

# ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT BEING EVICTED?

## **EVICTIONS IN MASSACHUSETTS MUST BE COURT ORDERED.**

You do not need to leave just because your landlord tells you to leave or gives you a notice to quit. If your landlord files in court, you will receive a summons from the court and you are not required to leave until a court orders you to do so.

## **A LANDLORD CAN'T THROW YOU OUT WITHOUT A COURT ORDER.**

Your landlord cannot:

- Move your belongings out of your apartment,
- Change your locks,
- Shut off your utilities, or
- Interfere with your use of the unit without permission from the court.

If your landlord has done or threatens to do any of the above, you can call the Attorney General's Office at (617) 727-8400.

## **IF YOU HAVE A COURT DATE FOR AN EVICTION HEARING:**

You can raise defenses to prevent your eviction. Some examples of defenses include:

- There are serious problems with the condition of your home;
- Your landlord did not give you the written notice required;
- If your landlord is retaliating against you for exercising your rights or discriminating against you;
- You have a rental assistance application pending.

**OVER** 



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## **EVICTION HELP: RENEWED CH. 257 PROTECTIONS.**

If you are in the process of applying for rental assistance, then you can NOT get evicted for non-payment of rent. Tenants must still show up for the housing court date and let the judge know that they have a pending rental assistance application.

These protections have been renewed until March 31st, 2023

## **YOUR LANDLORD CAN'T DISCRIMINATE AGAINST YOU FOR RECEIVING FINANCIAL HELP.**

Your landlord can't discriminate against you because you receive government benefits.

If your landlord refuses to accept RAFT or refuses to fill out their portion of the application, they may be violating Massachusetts law.

To report discrimination, call the Civil Rights Division at (617) 963-2917 or file a civil rights complaint at [www.mass.gov/ago/civilrightscomplaint](http://www.mass.gov/ago/civilrightscomplaint).

## **THERE MAY BE FREE LEGAL HELP AVAILABLE TO YOU:**

- Legal services lawyers may be able to assist if you cannot afford a lawyer.
- Visit [evictionlegalhelp.org](http://evictionlegalhelp.org) for more information.
  - There are volunteer lawyers available in Housing Court to help you through
- The Lawyer for the Day program.
  - If you have a hearing, tell the judge or the mediator right away that you would like to speak to a lawyer.
- The Court Service Centers can help explain the court process and help you fill out basic court documents to respond to a summons and complaint.

