



Housing Rights for Immigrant Tenants

Special Thanks

We would like to extend our appreciation to the following organizations who provided valuable information and insight

Shriver Center on Poverty Law **MALDEF** **Legal Aid Chicago**
Autonomous Tenants Union **Family Focus Cicero**
Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights



ABOUT

This guide covers basic housing rights and policies for immigrant tenants living in Illinois, regardless of immigration status. It includes tenant protections, landlord responsibilities and obligations, and free housing resources. It also offers descriptions of legal processes and the right to interpreters/translators in legal proceedings, as well as other means for immigrant tenants to defend their rights and report unequal treatment.

This handbook is available in Spanish and in digital formats at www.latinopolicyforum.org.

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This handbook provides essential information on Illinois, Cook County, City of Chicago and other local municipal housing laws and protections. Any errors or omissions are the responsibility of the Latino Policy Forum.

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POLICY FORUM 

GLOSSARY

Definitions are listed in order of page number.

Implied Warranty of Habitability (pg. 1): Illinois courts hold that, in every written or oral lease, the landlord is required to keep the property in a condition that is safe or “habitable” for the tenant. This agreement must be kept by the landlord for the whole duration of the lease.

Building codes (pg. 1): Rules and standards that buildings must heed to ensure that the residents’ health, safety, and welfare are protected.

Residential Tenants’ Right to Repair Act (pg. 1): A landlord is legally required to make repairs to a unit after receiving a written request from a tenant, as long as the repairs do not exceed \$500 or half of the monthly rent.

Retaliatory Eviction Act (pg. 2): A landlord cannot end or refuse renewal of a tenant’s lease because the tenant reported any violations of building code, health, or any other regulations/ordinances to a government organization.

Residential Tenant and Landlord Ordinance (RTLO) (pg. 3): These city- and county-wide ordinances provide landlords and tenants with specific rights, responsibilities, and protections, such as tenant protections against lockouts.

Lockout (pg. 3): A lockout is when the landlord removes, changes, or adds new locks to your unit/property. Other forms of lockouts are cutting off utilities, removing appliances or personal property, or removing doors and/or windows. Lockouts are always illegal.

Forcible Entry and Detainer Act (pg. 5): Protects tenants against unlawful or forcible entry into a housing unit by the landlord.

Default judgment (pg. 5): A judgment in favor of one party in a lawsuit because of failure to take action on the part of the other party.

Summons and Complaint (pg. 5): Official court documents that begin a lawsuit.

Eviction order (pg. 5): Sometimes called a writ of eviction, an eviction order is issued after a landlord wins an eviction case. It allows a person or group to take possession of the property, forcing the current residents out.

Sealed evictions (pg. 5): An eviction is sealed when it no longer appears on your record. This means that no one will be able to see that you have been evicted.

Foreclosure (pg. 6): When a property owner has failed to keep up with their mortgage payments and the property is taken from the owner.

At-will lease termination (pg. 6): If a tenant has an oral or month-to-month lease, the landlord or tenant can end the tenancy at any time without a reason as long as they provide a written notice within the legal timeframe.

Public Housing Authority’s grievance procedure (pg. 7): The process a tenant living in a public housing building has to follow when filing a complaint with respect to the Public Housing Authority’s action or failure to act in accordance with the individual tenant’s lease or the Public Housing Authority’s regulations.

Subsidized housing (pg. 7): Subsidized housing is when a privately owned property receives payment from the government for renting to tenants with low to moderate income. Tenants who live in these types of properties are considered subsidized housing tenants and pay rent based on their income.

Fair Housing Rights (pg. 8): Protections against housing discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability.

Discrimination (pg. 8): Unfair or unequal treatment of an individual (or group) based on certain characteristics, such as race, national origin, etc.

Ancestry (pg. 8): A person’s family heritage or line of descent.

Housing Voucher (pg. 8): A certificate available for certain populations (such as veterans, persons with disabilities, elders) who are low-income and meet certain requirements for reduced-cost housing.

Safe Homes Act (pg. 9): Protections for survivors of domestic and sexual violence who live in rental and subsidized housing. This act allows survivors to change the locks or leave their housing unit to protect their safety.

Just Housing Amendment (pg. 11): A recent amendment to the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance that protects tenants with a criminal record from discrimination.

Illinois Code of Civil Procedures (pg. 13): Rules set by the State that must be followed in civil court in Illinois.

Judicial Circuits Language Access Plan (pg. 13): A framework that each judicial circuit lays out to provide timely and meaningful language assistance to Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons in their courts. Language Access Plans also ensure that they are given equal access to court and relevant court services.

Section 8 housing (pg. 14): A federal program that allows landlords with private property to rent out apartments or homes they own at a fair and equitable market rate for those who qualified for low-income housing. Section 8 also refers to Section 8 vouchers, which are funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

2019 Public Charge Rule (pg. 14): This rule redefined the term “public charge” to apply to an immigrant who would be likely to receive in the future SNAP (Link Card), Medicaid (with certain exceptions), Section 8 Housing, or Federal Public Housing for a certain amount of time. **As of March 9, 2021, this rule is no longer in effect.** Federal immigration officials are now using the pre-existing 1999 public charge guidance.

1999 Public Charge Guidance (pg. 14): Guidelines used by federal immigration officials to examine an immigrant’s totality of circumstances when they apply for legal permanent residency or a visa. The totality of circumstances includes: financial status, age, health, English proficiency, and most importantly the financial sponsor’s affidavit of support. This is to determine if in the future the immigrant will require:

- long-term institutionalization paid for by the government such as nursing home care or mental health institutionalization, and/or
- cash assistance for income maintenance, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI); Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF); or state, local, or tribal general relief (e.g. General Assistance, cash assistance for AABD).

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) (pg. 14): A program funded through general tax revenue by the federal government. SSI gives financial support to those who are either aged, blind, and/or disabled and have little to no income. SSI can also provide cash assistance to help meet basic needs such as food, clothes, and shelter.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) (pg. 14): A federally funded program that will provide grants to states who will later provide these funds to families who need financial assistance and other related support services. Some of the programs TANF can include that are administered by the state are childcare assistance, work assistance, and job preparation.

