



LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
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Serving Los Angeles County consumers and  
businesses since 1976.



**OUR MISSION**

To promote a fair and vibrant marketplace, we serve consumers, businesses, and communities through education, advocacy, and complaint resolution.



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# Repairing Your Rental Unit

## FACTS FOR RENTERS



## REPAIRING YOUR RENTAL UNIT

Your landlord must keep your rental unit livable so as not to endanger your health and safety. If your unit needs repairs, notify your landlord in writing and keep a copy for your records.

### Landlords' responsibilities

The law requires landlords to keep the premises safe and in good condition for tenants and to:

- Fix water leaks from the roof, doors, windows, or walls.
- Repair plumbing, gas, heating, and electrical problems.
- Keep the grounds outside your unit clean, safe, and free of pests such as mice and roaches.
- Supply enough trash bins.

### Tenants' responsibilities

You must keep the unit clean and free of trash. You must use gas, electric, and plumbing fixtures correctly. You must also prevent guests from damaging the unit.

### How soon does the landlord have to make repairs?

If your health or safety is threatened, your landlord must make repairs immediately. Urgent items include:

- A broken heater during the winter
- No hot water
- Bad electrical wiring
- Toilets and plumbing that don't work

Your landlord must make urgent repairs quickly. Non-urgent repairs that do not put your health and safety at risk should be made within a reasonable amount of time.

### What if my landlord does not make urgent repairs?

You have several choices:

**File a complaint** with a government agency, such as the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health or your local Department of Building and Safety. Keep a copy of the inspection report.

**Mediate the problem** – If you live in the County of Los Angeles, call our Mediation service for help: (800) 593-8222.

**Sue the landlord** – You can sue the landlord for the cost of urgent repairs in Small Claims Court. Call our Small Claims Advisors at (800) 593-8222 for help.

**Repair and deduct** – You can have the repairs done yourself, and subtract the cost from your rent. Before you do this, call us for more information, or get legal advice because your landlord might try to evict or sue you.

**Stop paying rent** – You might not have to pay rent while waiting for the landlord to make repairs. Before you do this, call us for more information, or get legal advice because your landlord might try to evict or sue you.

**Move out** – If your unit is dangerous to your health or safety, you may be able to move out without giving additional notice. Before you do this, call us for more information, or get legal advice. Otherwise, the landlord might sue you.

### What if the landlord does not make non-urgent repairs?

The landlord must repair non-urgent items such as, carpets, draperies, dishwashers, security systems, air-conditioners, and washing machines.

Write a letter to your landlord about the needed repairs. If the repairs are not made, you can sue the landlord in Small Claims Court.

You cannot repair these non-urgent things and deduct the cost or stop paying rent without the landlord's permission.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION



(800) 593-8222



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