

NO LEASE

**Renters:
Know Your Rights!**

Your landlord **can** take you to court if you don't have a lease, but they **CAN'T**:



Change the locks to make you leave



Shut off your utilities (lights, water, gas)



Set your things on the street or remove them from the property

If this happens to you, call Eviction Right to Counsel.

Do I still have rights if I don't have a lease?



Yes! While it's better to have a written lease, **you still have rights without one.** Some situations where you might not have a lease are:

- If you're renting from someone but **didn't sign papers**
- If you **used to have a lease**, but it **expired**
- If you're living at a **friend or family member's house** and **paying rent**
- If you've been staying in a **hotel or motel** for **more than 30 days**

There are some rights you lose without a lease, too. If you don't have a lease, **your landlord can start the eviction process against you at any time.** That doesn't mean they can just change the locks, though - they still **need to take you to court.** See the other side of this sheet for more information!

Do these rights apply to me?

	YES	NO
I pay my rent once a month or once a week.	✓	
I used to have a lease , but it expired.	✓	
I'm staying with family or friends , but I pay rent.	✓	
I'm staying with family or friends , but I don't pay rent.		✗
I'm in a hotel and I've been here for 30 or more days.	✓	
I'm in a hotel and I've been here for less than 30 days.		✗
I'm in a shelter, care facility, dorm , or similar institution.		✗
I own my home or am paying a mortgage.		✗



(833) 837-HOME



(615) 701-7957



(615) 988-6460



This information is only for Davidson County. The information provided here does not and is not intended to constitute legal advice. If you have a legal problem, please call a private attorney or call your local Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland office at 1-800-238-1443 or the Nashville Hispanic Bar Association at 1-615-701-7957. Revised 5/24.



When can my landlord raise my rent or take me to court?



Before your landlord can raise your rent or take you to court to make you leave, they have to give you a notice **in writing**. The **amount** of time you have depends on **how often you pay your rent**, but you should **always** get a notice unless you're being evicted for not paying rent.

If your landlord is taking you to court because you **missed a rent payment**, they only have to tell you **14 days in advance**. If you have an **expired lease** where you **waived your right to notice for nonpayment**, they **might not have to tell you at all** before they file an eviction.

Month-to-Month

If you **pay your rent once a month**, you are a month-to-month tenant. Your landlord needs to tell you **one calendar month** before they take you court or raise your rent.

Example: If you pay your rent on the 1st of every month and your landlord gives you a **“one month notice”** on **May 5th**, they cannot bring you to court or raise your rent until **after July 1st**.

Why not June 5th, one month later?

Because the notice must cover **1 full month**, even if that is longer than 30 days.

Week-to-Week

If you **pay your rent once a week**, you are a week-to-week tenant. Your landlord needs to tell you **10 days** before they take you to court or raise your rent.

This is most common in **hotels and motels**, but these rules only apply if you've been there for **at least 30 days**. If it's been **less than 30 days**, your landlord can **raise the rent at any time** or **kick you out without going to court**.

Expired Lease

If you **used to have a lease, but it expired**, you're probably a **month-to-month** tenant unless your lease says otherwise.

All the rules from your lease still apply when it expires, including if you **waived your right to a notice for not paying your rent**. Read your lease and find out what other rules there are!

I don't have a lease and I want to move. What should I do?

Just like your landlord has to give you notice before taking you to court, you **also need to give your landlord written notice** before you move out. The amount of time you need to give is **exactly the same, including** the full term rule, so read the section above!

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