Aid to the Aged, Blind, and Disabled (AABD) (pg. 14): Cash and medical assistance service programs that are offered to those who are aged (65 or older), blind, or disabled. AABD is a state-run program. You can get this assistance in addition to SSI assistance if you pay rent and utilities, or in replacement of SSI if you are not immigration-status eligible for SSI and meet state immigration requirements for Medicaid.

Federal public housing (pg. 14): A program of housing units for eligible low-income families and individuals administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and managed by local Public Housing Agencies (PHA). Building types range from single-family houses to high-rise apartments.

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ILLINOIS STATE LAW GENERAL HOUSING RIGHTS



All people have the right to a safe and stable home to build better futures for themselves and their families. In Illinois, you have the right to:

LIVE IN A SAFE, REASONABLY MAINTAINED HOME

The Implied Warranty of Habitability in Illinois states that a home is “uninhabitable” if it is “unsafe or unsanitary, and thus unfit for occupancy.”

In Illinois, your landlord is responsible for maintaining running water, electricity, and heat, based on the specific requirements of local building codes. If your heat is not functioning during the winter, your landlord has 24 hours to respond to your complaint with plans to resolve the issue.

ASK FOR REPAIRS TO YOUR RENTAL UNIT

Illinois Residential Tenants' Right to Repair Act

You have the right to repairs made within 14 days (or 72 hours in an emergency) that do not exceed \$500 or half of the monthly rent, whichever is less.

- 1 Request repairs in writing, including the date.
- 2 If the landlord refuses to make repairs, submit a formal letter with your rent.
- 3 If the landlord still does not make repairs by the given deadline, you have the right to hire a licensed professional to make the repairs and deduct the costs from your rent with a receipt.

SAMPLE LANGUAGE

“If you do not make the requested repair within 14 days, I will exercise my rights under the IL Residential Tenants’ Right to Repair Act (765 ILCS 742/1 et seq.) by making the repairs myself and reducing the expenses from my future rent.”

For government subsidized housing, contact your housing advisor or inspections office with complaints about housing conditions, and they should come inspect the premises for code violations.

If the repairs are not being made, talk to a local housing counseling agency. Call 800-569-4287 for a directory in English and Spanish based on services needed and zip code.

COMPLAIN TO ANY GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY OR TESTIFY IN COURT ABOUT THE STATE OF YOUR UNIT AND ENJOY EQUAL PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW

(See page 13 for your right to free interpretation/translation services)

Retaliatory Eviction Act

You have the right to report a complaint to any governmental authority about a violation of a building code, health ordinance, or similar regulation without threat of eviction or refusal to renew the lease.

Discussing or even mentioning a tenant’s immigration or citizenship status in civil proceedings is prohibited and irrelevant, unless the tenant mentions it or it is otherwise necessary to comply with federal law (for example, if the housing is federally subsidized, excluding federal emergency assistance).



RENT INCREASES

In Illinois, landlords cannot raise rent* during the time period of a written or a verbal lease. For month-to-month tenants, the landlord must provide 30 days’ notice, and for week-to-week tenants, they must provide seven days’ notice before the rent is due.

**Separate rules for notifying rent increases apply for federally subsidized housing.*

RESIDENTIAL TENANT AND LANDLORD ORDINANCES (RTLO)

Every tenant in Illinois is covered by Illinois laws, but some cities and counties also have their own local laws, called ordinances, that apply to landlords and tenants **regardless of immigration status**. These ordinances cover the rights and responsibilities of both tenants and landlords. Your landlord should provide you with a written summary of the RTLO with your lease.

Cook County Residential Tenant and Landlord Ordinance

Some highlights of the ordinance:

- Prevents landlords from charging late fees greater than \$10 a month for the monthly rent of up to \$1,000, plus 5% per month for the monthly rent over \$1,000.
- Limits security deposits to no more than one and a half months' rent.

Security deposits must be returned within 30 days after the tenant has left the unit. If a reasonable amount has been deducted for repairs, the landlord must provide an itemized list of damages and costs for repairs.
- Landlords cannot threaten to, attempt to, or forcefully remove a tenant without authority of the law. For example, landlords cannot change the locks, shut off utilities, or do anything else that interferes with the tenant's use of the apartment.

Lockouts are always illegal, but the Cook County RTLO adds extra protections. In Cook County, you can sue your landlord for up to two months' rent or twice the damages sustained by the tenant, whichever is greater. In municipalities outside of the City of Chicago, violations should be made to the Cook County Sheriff's Office at 773-674-4357.

See Appendix for sample letter to landlord for ending lockouts in Cook County.

To learn more: <https://cook-county.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=8696529&GUID=8F286650-83E2-4FF5-8E03-1246A8121B04>

Chicago Residential Landlord Tenant Ordinance

Some highlights of the ordinance:

- Prevents landlords from charging late fees greater than \$10 a month for the monthly rent of up to \$500, plus 5% per month for the monthly rent over \$500.
- Security deposits must be returned, minus any expenses for damages, within 45 days after the tenant has left the unit.

Before the landlord can deduct expenses for damages, they must first provide the tenant with an itemized list of damages within 30 days after the tenant has left the unit.
- Landlords cannot threaten to, attempt to, or forcefully remove a tenant without authority of the law. For example, landlords cannot change the locks, shut off utilities, or do anything else that interferes with the tenant's use of the apartment.

Lockouts are always illegal, but the Chicago RTLO adds extra protections. The City of Chicago will fine the landlord \$200 to \$500 for each day the lockout occurs. Violations should be reported to the Chicago Police Department. Call 311 for assistance.

