

# Renter Rights in Multi-Tenant (Rooming) Houses



## Information for Renters

Multi-tenant (rooming) houses are buildings where four or more rooms are rented out to separate people. Tenants may share the kitchen and/or washroom but they do not live together as a single household.

The City will work collaboratively with landlords and will not close a multi-tenant house unless a serious fire or life safety risk is identified. For tenants who must leave their home due to fires or emergency evacuations, emergency social services can provide support, including short-term accommodation and access to essential items such as clothing and food. Tenants can call 311 for more information.

## Your Rights in a Multi-Tenant House

- Most tenants are protected by Ontario's Residential Tenancies Act (RTA). These laws outline the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants. Your landlord cannot evict you without an official Eviction Notice. These notices **do not mean you need to move out**. If you receive an Eviction Notice from your landlord, get legal advice. You do not need to move out until your landlord files an eviction application with the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) and the LTB issues an **Order for Eviction**.
- If your landlord filed an eviction application against you, you can check with the LTB by emailing [lrb@ontario.ca](mailto:lrb@ontario.ca) and ask for all notices about you and your apartment to be emailed to you. You are protected by the RTA even if your multi-tenant house is not licensed by the City. **Your landlord cannot evict you simply because the home is not licensed.**

Most multi-tenant house tenants are covered under the RTA which may provide protection from eviction. Some tenants are not covered, for example, if they share a kitchen or bathroom with the owner or their immediate family, if they live in a school dormitory, or in some types of roommate situations. Call the FMTA Tenant Hotline at 416-921-9494 for questions about your legal status.

For more information about the RTA, visit <https://tribunalsontario.ca/lrb/renting-in-ontario/>

## Landlord Responsibilities and How to Submit a Complaint

Landlords are responsible for cleaning and maintaining common spaces including bathrooms, kitchens, and hallways. The landlord must also have plans for waste and pest management. If there are pests, the landlord must take adequate measures to prevent their spread and to eliminate them.

Your landlord must respond to non-urgent service requests within seven days and urgent service requests within 24 hours. Urgent requests can include fuel, electricity, gas, heat, cold or hot water issues.

Have a complaint about your room or common area of your multi-tenant house? Talk to your landlord and submit a complaint in writing.

If your landlord does not act and problems persist, contact 311. Once your complaint is submitted to 311, City staff will investigate and take appropriate action.

You can check the status of your request using the reference number provided to you by 311 at [toronto.ca/311](https://toronto.ca/311).

For more information on multi-tenant houses in Toronto, visit [toronto.ca/MultiTenantHouses](https://toronto.ca/MultiTenantHouses)

# Organizations That Can Help

City of Toronto: 311

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## **Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations (FMTA)**

Answers questions about tenant rights and responsibilities in Toronto.

 416-921-9494

 [hotline@torontotenants.org](mailto:hotline@torontotenants.org)

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## **Canadian Centre for Housing Rights**

Provides free, confidential individualized services to renters in Ontario who are facing challenges in their housing.

 416-944-0087

 [cchr@housingrightscanada.com](mailto:cchr@housingrightscanada.com)

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## **Legal Aid Ontario**

Offers free legal advice to low-income tenants.


 1-800-668-8258

 [legalaid.on.ca/legal-clinics](http://legalaid.on.ca/legal-clinics)

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## **Centre for Immigrant and Community Services (CICS)**

Answers questions about tenant rights and responsibilities in Toronto.

 416-292-7510 ext. 1222

 [housing.support@cicscanada.com](mailto:housing.support@cicscanada.com)

**Text or Whatsapp: 647-473-2065**

For information on additional organizations that can provide legal help, visit

**[toronto.ca/EvictionHelp](http://toronto.ca/EvictionHelp)**