



## Quick Tips for Renters

Every landlord/tenant situation is unique. To help navigate those challenges, Consumer Protection offers the following advice and resources for people who rent.

### KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

- You have the right to a safe living space with structures such as roof, walls and windows in reasonably good condition.
- You have a right to functioning facilities for heat during winter, running water, and hot water.
- You have the right not to be discriminated against.

### PROTECT YOURSELF

- Before you sign the lease, make sure you read and understand the terms of the agreement.
- Notices to and from a landlord must be in writing.
- Keep copies of all documents for your records.
- Before you move in and prior to moving out, conduct a walk-through with the landlord and document any damage with photographs.
- When you get ready to move from a rental unit, regardless of the duration, be sure to give advance notice as specified in your lease, settle all accounts, understand the conditions of the security deposit, provide a forwarding address and leave the premises in a clean condition.

### REACH OUT FOR HELP

**Legal aid:** Seek legal help as soon as you know you will not be able to pay rent. Find legal help before you receive a notice from your landlord. If you do get a "3-day notice" or any written notice that you have to pay or leave, reach out to legal aid the same day you get that notice. Your possible solutions depend on how soon you get legal assistance.

**Consumer protection:** Rental opportunities that sound too good to be true probably are. Beware of any situation where the listing details are vague, you are asked to sign a lease without seeing the property, or you are told to wire money or pay via an online payment app. These are red flags! Contact Consumer Protection to determine your best course of action.

**Fair housing:** If you feel you have been discriminated against on basis of your race, gender, ethnicity, etc., document the incident(s) and contact the Office of Human Rights at (727) 464-4880.

### FLORIDA LANDLORD-TENANT LAW

Before you rent, know your rights and responsibilities under the law.

Pinellas County does not have rent control.

Florida Statute 83, Landlord and Tenant, Part II, Residential Tenancies: [www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes)



**Pinellas County Consumer Protection** [Pinellas.gov/consumer](http://Pinellas.gov/consumer)

To file a complaint or to speak with an investigator, contact Consumer Protection at:  
Phone: (727) 464-6200 Fax: (727) 464-6129 Email: [consumer@pinellascounty.org](mailto:consumer@pinellascounty.org)



## Assistance is available for renters through the following agencies:

### **Pinellas County Housing Authority**

(727) 443-7684

[pinellashousing.com](http://pinellashousing.com)

Offers long-term affordable housing and rental assistance programs for income-eligible families, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

### **Clearwater Housing Authority**

(727) 461-5777

### **Tarpon Springs Housing Authority**

(727) 937-4411

### **St. Petersburg Housing Authority**

(727) 323-3171

### **Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation**

(850) 488-1122

[www.myfloridalicense.com](http://www.myfloridalicense.com)

Enforces Florida Mobile Home Act (FL Statute 723), which applies to the rental of mobile homes located on a rented or leased lot in a mobile home park where 10 or more lots are offered for rent or lease.

### **Housing and Community Development**

(727) 464-8210

[pinellas.gov/community/rentalinfo.htm](http://pinellas.gov/community/rentalinfo.htm)

Provides access to resources and services in Pinellas County, including assisted living facilities, community housing and public housing.

### **2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares**

Dial 211 or text your zip code to 898211.

[211tampabay.org](http://211tampabay.org)

Connects residents to helpful services, including housing resources.

### **The Pinellas County Office of Human Rights**

(727) 464-4880

[pinellas.gov/humanrights](http://pinellas.gov/humanrights)

Protects residents of Pinellas County from discrimination. The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination for the sale, rental or mortgage lending of housing because of race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, familial status or disability.

### **Pinellas County Code Enforcement**

(727) 464-4761

[pinellas.gov/code-enforcement/](http://pinellas.gov/code-enforcement/)

Regulates code compliance in Pinellas County's unincorporated neighborhoods and maintains a complaint system for complaints.

(If you live in a city within Pinellas County, visit your city's website for information about how to file a complaint.)

## The following services offer legal help:

### **Self Help Centers**

[www.mypinellasclerk.org/Self-Help](http://www.mypinellasclerk.org/Self-Help)

Provides affordable legal help to county residents who represent themselves in court and do not have a private attorney. Attorneys only assist with family law, landlord-tenant and small claims.

For more information call:

Clearwater (727) 464-5150

St. Petersburg (727) 582-7941

North County (727) 464-5150

### **Gulfcoast Legal Services**

(727) 821-0726

[gulfcoastlegal.org](http://gulfcoastlegal.org)

Provides free legal aid to income eligible residents of the greater Tampa Bay area. Services include housing, mortgage foreclosure and consumer matters.

### **Bay Area Legal Services**

(800) 625-2257

[www.bals.org](http://www.bals.org)

Provides free civil legal help to income-eligible residents, seniors and veterans.

### **Lawyer Referral Service**

(727) 461-4880

[LRS.floridabar.org](http://LRS.floridabar.org)

Makes legal services readily available to individuals and families in need of a lawyer.

### **Florida Senior Legal Helpline**

(888) 895-7873

[elderaffairs.org](http://elderaffairs.org)

A free statewide legal service funded by the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and managed by Bay Area Legal Services, Inc. Provides free legal advice and brief services to Florida residents aged 60 and older.

### **Community Law Program**

(727) 582-7480

[lawprogram.org](http://lawprogram.org)

Provides free civil legal services to financially eligible residents.

Pinellas County complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. To obtain accessible formats of this document, please call (727) 464-4062 (V/TDD). 6/2022