To learn more: <https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/dcd/general/housing/RLTOEnglish.pdf>

Other Municipalities with their own RTLO

Village of Mount Prospect RTLO:

<https://www.mountprospect.org/home/showpublisheddocument?id=141>

Oak Park Village RTLO:

<https://www.oak-park.us/our-community/community-relations/landlord-tenant-handbook>

City of Evanston RTLO:

<https://www.cityofevanston.org/home/showdocument?id=636>

**Chicago and Cook County RTLO do not apply to landlords who live in and operate residential buildings with six or fewer units or residential units that are single-family homes where the owner manages the property and has lived there for at least a month in the past year prior to marketing the property.*

LOCKOUTS AND EVICTIONS

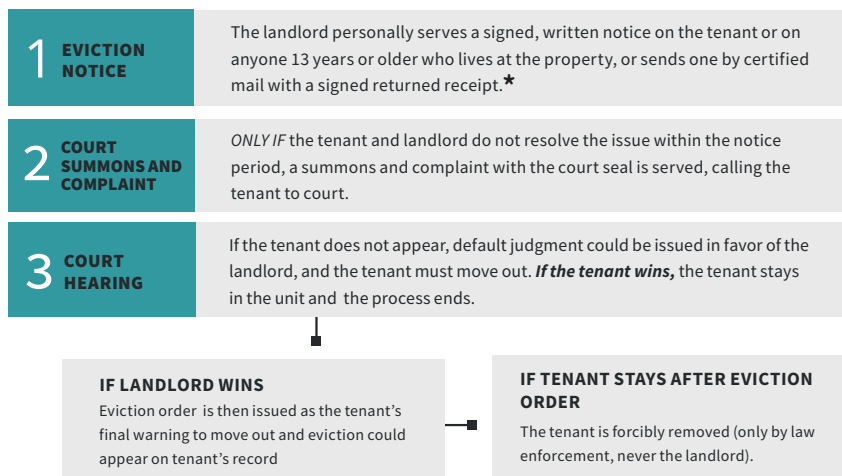
1 A landlord cannot forcibly enter your home, change the locks, break down the door, or cut off access to utilities in an attempt to evict you, pursuant to the Forcible Entry and Detainer Act.

The County Sheriff can forcibly retake possession for a landlord **only** on order from a judge, **only** after the landlord wins an eviction lawsuit and the tenant refuses to leave.

2 **DON'T SELF EVICT!** An eviction notice is not the same as an eviction.

An initial eviction notice is only the first step in the eviction process. It does not mean that the tenant has to move out immediately, and it does not necessarily mean that the tenant will have to appear in court. There will still be a chance to resolve the issue directly with the landlord, outside of court.

Eviction Process



LEGAL REPRESENTATION

The tenant can represent themselves in court or hire a lawyer. If the tenant can't afford a lawyer, they can contact organizations that provide low-cost and free legal representation in our resources section.

SEALED EVICTIONS

Eviction records between March 2020 and March 2022, with some exceptions, will be sealed. This will protect tenants who have been put into eviction proceedings as a result of late/missed rent payments due to COVID-19 hardships.

Types of Eviction Notices

The reason for eviction determines some aspects of the eviction process—mainly, how many days a tenant has to resolve the issue or fight the eviction in court.

5 DAY NOTICE

NONPAYMENT OF RENT

Upon receiving this **written** notice, the tenant can avoid going to court by repaying the past due rent in full within five days. In Illinois, if the landlord accepts partial payment of rent, the eviction becomes invalid, unless the notice states that *only full payment of rent will waive the landlord's right to terminate the lease*. In Chicago, the eviction process becomes invalid if the landlord accepts any payment of partial rent at all.

ILLEGAL ACTIVITY

A tenant may receive this **written** notice if they have committed a class X felony, such as armed robbery, aggravated battery, or aggravated arson.

10 DAY NOTICE

NONCOMPLIANCE

A tenant may receive this **written** eviction notice for violating terms of the lease or rental agreement, including more people than permitted residing in the unit, damaging rental property, or having pets if not permitted in the unit.

7/30/60 DAY NOTICE

AT-WILL LEASE TERMINATION

Either a tenant or landlord may submit a **written** notice to end the lease if the lease agreement does not specify a move-out date.

After the tenant has lived in the unit for:
At least a week: 7-day notice
Between a week and a year: 30-day notice
At least a year: 60-day notice

PROTECTIONS FOR WHEN YOUR RESIDENCE IS SOLD

Tenants must be informed that the property has been sold and they have a new landlord within 10 days of purchase. If a building/unit is sold, all oral or written leases remain valid for the duration of the lease. New landlords cannot raise rents, remove tenants, force tenants to sign a new lease, or withhold security deposits for a purchased property. The new landlord is responsible for obtaining all pertinent documents and deposits from the former owner and paying security deposits back when the tenant leaves.*

90 DAY NOTICE

FORECLOSURE OF UNIT

A tenant may receive this **written** notice if their unit is part of property that has been foreclosed upon and their rental cannot continue. Tenants have 90 days to move regardless of whether they have a verbal or written lease.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE LOCKED OUT OR ILLEGALLY EVICTED

Lockouts are always illegal regardless of immigration status.

- 1 Call an attorney or trusted housing organization to file a police report with the county sheriff. If you're in Chicago, report it to the Chicago Police Department. See resources on pages 15-24.**

In an emergency, call 911.

Be prepared to give the police or dispatcher your name and address as well as the landlord's name and phone number. If the dispatcher or officer responds that it's a "civil matter," ask to speak with the watch commander, or call 911 again and request to speak with the watch commander from the beginning of the call. Make sure to have an ID or a photo of your ID showing your address. A consulate ID (matrícula consular), Chicago CityKey, or TVDL (Temporary Driver's License) are all acceptable.

- 2 If the landlord does not end the lockout:**

- You can file charges in court to obtain a temporary restraining order and have the property returned to you until the issue is resolved.
- In Chicago: You can file a complaint by calling 311. The city can fine your landlord \$200-\$500 for every day the lockout occurs. You will need a copy of the police report to file the complaint.
- In Cook County: You can sue your landlord for up to 2 months rent or twice damages incurred, whichever is greater. You will need a copy of the police report to file the complaint.

- 3 In general, if an undocumented tenant must call or interact with the police, the ACLU recommends:**

Stay calm. Don't run, argue, resist, or obstruct the officer, even if you believe your rights are being violated. Keep your hands where police can see them.

You do not have to consent to a search of yourself or your belongings.

You do not have to answer questions about where you were born, whether you are a U.S. citizen, or how you entered the country. Anything you tell an officer can later be used against you in immigration court.

Don't lie or produce any false documents. Don't sign anything without speaking with a lawyer first, and don't sign any documents in English if you only understand limited English.

