

What are my housing rights as a survivor of domestic violence?

If you are a survivor of **domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking**, your landlord cannot discriminate against you **because of the violence committed against you**. This means:

- Your landlord **cannot evict you** because of **abuse against you**—for example, because you called the police to make your abuser stop, or because a stalker broke your door. However, you may need an **Order of Protection** to stop the eviction. This could also help you **evict your abuser**.
- For help getting an Order of Protection, call the **Family Safety Center** at (615) 880-1100.

If you live in **federally assisted housing**, like **MDHA public housing, Section 8 complexes, or LIHTC**, or if you have a **housing choice voucher**, you have some **additional rights** under the **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)**. These rights are:

- You **can't be denied admission** to any federally assisted housing program for reasons relating to the abuse you survived, such as **bad credit, rental, or criminal history**.
- If you need to escape violence, you can **transfer your voucher** and/or **move into a different subsidized unit**.
- If your abuser is evicted from your subsidized unit and **you are not on the lease**, then you generally have **90 days or until the end of the lease (whichever is sooner)** to get a new lease or move out.

For more information on your rights in federally assisted housing, see the **back** of this sheet.

What do I do if I need to end my lease early?



If you live in a **private rental**, you can end your lease early **without termination fees** if you give your landlord a special written notice. The notice **must include**:

1. That you or another household member is a **domestic abuse, assault, or stalking** victim.
2. A **move-out date** within the **next 30 days** that is **approved by the landlord**.
3. That you are requesting **“release from the lease agreement.”**
4. A copy of a valid **Order of Protection** OR documentation of a **criminal charge** from within the **last 60 days**.

The landlord **must keep this notice private** unless you give them written permission for it to be shared.

If you move out, you are **still responsible** for the **current rent payment** for the entire month you leave, as well as **any rent that you owed** before you moved.

If you need help breaking your lease or getting your abuser off your lease, call **Eviction Right to Counsel**.

What if I live in federally assisted housing?

If you live in federally assisted housing, like MDHA public housing, Section 8 complexes, LIHTC, or you have a voucher, you have more options. VAWA allows you to choose one of **three** ways to prove you can break your lease, transfer your voucher, or switch units:



Complete the HUD self-certification form (also known as Form HUD-5382). You can find this by visiting hud.gov/vawa.



Provide a letter signed by a victim service provider (such as a domestic or sexual violence counselor), attorney, or a health professional describing the abuse. You must also sign this letter.



Provide a police report, court record (ex: protective or restraining order), or administrative record.

This documentation **cannot** be shared with others without your written permission, **UNLESS** it is needed to evict the abuser or is otherwise required to be shared by law.

Get Connected to Domestic Violence Survivor Support Services

To get help with domestic violence emergencies, contact:

Tennessee Statewide 24/7 Crisis Line
1-866-811-7473

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-7233 or 1-800-787-3224

Mary Parrish Center

(615) 955-0620
Transitional and permanent housing assistance

YWCA 24/7 Crisis Line

Call 1-800-334-4628 or text (615) 983-5170
Emergency shelter, counseling, and other services

Morning Star Sanctuary
24/7 Crisis Line

(615) 860-0003
Emergency shelter and children's programs

Sexual Assault Center

(615) 259-9055
Counseling, education, and advocacy

Fifty Forward

(615) 743-3417
For seniors experiencing domestic violence

(833) 837-HOME



(615) 701-7957



(615) 988-6460

