



# Required Notice of Tenants' Rights

**Under Pinellas County's Tenants Bill of Rights (Ordinance No. 22-27) landlords and other lessors of residential rental property in Pinellas County are required to distribute this notice to tenants prior to occupying a rental unit (except in the City of St. Petersburg where the City's ordinance applies\*). This notice provides a general overview of rental rights and related resources for tenants in Pinellas County but is not intended to provide legal advice by either the County or the landlord providing the notice.**

## Tenants' Rights under County Ordinance No. 22-27

- **Written Notice of Rights:** Landlords are required to provide tenants with this written Notice of Rights under Federal Law, Florida Law and County Code at the time of a new lease or lease renewal.
- **Notice of Late Fees:** Landlords are required to provide tenants with advanced written notice of late fees. The notice should include the reason for the late fee and the amount of the late fee which is due at the time of the notice.
- **Notice of Rent Increases:** Landlords are required to provide tenants with written notice of rent increases of more than 5% the timing for notice of rent increases depends on the length of the lease.
- **No Discrimination Based on Income Source:** The ordinance prohibits discrimination based on a lawful source of income such a public assistance housing assistance program or subsidy, including but not limited to Housing Choice (Section 8) Vouchers, Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Vouchers, Social Security, and Supplemental Security Income.

## How to File a Complaint

A tenant may file a complaint for a violation of the ordinance as follows:

- **Issue with Receiving Notice of Rights, Notice of Late Fees, or Notice of Rent Increase:** You may file a complaint with Code Enforcement through the Pinellas County Citizen Access Portal ([aca-prod.accela.com/pinellas](http://aca-prod.accela.com/pinellas)) or by calling Code Enforcement at (727) 464-4761.
- **Issue with Source of Income Discrimination:** You may file a complaint with Consumer Protection through the Pinellas County Citizen Access Portal ([aca-prod.accela.com/pinellas](http://aca-prod.accela.com/pinellas)) or by calling Consumer Protection with any questions at (727) 464-6200.

\*Other cities may choose to opt out or adopt their own ordinance.



# Required Notice of Tenants' Rights

## Your Rights Under State and Federal Law

- **Discrimination and retaliation are illegal.** A landlord may not raise your rent or threaten to evict you because you reported a health or safety violation or filed a fair housing complaint. A landlord cannot treat you differently because of your race, nationality, disability, or sexual orientation, among other criteria. If you feel you have been discriminated against or retaliated against, contact the Pinellas County Office of Human Rights at 727-464-4880.
- **All residential rentals must be fit for habitation.** A unit must include working plumbing and heating, be free from pests and have locking doors and windows, among other requirements. Structures must also meet all applicable building, housing, and health codes. If there is an issue with your unit for which you are not responsible for in your lease, contact your landlord as set forth in your lease. If your landlord does not address the issue within a reasonable timeframe, you may report it through the Pinellas County Citizen Access Portal ([aca-prod.accela.com/pinellas](http://aca-prod.accela.com/pinellas)) or by calling Code Enforcement at (727) 464-4761 within the unincorporated county or contact your city to file a complaint.
- **You have the right to challenge an eviction.** A lease cannot prevent you from challenging an eviction or limit the liability of a landlord. If a landlord is violating the lease agreement you can always seek relief through the courts. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal assistance from many local and statewide groups. Contact the Pinellas County Office of Human Rights at 727-464-4880 or visit the Florida Bar website at [floridabar.org/public/probono](http://floridabar.org/public/probono) for more information.

## More Information and Resources:

- **Florida Landlord Tenant Law:** Before you rent, know your rights and responsibilities under the law. Learn more at [fdacs.gov/Consumer-Resources/Landlord-Tenant-Law-in-Florida](http://fdacs.gov/Consumer-Resources/Landlord-Tenant-Law-in-Florida)
- **Help with Housing:** More Pinellas County resources are available at: [rent.pinellas.gov/help-with-housing](http://rent.pinellas.gov/help-with-housing)