

COVID-19 & HOUSING

OTTAWA RESOURCES TO SUPPORT HOUSING & TENANT QUESTIONS

(April 22, 2020)

We have prepared the following information to help you access resources to support housing related questions during COVID-19. This information is solely for informational purposes. Given all of the rapid changes happening in response to COVID-19, we will seek to update our resources on a regular basis and urge you to consult with us if you have any specific legal questions about a client's situation.

Currently in Ottawa (as of April 22)

- Until further notice, the Board is not issuing eviction orders, except in very limited situations relating to an urgent matter.
- In order to enforce an eviction order with the Sheriff's office, a landlord must first make an urgent motion to the Superior Court of Justice to get leave to enforce the eviction order.
- Regardless of the current circumstances, only the Sheriff can enforce an eviction order.
- Tenants must pay rent while an eviction order is not being enforced
- The City of Ottawa is promoting supports for rent arrears. Call 3-1-1: choose your language, press 4 and then press 3 to speak to a "verification specialist".

For General Information on Housing and COVID-19

Steps to Justice Website:

<https://stepstojustice.ca/covid-19/covid%E2%80%91housing-law>

Examples of questions you can find answers for on this website:

- *I couldn't pay rent this month and my landlord is threatening to evict me. What can I do?*
- *My rent payment is due, but I can't pay it because of COVID-19. How will this affect me?*
- *Can I cancel my lease if I can't keep the place because of COVID-19?*
- *I have a hearing at the coming up at the Landlord and Tenant Board but I heard they are closed. What should I do?*
- *My landlord heard that the Sheriff's office isn't enforcing eviction orders and is threatening to change the locks and evict me themselves. Can they do this?*
- *Is my landlord responsible for enforcing physical distancing?*
- *Should my landlord be cleaning the building more during COVID-19?*
- *The landlord is asking tenants questions about their health status. Can they do this?*
- *Can my landlord refuse to come in to do repairs because of COVID-19?*
- *My landlord wants to show my place to prospective tenants or buyers. Can I stop people from coming in if I am worried about COVID-19?*

Action-Logement website:

<https://www.action-logement.ca/en/housing-resources/faq-en/#COVID-19%20Pandemic>

Examples of questions you can find answers for on this website:

- *I can't afford to pay my rent. What do I do?*
- *I am receiving a rent subsidy and I lost my part-time job. What do I do?*
- *Someone told me that I can't be evicted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Is that true?*
- *My landlord threatened to throw me out of my apartment because I haven't paid my rent. What do I do?*
- *My landlord has sent me an eviction notice (N4, N5, N6, N7). What does this mean during the COVID-19 pandemic?*
- *My landlord increased my rent. What do I do?*
- *My landlord gave me a legal notice for a rent increase (N1) a few months ago, and it is to take effect now. What do I do?*
- *My landlord is not doing repairs. What do I do?*

For Specific Information on Housing Related Questions

Examples of specific questions:

- *I received a Landlord and Tenant Board Notice of Hearing in the mail saying I have a hearing on April 28, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. for my eviction. What should I do?*
- *There are bed bugs in my unit. I told my landlord, but he said that he is not sending anyone in to the unit due to COVID-19. What can I do?*

1. Action-Logement / Action Housing (www.action-logement.ca)

- Provides free services to low to moderate income individuals and families to access and maintain safe, adequate and affordable housing.
- Inquiries – Do not attend in person, for assistance please call (613) 562-8219

2. Housing Help / Aide Logement (www.housinghelp.on.ca)

- Provides free services to low to moderate income individuals and families to access and maintain safe, adequate and affordable housing.
- Inquiries – Do not attend in person, for assistance please call (613) 563-4532

3. Community Legal Services of Ottawa (www.clsottawa.ca)

- Provides free legal services for persons with low income in the areas of housing law, immigration law, and social assistance law.
- Inquiries – Do not attend in person, for assistance please call the specific location:
- Downtown location: (613) 241-7008
- South location: (613) 733-0140
- West location: (613) 596-1641

4. Reach Canada – Ottawa (www.reach.ca)

- Provides independent legal referral services to persons with disabilities.
- Inquiries – Do not attend in person, for assistance please call (613) 236-6636 or toll free 1-888-669-4001

5. Clinique juridique francophone d'Ottawa (www.cscvanier.com/fr/juridique)

- Provides free services to French speaking individuals in the areas of housing law, immigration law, family law and social assistance law.
- Inquiries – Do not attend in person, for assistance please call (613) 744-2892 ext. 1111

6. University of Ottawa Community Legal Clinic (www.commonlaw.uottawa.ca/community-legal-clinic/)

- Provides low income individuals and students free services in the areas of housing law, family law, criminal law, and to women who have been victims of violence in obtaining compensation.
- Currently closed until May 15, 2020.
- For assistance after May 15, 2020, do not attend in person, please call (613) 562-5600

7. Connecting Ottawa (www.connectingottawa.com)

- Provides consultations with **front-line workers** to assist individuals who are linguistic minorities.
- Inquiries – Do not attend in person, for assistance please email info@connectingottawa.com