



**Renters have a right to live in a home that is safe from lead hazards.**

Lead hazards can be harmful to your health, particularly the health of children under the age of 6 and the health of pregnant women. Most lead hazards come from lead paint in the form of paint dust or paint chips.

RIHousing has a program that can fix lead-paint hazards in and outside of your home. The law requires landlords to fix these hazards.

*This document discusses some common concerns we hear from renters about fixing lead hazards. Below are a few of your rights and responsibilities for renting a lead-safe home.*

As a tenant, you have the following rights:

- **To talk to your landlord about concerns you have with lead paint in your home**
- **To ask your landlord to fix lead hazards in your home**
- **To have a certified lead inspector check your home for lead, if desired**
- **To not be evicted because you asked for lead hazards to be fixed**
- **To not be retaliated against because you asked for lead hazards to be fixed.**

*This means your landlord cannot:*

- Shut off utilities after you ask for lead hazards to be fixed
- Raise the rent immediately after you ask for lead hazards to be fixed
- Create a hostile environment, such as making you feel threatened, after you ask for lead hazards to be fixed

- **To have children live in your home.**  
Landlords cannot refuse to rent to children. This includes adoptions, fostering a child, becoming pregnant and having a child, having grandchildren live in or visit the home, etc.
- **To live in a healthy and safe home, free of lead hazards.**

You also have responsibilities:

- **To pay rent.**  
In most cases if you stop paying rent your landlord may have the right to evict you.
- **To allow your landlord access to the unit with advanced notice.**  
Your landlord is required to give a minimum of two days notice, unless there is an emergency. With proper notice, or in an emergency, they have the right to reasonably access the apartment.
- **To maintain the property, such as notifying your landlord of needed maintenance or repairs, and keeping the unit safe and sanitary.**
- **To leave the unit for your landlord to repair lead hazards.**  
If your landlord is participating in RIHousing's Lead Safe Homes Program, the program will pay for you to stay somewhere else while the lead hazard repair work is being done, if you have nowhere else to stay.

If you are concerned there are lead hazards in your apartment that are not being appropriately addressed, or have questions or concerns about your rights and responsibilities as a tenant, please contact the Center for Justice at (401) 491-1101.

# PROPERTY OWNERS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## Landlords may only rent safe and healthy homes that are free of lead hazards.

Lead hazards can be harmful to both you and your tenants' health and are particularly dangerous for children under the age of 6 and for pregnant women. Most lead hazards come from lead paint in the form of paint dust or paint chips.

RIHousing's LeadSafe Homes Program fixes lead-paint hazards in and outside of the home. In most instances, this assistance is free. As a landlord, you have both rights and responsibilities when it comes to keeping your properties safe.



As a landlord, you have the following rights:

- **To gain access to a tenant's unit if you need to fix lead hazards.**  
Unless it is a life-threatening situation, you must give at least two days' notice.
- **To continue receiving rent when a tenant is temporarily relocated due to lead hazard remediation**  
Those relocation expenses are being covered by RIHousing's LeadSafe Homes Program.
- **To raise the rent, in accordance with your lease and under state law.**  
This requires giving adequate notice to the tenant.
- **To evict tenants who do not pay rent or are in violation of their lease.**

If you have questions or concerns about your rights and responsibilities as a landlord, please contact the Center for Justice at (401) 491-1101.

You also have responsibilities:

- **To fix and maintain health and safety hazards in your properties, including lead hazards.**  
Rhode Island law requires that all rental properties be safe from lead hazards. There are no exceptions.
- **To allow your tenants to have their own certified lead inspectors inspect their units for lead, if they so desire.**  
RIHousing conducts these inspections for free as part of the LeadSafe Homes Program.
- **To not evict, retaliate or create a hostile environment for tenants who request that you fix lead hazards or other housing code requirements.**  
Illegal retaliation might include:
  - raising the rent once a tenant brings concerns to you;
  - moving to evict the tenant after they bring concerns to you;
  - shutting off their utilities; or
  - making tenants feel threatened or intimidated.
- **To relocate residents if they must leave the unit while lead hazards or code violations are being fixed.**  
If tenants do not have family or friends to stay with, you may need to pay for a hotel room and provide a food stipend. If you participate in RIHousing's LeadSafe Homes Program, the program will pay for a place for tenants to stay, and you will continue to receive rent.
- **To not refuse to rent to tenants because they have children.**  
If a child is born or moves in (through adoption, fostering, or for any reason), you cannot ask them to leave because of the child. This is discrimination based on family status and violates the law.