

2024

NATIONAL TENANTS BILL OF RIGHTS

FACT SHEET

THE RIGHT TO

- A Fair Application
- A Fair Lease
- Freedom from Discrimination and Harassment
- A Habitable Home
- Reasonable Rent and Costs
- Organize
- Safeguards Against Evictions

ENDORSE THE NATIONAL TENANTS BILL OF RIGHTS

The National Housing Law Project, National Low Income Housing Coalition, and Tenant Union Federation created the National Tenants Bill of Rights to shift the balance of power between tenants and landlords.

The comprehensive proposal was written with direct input from tenant leaders, people with lived experience of housing instability, legal aid experts, and advocates nationwide. When enacted, the National Tenants Bill of Rights will correct the power imbalance between tenants and landlords that fuels racial inequities and puts the 114 million people who rent their homes at greater risk of housing instability, harassment, eviction, and homelessness.

Solutions to our nation's housing crisis that address housing affordability and supply must be paired with strong and enforceable tenant protections to help prevent housing instability and homelessness, redress long-standing racial and social inequities, and advance housing justice.

THE RIGHT TO A FAIR APPLICATION

- Regulates how landlords screen applicants;
- Strengthens regulations of tenant screening companies; and
- Streamlines the application process for federally assisted housing.

Landlords often use tenant screening companies to determine which tenants to approve for housing. These companies charge fees, rely on inaccurate or biased information, and lack transparency. This leaves tenants unsure whether their application will be accepted. To make the application process fairer for all, landlords should only consider relevant and accurate information, refraining from charging application fees, and tenant screening companies must be regulated.

THE RIGHT TO A FAIR LEASE

- Requires landlords to provide critical information to tenants;
- Ensures leases clearly list all rent and mandatory fees; and
- Prohibits unreasonable or predatory lease terms.

Leases often include predatory and deceptive terms that harm tenants and give landlords more power over tenants' homes. Leases should clearly define the rights and responsibilities of both landlords and tenants and protect renters from abusive terms.

THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

- Strengthens fair housing protections and enforcement;
- Stops discriminatory and retaliatory evictions by landlords;
- Allows tenants to sue their landlords - and collect attorney's fees - when landlords harass tenants; and
- Ends police surveillance and raids in federally assisted housing programs.

Tenants need new tools to stop landlord discrimination and harassment, and existing federal protections must be robustly enforced.

THE RIGHT TO A HABITABLE HOME

- Ensures tenants can enforce their right to a habitable home;
- Ensures tenants can report unsafe conditions without fear of retaliation by landlords; and
- Supports the creation of local, state, and national rental registries.

All tenants deserve to live in safe homes. Renters should not be forced to live in homes with broken appliances, unreliable utilities, pests, lead, and mold, which put renters and their families at risk of serious illnesses. Laws must be in place to ensure safe housing standards, and the health and safety of renters must be a top priority for our nation.

THE RIGHT TO REASONABLE RENT AND COSTS

- Regulates rent increases;
- Regulates fees and other charges; and
- Protects renters in federally assisted housing programs.

For millions of tenants, the cost of housing has far outpaced wages, putting renters at greater risk of housing instability and eviction. Housing markets are largely unregulated, allowing landlords to aggressively hike rents without any concern for renters. Protections are needed to stop rent gouging and hidden fees.

THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE

- Creates a right to organize for all renters; and
- Establishes a Tenant Opportunity to Purchase.

To correct the power imbalance between renters and landlords, tenants must have the ability to organize without fear of retaliation or eviction from landlords, owners, and management.

THE RIGHT TO SAFEGUARDS AGAINST EVICTIONS

- Creates federal just cause eviction protections;
- Requires 30 days-notice of any eviction and provides tenants the right to cure lease violations; and
- Strengthens due process protections for tenants in eviction court.

In many places across the country, landlords can evict tenants for no reason with only a few days notice, pushing renters into housing insecurity and harming their financial and physical well-being. Tenants must have protection from illegal and forced evictions, and landlords should be required to have good cause for any eviction proceeding.



TAKE ACTION!

You can help build tenant power, advance racial equity, and achieve housing justice:

- Join tenants nationwide in [endorsing](#) the National Tenants Bill of Rights and sharing it with others! Local, state, and national organizations, individuals, elected officials, and candidates for office can [endorse](#) the National Tenants Bill of Rights!
- Show your support for the National Tenants Bill of Rights on social media and share your story about why tenants deserve rights! Use the hashtags #ProtectTenants and #TenantsBillofRights.
- Urge your elected officials to advance the tenant protections included in the National Tenants Bill of Rights at the local, state, and national level.

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