- 4 Subsidized housing tenants have a right to prepare a defense against perceived wrongful eviction through the public housing authority's grievance procedure.**



FAIR HOUSING RIGHTS

In Illinois, landlords cannot refuse to rent or sell to you, provide limited options, alter terms of the rental agreement, or in any other way give you unequal treatment because of your *race, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, familial status (including the age and number of children), physical or mental disability, age, marital status, unfavorable military discharge, sex, pregnancy, order of protection status, or sexual orientation.*



This includes discrimination in the terms and conditions of any real estate transaction, advertising materials, and financial lending.

If you are experiencing discrimination:



Try to get communication in writing (text, e-mail, letter). Keep copies of these and any voice messages. Take good notes on any conversations (when, who, what was said).



Report housing discrimination to a housing advocacy organization or the Illinois Department of Human Rights: IDHR.FairHousing@illinois.gov, (312)-814-6200. Find more resources on pages 15-24.

In Chicago and Cook County, landlords cannot discriminate based on the tenant's source of income, such as a housing voucher.

Protections for tenants with disabilities

Illinois Fair Housing Laws require that tenants with disabilities be given Reasonable Accommodations and Modifications to their rental units.

- You have the right to request a change to a policy or practice to allow you equal access to housing, such as closer or wider parking spots or an exception to a no-pet rule.
- You also have the right to request physical modifications to the structure of the rental unit to allow you equal access, such as bars in the bathroom or a ramp in the common areas. The tenant may be responsible for paying for these changes. Contact a housing advocacy organization for information about financial assistance.

A landlord cannot ask general questions about a tenant's disability.

Protections based on sex and gender

Sex- and gender-based discrimination includes sexual harassment. It is illegal for a landlord to make any unwelcome sexual advances on a tenant or coerce them in any way that may interfere with an individual's rental or purchase of a property or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. For example, landlords cannot write sexual favors into the terms of a lease or refuse to rent to a tenant because of their response to harassment.

SAFE HOMES ACT

If you have been in a violent or abusive housing situation (such as domestic violence, child abuse, or elder abuse), you and your family have the right to:



- 1 Break your lease and leave the home without having to continue paying rent, as long as you give the landlord **written notice** three days before or after you leave the home, and/or
- 2 Request an emergency lock change via **written notice** to keep the abuser out of the home in an emergency situation.

This act covers rental housing and subsidized housing (such as Section 8 housing choice vouchers) and applies to written and oral leases.



What to include in the written notice

- 1 The reason for vacating the premises was because of domestic or sexual violence against the tenant or member of the tenant's household.
- 2 The date of the domestic or sexual violence.
- 3 At least one form of the following types of evidence:
 - medical, court, or police evidence of violence, or
 - statement from an employee of a victim-services or rape crisis organization from which the tenant or a member of the tenant's household sought services

IMMIGRATION STATUS DISCLOSURE AND NATIONAL ORIGIN PROTECTIONS

- Landlords can't discriminate against you because of the country you or your family are from.
- If landlords ask about immigration status, they must ask **ALL** applicants.
- Fair housing agencies should not ask about immigration status.

It is illegal to require additional fees or documentation due to perceived national origin or ancestry, regardless of immigration status.

ALTERNATIVE DOCUMENTS A TENANT CAN ASK A LANDLORD TO ACCEPT WHEN APPLYING TO RENT



IDENTITY

Consulate card, current foreign passport with I-551 stamp or I-94 form (arrival record), I-864 form (sponsorship verification), school ID card with photograph, hospital records, or Chicago CityKey, among other options. Contact a trusted housing organization for details.



PAST RENTAL HISTORY

School records, letter from utility company (energy, water, gas, etc.), copy of lease from former residence, or letter from former landlord with a phone number.



CREDIT/ABILITY TO PAY

Letter from employer or current pay stubs, sponsorship letters or I-864 form, or Section 8 voucher, among other options.

JUST HOUSING AMENDMENT

COOK COUNTY



1

This amendment to the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance protects tenants, including in Chicago, from discrimination based on their criminal record.

2

In Cook County, landlords cannot deny rental applications based on the applicant's criminal history, including arrests or citations, juvenile records, or most convictions over three years old.

3

It is illegal for landlords to have blanket "no criminal record" policies. During individualized assessments, landlords must offer each applicant a chance to share information about convictions, evidence of rehabilitation, etc.

4

If you believe you have been discriminated against because of your prior justice involvement, contact the Chicago Lawyers Committee for Civil rights or the Uptown People's Law Center.

IMMIGRANT TENANT PROTECTION ACT (ITPA)

This law went into effect in August 2019. It prohibits Illinois landlords from **harassing, threatening, or evicting** tenants based on actual or perceived immigration or citizenship status.



Protects all renters, regardless of immigrant status.



Protects everyone living in the household, not just people named on the lease.



Protects tenants with both written and verbal leases.

If your lease recently expired but you continue paying rent, the ITPA may still cover you for up to 60 days, and you should contact a fair housing organization for assistance.

Landlords cannot use your immigration status to:

- ⚠ Threaten to call Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), evict you, or shut off utilities for exercising your rights.
- ⚠ Intimidate you, harass you, or force you to move.
- ⚠ Require tenants to share their immigration status or mention their immigration or citizenship status during civil court proceedings (unless you bring it up or the housing is federally subsidized, excluding federal emergency assistance).

If you win a lawsuit against your landlord, you could win:

- ✓ Money for physical, financial, or emotional damages suffered as a result of discrimination
- ✓ An additional \$2,000 for each incident, and
- ✓ Money to pay for your lawyer



LIMITATIONS OF IMMIGRANT TENANT PROTECTION ACT



- Only protects tenants in places where they already rent or were renting in the past (as of August 2019)
- Does **not** cover federally funded housing that requires landlords to check status
- Does **not** prohibit landlords from asking for references or credit checks
- Tenants must continue paying rent until they move

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO FREE INTERPRETATION AND TRANSLATION SERVICES



If a prospective tenant brings an interpreter/translator, landlords must work with the interpreter/translator.



Landlords should make sure tenants understand the lease and provide it in alternate formats (e.g. provide the written lease in Spanish).

If the landlord refuses to provide a lease in a certain language, it may be a violation of Fair Housing or other civil rights laws, and you should consult an attorney.



