# 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.
WHERE CAN I GO FOR EMERGENCY SHELTER?

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

*Single Women & Families*
Apple Tree Family Center
1430 Cherry St (near Cherry and 15th)
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 48th St (near 48th & 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**
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
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
  o Licenses & Inspections. Call 311.
  o PHA Section 8 Inspection. Call 215-684-3860.

☐ File a Fair Housing Commission Complaint.
  o Call 215-686-4670 or go to 601 Walnut St, Ste 300 South

☐ Withhold rent. For serious repair issues only.
  o Send rent withholding letter to landlord.
  o Escrow your rent. Open a bank account to deposit your rent or keep the rent in a money order.

☐ Repair & deduct.
  o Contact a repair person and ask for an estimate for the cost of repair.
  o Send a letter to landlord with a copy of the estimate.
  o Hire the repair person if the landlord does not complete the repairs in a reasonable amount of time. Keep the invoice and receipt.

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, 10th 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.
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 16th St (near 16th 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.
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

Fair Housing Commission
601 Walnut St, Suite 300 South
215-686-4670
www.phila.gov/fairhousingcommission

Fair Housing Rights Center
444 N 3rd St, Suite 110
215-625-0700
www.fairhousingrights.org

Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission
110 N 8th St, Suite 501
215-560-2496
www.phrc.pa.gov

HUD Discrimination Hotline
1-888-799-2085
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, 6th 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.
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.

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.

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.
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:
    o Tenant Union Representative Network
    o SeniorLAW Center
    o AIDS Law Project
    o Legal Clinic for the Disabled
    o 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://lris.philadelphiabar.org

Get Other Help and Information.
  Tenant Union Representative Network – Daily tenants’ rights workshops
  (215) 940-3900
  www.ourturn.net
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

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

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

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging Emergency Fund
215-765-9040
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

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
WHERE CAN I FIND FOOD PANTRIES AND SOUP KITCHENS?

Coalition Against Hunger
215-430-0556
www.hungercoalition.org/food-pantries

WhyHunger
1-800-548-6479

Philabundance
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
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

Private Health Insurance
   Apply by phone
   Pennsylvania Health Access Network
   877-570-3642

   Apply online

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

   City Health Centers
   311 or 215-685-6769
   beta.phila.gov/services/mental-physical-health/city-health-centers
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 8th St (8th & Locust St)  
  215-829-5249
- **West**  
  Mercy Hospital - 501 S 54th St (54th & 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, 3rd 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.
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
WHERE CAN I GET HELP WITH EMPLOYMENT?

CareerLink
1-833-750-JOBS (5627)
www.pacareerlinkphl.org/events

Philadelphia Unemployment Project (PUP)
215-557-0822
www.philaup.org

Urban League Career Center
215-985-3220
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

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
EXTRA HELP

WHERE CAN VETERANS GO FOR HELP?

Veterans Multi Service Center
Including the Perimeter and Women Veterans Center
213-217 N 4th St
215-923-2600
www.vmcenter.org

Impact Services Corporation
147 W Allegheny Ave
215-739-0243
www.impactservices.org

UESF Veterans Program
1608 Walnut St, Suite 600
215-814-6888
www.uesfacts.org

Project HOME
4133 Chestnut St
215-232-7272
www.projecthome.org

The Veterans Group
3209 Baring St
215-222-4379
www.theveteransgroup.org

WHERE CAN IMMIGRANTS GO FOR HELP?

HIAS Pennsylvania
2100 Arch St
215-832-0900
www.hiaspa.org

Nationalities Service Center
1216 Arch St, 4th Floor
215-893-8400
www.nscphila.org

Esperanza
4261 N 5th St
215-324-0746
www.esperanza.us/eils
WHERE CAN PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES GO FOR HELP?

Disability Rights PA  
1315 Walnut St, Suite 500  
215-238-8070  
www.disabilityrightspa.org

Mental Health Partnerships  
1211 Chestnut St, Suite 1100  
215-751-1800  
www.mentalhealthpartnerships.org

Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health  
215-685-6440  
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

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging  
215-765-9040  
www.pcacares.org

Mayor's Commission on Services to the Aging  
215-686-8450

Elder Justice Resource Center  
https://www.courts.phila.gov/ejc/
WHERE CAN PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ GO FOR HELP?

Mazzoni Center
1348 Bainbridge St
215-563-0652
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

Attic Youth Center (Ages 14-23)
255 S. 16th Street
215-545-4331
www.atticyouthcenter.org

William Way House
1315 Spruce St
215-732-2220
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

Women Organized Against Rape
215-985-3333
www.woar.org