics every tenant should know.

YOUR RIGHTS

Heat & hot water

Your landlord must provide hot water 24/7/365 at a minimum of 120°F. During heat season (Oct 1 – May 31), your apartment must reach at least 68°F during the day when it's below 55°F outside, and at least 62°F at night. Landlords who fail to provide heat face penalties of \$250–\$1,000 per day.

Repairs

Your landlord is legally required to keep your apartment safe and livable. This includes fixing leaks, broken fixtures, peeling paint, damaged floors, walls, ceilings, and defective plumbing or electrical systems. You do not need your landlord's permission to file a complaint about conditions in your apartment.

Pests

Mice, rats, and roaches are Class C (immediately hazardous) violations — your landlord has 21 days to address them. Bedbugs are Class B (hazardous) — 30 days. Your landlord must also file an annual bedbug history report for your building, which is publicly available.

Mold

Under Local Law 55 of 2018, your landlord must remediate mold and fix the underlying moisture source. Deadlines depend on severity: under 10 sq ft = 90 days, 10–29 sq ft = 30 days, 30+ sq ft = 21 days. Buildings with 10+ units must use a licensed assessor and remediator for areas over 10 sq ft.

Lease renewals & rent stabilization

If your apartment is rent-stabilized, your landlord must offer you a lease renewal. Not sure if you're stabilized? You can request your rent history from NYS DHCR (833-499-0343) or use JustFix's free rent history tool online.

Lead paint

Under Local Law 1 of 2004, landlords must inspect for and fix lead paint hazards in apartments where children under 6 live. Peeling or chipping paint in pre-1978 buildings should always be reported — don't wait.

Retaliation is illegal

Your landlord cannot raise your rent, reduce services, threaten eviction, refuse to renew your lease, or harass you because you filed a complaint, called 311, contacted HPD, joined a tenant association, or exercised any legal right. If you're a market-rate tenant, retaliation protections still apply — they aren't limited to rent-stabilized apartments.

Window guards

NYC law requires window guards in any apartment where a child 10 years old or younger lives. Your landlord must install them at no cost to you. Request them in writing and keep a copy.

Right to organize

You have the legal right to form or join a tenant association in your building. Your landlord cannot retaliate against you for organizing, meeting with other tenants, or communicating about building conditions.

Immigration status doesn't matter

Every NYC housing protection on this page applies to you regardless of your immigration status. Your landlord cannot threaten to report you to ICE, refuse repairs because of your national origin, or use your status against you in any way. If they do, contact the NYC Commission on Human Rights at 212-416-0197.

Right to a livable apartment

NYC's warranty of habitability means your landlord cannot collect full rent while your apartment has serious problems. If conditions are bad enough, you may be entitled to a rent reduction through DHCR or Housing Court — even retroactively.

Free legal help exists

NYC's Right to Counsel law guarantees free legal representation to qualifying low-income tenants facing eviction. Even outside of eviction, organizations like Met Council on Housing ([212-979-0611](tel:212-979-0611)), Housing Court Answers ([212-962-4795](tel:212-962-4795)), and Legal Services NYC ([917-661-4500](tel:917-661-4500)) provide free help.

NEED HELP TAKING ACTION?

Scan the code or visit the site for free, step-by-step guides on what to do about heat, mold, pests, leaks, and more — including complaint templates, phone scripts, and a tool to look up your building's violation history.

tenanttriagenyc.org



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