All individuals have the right to request an interpreter in any Illinois court when they check in with the clerk for civil cases. The services of court foreign language interpreters are provided at no cost to the individual in need of the service, consistent with the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure and the judicial circuit's Language Access Plan (735 ILCS 5/8-1403).

Any organization that receives federal funding is obligated (Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act) to provide language services free of charge to the recipient.

The 2019 Public Charge Rule is Permanently Blocked

As of March 9, 2021, the 2019 public charge rule is permanently blocked nationwide. This means that SNAP, Section 8, Public Housing, and Medicaid (with the exception of long-term institutionalization) are **NO longer** included as part of adjustment to legal status (green card process).

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC CHARGE?

The public charge is part of federal immigration law under which the immigrant applying for legal permanent residency (green card) or a visa to enter the US can be denied if they are deemed "likely to become primarily dependent on the government for subsistence."

Under current guidance, immigration officials will consider an applicant's age, income, English proficiency, and financial sponsorship, as well as past use of the following two programs:

- 1 **Long-term institutionalization paid for by the government, such as:**
 - Nursing home care
 - Mental health institutionalization
- 2 **Cash assistance for income maintenance, such as:**
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
 - State, local, or tribal general relief (e.g. General Assistance, cash assistance for AABD).

Note: Undocumented individuals are not eligible for these federal programs.

WHAT HAS CHANGED?

Now, your applications for legal residency **WILL NOT** be affected by the use of federal housing programs, such as:

- 1 **Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher**
- 2 **Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance (including the Moderate Rehabilitation Program)**
- 3 **Public Housing**

Note: Undocumented tenants are not eligible for federal housing programs, but they can live with family members or individuals who are eligible.

All immigrant families, regardless of immigration status, can and should access the emergency rental, mortgage, and cash assistance programs for which they are eligible, as well as:

■ **EMERGENCY SHELTERS & TRANSITIONAL HOUSING**
www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=98150

■ **HUD LOCAL CONTINUUM OF CARE**
www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc

■ **HOMELESS PREVENTION PROGRAMS**
www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=110583

For more information:

www.protectingimmigrantfamiliesillinois.org
IL Department of Human Services Help Line: 1-800-843-6154

Housing Resources for All Tenants

REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS

All resources offer free or low-cost services and speak both Spanish and English, unless otherwise noted.

Eviction and Lockout Assistance

State of Illinois

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Eviction Help Illinois	Legal aid, mediation services, and resources in response to the eviction crisis	evictionhelpillinois.org	Call: 1-855-631-0811 Text: 844-938-4280 (ENG), 844-938-4289 (SPN)	—
Illinois Free Legal Answers	Secure website where users can ask questions about civil matters including evictions, discrimination, and abuse	il.freelegalanswers.org	—	—

Cook County

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Cook County Legal Aid for Housing and Debt	Legal aid for tenants, landlords, and homeowners living in Cook County with a hotline for renters facing eviction or unresolved debt issues	cookcountylegalaid.org	855-956-5763	—
Coordinated Advice & Referral Program for Legal Services (CARPLS)	Free legal advice, legal aid hotline, and court-based help centers for people representing themselves	carpls.org	312-738-9200	info@carpls.org
Catholic Charities Legal Assistance Department (Cook and Lake Counties)	Legal housing aid with eviction issues, disability housing, mental health counseling, and services for domestic violence survivors, among others	catholiccharities.net	312-948-6821	—

City of Chicago

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing with Rentervention	Legal housing support with issues including evictions, negotiating with your landlord, lockouts, discrimination, and more	lcbh.org/get-legal-help rentervention.com	Main Number: 312-347-7600 Tenants in Foreclosure Helpline: 312-784-3507	—
Metropolitan Tenants Organization	Advocates for affordable, stable, accessible, and habitable housing with support services including a tenants rights hotline	tenants-rights.org	773-292-4988	—
La Casa Norte	Provides permanent, transitional, and emergency housing to youth and families facing homelessness	lacasanorte.org	773-276-4900	info@lacasanorte.org
Westside Justice Center	Legal aid in both civil and criminal matters* *Does not offer services in Spanish	westsidejustice.org	773-940-2213	intakes@westsidejustice.org

Eviction and Lockout Assistance

Other Areas

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Únete La Villita (North and South Lawndale)	Eviction defense/lockout hotline for North and South Lawndale and other community resources	facebook.com/UneteLaVillita	773-313-0870	unetelavillita@gmail.com
Northwest Side Housing Center (Belmont Cragin and the Northwest Side)	Rental counseling, foreclosure prevention, and other housing supports	nwshc.org	773-283-3888	rental@northwestsidecdc.org
University YMCA New American Welcome Center (Champaign County)	Provides permanent, transitional, and emergency housing to youth and families facing homelessness	universityymca.org/welcome	217-417-5897	laline@universityymca.org legal@universityymca.org
Northside Community Resources (North Side of Chicago)	Legal housing support, especially for housing discrimination claims	northsidecommunityresources.org	773-338-7722, ext. 26	info@northsidecr.com
Uptown People's Law Center (Uptown area of Chicago)	Defense against evictions for low-income renters around Uptown	uplccchicago.org	773-769-1411	uplc@uplccchicago.org
Catholic Charities Legal Assistance Department (Cook and Lake Counties)	Legal housing aid with eviction issues, disability housing, mental health counseling, and services for domestic violence survivors, among others	catholiccharities.net	312-948-6821	—

Discrimination Assistance

State of Illinois

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund	Legal housing support for ITPA cases (discrimination based on immigration status)	maldef.org	312-772-3535	intake.maldefchi@gmail.com
Illinois Department of Human Rights	Resources to report and file discrimination complaints	illinois.gov/dhr	312-814-6200	idhr.fairhousing@illinois.gov
HOPE Fair Housing Center	Advocacy and support for tenants experiencing housing discrimination	hopefair.org	630-690-6500, ext. 202	info@hopefair.org

Cook County

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Cook County Commission on Human Rights	Investigates fair housing discrimination complaints	cookcountyil.gov/agency/commission-human-rights	312-603-1100	human.rights@cookcountyil.gov
UIC Law Fair Housing Legal Clinic	Provides pro bono legal representation in housing discrimination cases, and issues arising out of the discrimination such as retaliation, property maintenance, criminal records and other claims	law.uic.edu/experiential-education/clinics/fairhousing/clients/	312-786-2267	law-fairhousingclinic@uic.edu

Discrimination Assistance

City of Chicago

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights	Legal aid for housing discrimination based on race, national origin, prior justice involvement, and source of income	clccrul.org	708-568-0246	jschwalb@clccrul.org
Uptown People's Law Center	Legal aid for housing discrimination, especially discrimination based on criminal record	uplcchicago.org	773-769-1411	uplc@uplcchicago.org
UIC Law Fair Housing Legal Clinic	Provides pro bono legal representation in housing discrimination cases, and issues arising out of the discrimination such as retaliation, property maintenance, criminal records and other claims.	law.uic.edu/experiential-education/clinics/fairhousing/clients/	312-786-2267	law-fairhousingclinic@uic.edu
Access Living	Legal housing support, especially for tenants with disabilities	accessliving.org	312-640-2106	civilrightsintake@accessliving.org

Other Areas

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Open Communities (Evanston and north suburban Chicago)	Legal housing support in Evanston and other north suburban Chicago areas	open-communities.org	847-501-5760	info@open-communities.org
Northside Community Resources (North Side of Chicago)	Legal housing support, especially for housing discrimination claims	northsidecommunityresources.org	773-338-7722, ext. 16	fairhousing@northsidecr.com

Immigration Assistance

State of Illinois

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Protecting Immigrant Families-Illinois	Coalition working to defend access to basic essential needs programs and provide information on immigration policies	protectingimmigrantfamiliesillinois.org	—	pifillinois@povertylaw.org
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights Family Support Hotline	Education, advocacy, rights trainings, and other support services for immigrants	icirr.org	855-435-7693	fsn@icirr.org
Illinois Department of Human Services	Holistic case management and service coordination to immigrants and refugees through the Illinois Welcoming Centers	dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=124289	312-793-7120	dhs.bris@illinois.gov

Immigration Assistance

Cook County

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Mil Mujeres	Nationwide organization that provides legal immigration services with an emphasis on helping survivors of violent crime, including domestic violence and sexual assault	en.milmujeres.org	Nacional: 202-808-3311 Chicago: 312-219-2031	info@milmujeres.org questions@milmujeres.org
Catholic Charities Immigration/Naturalization Services Program (Cook and Lake Counties)	Immigration support for issues including family reunification and domestic violence, among other services	catholiccharities.net	312-427-7078	gethelp@catholiccharities.net

Other Areas

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
The Resurrection Project (Chicago's southwest neighborhoods and western suburbs)	Legal immigration aid as well as advocacy for tenants' and immigrants' rights, among other services	resurrectionproject.org	312-666-1323	—
University YMCA New American Welcome Center (Champaign County)	Resources and assistance with immigration, housing, healthcare, education, and other issues	universityymca.org/welcome	217-417-5897	laline@universityymca.org legal@universityymca.org
Catholic Charities Immigration/Naturalization Services Program (Cook and Lake Counties)	Legal aid in the areas of housing, immigration, and domestic violence	catholiccharities.net	312-427-7078	gethelp@catholiccharities.net
North Suburban Legal Aid Clinic (Lake County)	Legal aid in the areas of housing, immigration, and domestic violence	nslegalaid.org	847-737-4042	info@nslegalaid.org

Assistance for Tenants with Disabilities

State of Illinois

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living	Advocates for housing and personal rights for people with disabilities as well as peer support and skills trainings	incil.org	217-525-1308	—
The Arc of Illinois	Advocates for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and provides resources, trainings, and other support	thearcofil.org	815-464-1832	Contact page: thearcofil.org/take-action/contact-us/

Assistance for Tenants with Disabilities

Cook County

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Catholic Charities Legal Assistance Department (Cook and Lake Counties)	Legal housing aid, disability housing, mental health counseling, and services for domestic violence survivors, among others	catholiccharities.net	312-948-6821	—

City of Chicago

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Access Living	Legal housing support, especially for tenants with disabilities	accessliving.org	312-640-2106	civilrightsintake@accessliving.org

Other Areas

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Catholic Charities Legal Assistance Department (Cook and Lake Counties)	Legal housing aid, disability housing, mental health counseling, and services for domestic violence survivors, among others	catholiccharities.net	312-948-6821	—

Tenants' Unions

City of Chicago

Organization Name	Services Offered	Website	Phone Number	Email
Chicago Tenants Movement	Organizing opportunities and mutual aid networks	chicagotenants.org	773-657-8700	—
Autonomous Tenants Union	Opportunities to get involved in community housing justice movements and tenants' rights education	autonomoustenantsunion.org	872-216-5288	housing.atu@gmail.com

APPENDIX

Tenant Repair Letter Template

This letter can be sent as an email to your landlord.

Tenant: _____ Landlord: _____
 Unit Address: _____

PROBLEM/WORK REQUIRED:

I give permission to the landlord or its subcontractors to enter my leased premises and make necessary repairs if I am not present.

I am requesting that you fix the problem(s) within 14 days. If you do not make repairs within 14 days, I will hire a professional to repair the problem(s). Please note that if I hire a professional to repair the problem(s), I may send you the paid bill and I may deduct from rent the amount of the bill.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Repair Request Sample Log

	Repair Requested	Date	Contact
1	I have informed the landlord of mold in the bathroom.	01/22/2021	Email
2	I have reminded the landlord of the mold in the bathroom.	02/20/2021	Call
3	The roach infestation has been communicated to the landlord.	02/25/2021	Email
4	A text to inform the landlord of mold and roaches.	03/10/2021	Text
5			
6			
7			
8			

Security Deposit Return Request

Landlord Name: _____

Landlord Address: _____

Dear _____,

As you know, until _____ I leased the property located at _____ and regularly paid rent to your office. Upon moving in I paid a security deposit of \$_____, returnable upon my vacating of the premises. I left the unit after providing appropriate notice and left the premises cleaner than when I moved in. I also paid up any outstanding rent balances and fees and provided my forwarding address and email.

Under Illinois State Law, you had 30 days after my moving out to return my security deposit or provide an accounting of that money. As of today, _____, I have still not received my security deposit back or an accounting for it. You are now a week late in returning my deposit. Please be aware that I know my rights under 765 ILCS 710, and if I do not receive my deposit by _____ I will take appropriate legal steps.

Please mail my deposit to the address below. If you have any questions, please contact me at the number listed below.

Sincerely,

Tenant: _____

Tenant Address: _____

Tenant Phone Number: _____

Sample of Five Day Notice for Non-payment of Rent

FIVE DAY NOTICE TO QUIT

STATE OF ILLINOIS

COUNTY OF _____

To: _____

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that there is now due the undersigned Landlord, the sum of _____ as rent for the premises situated in the City of _____ and County of _____, Illinois and described as follows:

The property at _____ Unit Number _____, City of _____, Illinois, together with all buildings, sheds, closets, out-buildings, garages, barns, and other structures used in connection with said premises.

Payment of the sum due has been and is demanded of you and **UNLESS PAYMENT IS MADE ON OR BEFORE THE EXPIRATION OF FIVE DAYS AFTER THE SERVICE OF THIS NOTICE, YOUR LEASE OF THE PREMISES WILL BE TERMINATED FIVE DAYS AFTER SERVICE OF THIS NOTICE.**

ONLY FULL PAYMENT of the rent demanded in this notice will waive the Landlord's right to terminate the lease under this Notice, unless the Landlord agrees in writing to continue the lease in exchange for receiving partial payment.

Dated _____, 20____.

LANDLORD OR LANDLORD'S AGENT

AFFIDAVIT OF SERVICE

I, _____, being duly sworn, on oath deposes and says that on the ___ day of _____, 20___ (s)he served the within Notice on the tenant named therein by delivering a copy thereof to _____ at _____.

(signature of person delivering notice)

SUBSCRIBED and SWORN to before me this ___ day of _____, 20____

NOTARY PUBLIC

SOURCE

[https://eforms.com/eviction/il/5-day-notice/non-payment-of-rent/#::-:text=An%20Illinois%20five%20\(5\)%20day,posted%20on%20the%20tenant's%20door.](https://eforms.com/eviction/il/5-day-notice/non-payment-of-rent/#::-:text=An%20Illinois%20five%20(5)%20day,posted%20on%20the%20tenant's%20door.)

Sample of Five Day Notice for Unlawful Activity

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE
_____ COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

To: _____

vs. _____

5 DAY NOTICE TO QUIT - UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED, that in consequence of your default for:

- Use of premises for the purpose of unlawful possessing, serving, storing, manufacturing, cultivating, delivering, using, selling or giving away controlled substances or for permitting the premises to be used for such purposes (740 ILCS 40/11).

- Being charged with having committed an offense on the premises constituting a CLASS X Felony (765 ILCS 705/5) on the premises now occupied by you, being the _____.

No. _____, otherwise described as _____

you have elected to terminate your lease, and you are hereby notified to quit and deliver up possession of the same to _____ within **FIVE** days of this date.

Dated at _____ this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Landlord

By _____
Agent

SOURCE
<https://eforms.com/eviction/il/5-day-notice/unlawful-activity/>

Sample of 10-Day Notice for Lease Violation

State of Illinois REV. 13413B3

**ILLINOIS 10-DAY EVICTION NOTICE
FOR NON-COMPLIANCE (CURABLE)**

_____, 20__

To: _____

Rental Property: _____

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT, under the terms of the lease agreement dated _____, 20__ (the "Lease") for the rent and use of the premises listed above now occupied by you:

YOU ARE CURRENTLY IN VIOLATION (of Section _____) OF THE LEASE AS FOLLOWS: _____

The violation is: (Check one)

Curable. Demand is made that you remedy the violation on or before _____, 20__ or the tenancy will be terminated and you must vacate the premises. You are further notified that unless you correct the violation or vacate the premises, legal action may be initiated against you.

Incurable. The tenancy is hereby terminated and you must vacate the premises and deliver possession of the same to me on or before _____, 20__ at ____:____ AM/PM. You are further notified that unless you vacate the premises, legal action may be initiated against you.

THIS IS A: (Check one)

10 DAY NOTICE. (the minimum required by law)

_____ **DAY NOTICE.** (number of days stated in original lease agreement)

THIS NOTICE IS PROVIDED TO YOU IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LEASE AND 735 ILCS 5/9-210. NOTHING IN THIS NOTICE IS INTENDED OR SHALL BE CONSTRUED AS A WAIVER BY THE LANDLORD OF ANY RIGHTS OR REMEDIES THE LANDLORD MAY HAVE UNDER THE LEASE OR UNDER STATE OR FEDERAL LAW.

Signature _____
Date

Eviction Notice (Rev. 13413B3)

SOURCE
<https://legaltemplates.net/form/eviction-notice/illinois-il/>

Sample of 30-Day Notice for At-will Termination or Non-renewal

State of Illinois Rev. 13413B3

ILLINOIS 30-DAY EVICTION NOTICE (MONTHLY OR QUARTERLY RENT)

_____, 20__

To: _____

Rental Property: _____

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT, under the terms of the lease agreement dated _____, 20__ (the "Lease") for the rent and use of the premises listed above now occupied by you:

YOUR TENANCY WILL BE TERMINATED ON _____, 20__ AND YOU HAVE: (Check one)

7 DAYS (if rent is paid weekly)
 30 DAYS (if rent is paid monthly or quarterly)
 60 DAYS (if rent is paid yearly)

TO VACATE THE PREMISES. **You therefore must deliver possession of the premises to me by _____ on _____, 20__.** You are further notified that unless you vacate the premises by such date, legal action may be initiated against you.

THIS IS A: (Check one)

7 DAY NOTICE. (if rent is paid weekly)
 30 DAY NOTICE. (if rent is paid monthly or quarterly)
 60 DAY NOTICE. (if rent is paid yearly)

THIS NOTICE IS PROVIDED TO YOU IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LEASE AND 735 ILCS 5/9-207. NOTHING IN THIS NOTICE IS INTENDED OR SHALL BE CONSTRUED AS A WAIVER BY THE LANDLORD OF ANY RIGHTS OR REMEDIES THE LANDLORD MAY HAVE UNDER THE LEASE OR UNDER STATE OR FEDERAL LAW.

Signature _____
Date

Landlord Info:
Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone Number: _____

Eviction Notice (Rev. 13413B3)

Sample of 90-Day Notice for Foreclosure of Property

Continued on page 33.

NOTICE TO QUIT FOR FORECLOSURE

To: _____
(Tenant's Name)

(Rental Unit Street Address)

(Rental Unit City/State/Zip)

The rental unit above has been foreclosed upon as of _____ (date).

Your tenancy is hereby terminated and you must move out by _____ (date) at _____ (time), or a lawsuit may be filed against you.

Today's Date: _____

Signature of party completing this notice:

Printed Name and Title (i.e. landlord, property manager, etc.):

SOURCE

<https://legaltemplates.net/form/eviction-notice/illinois-il/>

Sample of Court Eviction Summons

This form is approved by the Illinois Supreme Court and is required to be accepted in all Illinois Circuit Courts.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, CIRCUIT COURT		EVICTIION SUMMONS		For Court Use Only
COUNTY				
Instructions ▼	Plaintiff (For example, the landlord or owner):			
Directly above, enter the name of county where you will file the case.	_____			
Enter your name as Plaintiff.	_____			
Below "Defendants," enter the names of all the people you are trying to evict.	v.			
The sheriff will only evict unknown occupants if the "Unknown Occupants" box is checked.	Defendants (First, middle, last name):			
The Circuit Clerk will add a Case Number.	_____			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown Occupants (Unknown Occupants are people living in the property whose names you do not know.)			Case Number
	<input type="checkbox"/> Alias Summons (Check this box if this is not the 1 st Summons issued for this Defendant.)			_____
NOTE: If you are suing more than 1 Defendant, fill out an Eviction Summons form for each Defendant, including 1 Eviction Summons for all Unknown Occupants, if checked.				
In 1(a), enter the name and primary address of Defendant.	1. Defendant's address and service information:			
In 1(b), enter a 2 nd address for Defendant, if you have one.	a. Defendant's primary address/information for service:			
In 1(c), check how you are sending your documents to that Defendant. If you need more information, see How to File Present & Eviction Case available at ilcourts.gov/FormApprovedCircuit .	Name (First, Middle, Last): _____			
	Street Address, Unit #: _____			
	City, State, ZIP: _____			
	Telephone: _____			
	Email Address: _____			
	b. If you have more than one address where Defendant might be found, list that here:			
	Name (First, Middle, Last): _____			
	Street Address, Unit #: _____			
	City, State, ZIP: _____			
	Telephone: _____			
	Email Address: _____			
	c. Method of service on Defendant:			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sheriff OR			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Special process server			
In 2, enter your contact information.	2. Contact information for the Plaintiff:			
Enter your complete address, telephone number, and email address, if you have one.	<input type="checkbox"/> Association <input type="checkbox"/> Landlord/Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Agent <input type="checkbox"/> Receiver			
	Name (First, Middle, Last): _____			
	Street Address, Unit #: _____			
	City, State, ZIP: _____			
	Telephone: _____			
	Email Address: _____			
GETTING COURT DOCUMENTS BY EMAIL: You should use an email account that you do not share with anyone else and that you check every day. If you do not check your email every day, you may miss important information, notice of court dates, or documents from other parties.				
E-S 3507.1	Page 1 of 5			(08/20)

Illegal Lockout Sample Letter

Dear Landlord,

My name is Jane Doe, and I am currently a tenant living at 123 Main St. #1, Tenantville, IL 60000. The lock on my front door has been changed illegally and I am writing this letter to you to request a new key. In the State of Illinois, it is illegal to change the locks of any residence without notice. I am writing this letter to you to inform you that if this issue is not resolved immediately, I will have to contact 911 and file a police report about this illegal lockout. I hope this matter can be resolved quickly without involving the police. You can contact me at (111) 111-1111 or by email at janedoe2022@gmail.com. I appreciate expediency on this issue since I need to be able to enter and exit my house in a safe manner.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

SOURCE

https://ilcourtsaudio.blob.core.windows.net/antilles-resources/resources/ab8ca7dd-42e2-49e6-b8d7-feac5cd50d85/EVC_EvictionSummons.pdf

Safe Homes Act Sample Letter

Dear Landlord,

My name is John Doe, and I am a tenant that lives at 123 Main St. #1, Tenantville, IL 60000. I am writing this letter to inform you that I will need to move out of the unit immediately due to unsafe living conditions I am experiencing. I understand that this is a violation of my lease agreement, but there's an individual who is causing me harm and threatening me at my home. As per the Safe Homes Act, I am entitled and have the right to move out of a unit if I am under any threat of danger from someone that has expressed to commit violent acts against me or my family at my home. I have already followed up with a police report to file a restraining order but I don't believe that will stop the person that has been threatening me. You can contact me by phone at (111) 111-1111 or email at johndoe2022@gmail.com. Thank you for reading this letter and I hope to hear back from you soon.

Sincerely,

John Doe

Tenant Incident Evidence Sample Log

	Incident (What happened?)	Who was involved?	Date
1	Landlord has said to me that I cannot play ethnic music loudly.	Tenant and landlord	02/20/21
2	Landlord has asked for proof of citizenship and threatened to increase rent due to non-compliance.	Tenant and landlord	02/27/21
3	Landlord made racist comments towards my family.	Tenant's sister and landlord	03/03/21
4	Landlord has increased rent to my unit only.	Landlord and tenant	04/01/21
5			
6			
7			
8			

SOURCE

<https://legaltemplates.net/form/eviction-notice/illinois-il/>

Tenant Incident Evidence Sample Log

	Incident (What happened?)	Who was involved?	Date
1	Landlord has said to me that I cannot play ethnic music loudly.	Tenant and landlord	02/20/21
2	Landlord has asked for proof of citizenship and threatened to increase rent due to non-compliance.	Tenant and landlord	02/27/21
3	Landlord made racist comments towards my family.	Tenant's sister and landlord	03/03/21
4	Landlord has increased rent to my unit only.	Landlord and tenant	04/01/21
5			
6			
7			
8			