



# Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Charles D. Baker, Governor ♦ Karyn E. Polito, Lt. Governor ♦ Jennifer D. Maddox, Undersecretary

### **RECEIVING A NOTICE TO QUIT**

In Massachusetts, a landlord must send a tenant a Notice to Quit before the landlord can file a summary process (eviction) action. The Notice to Quit is a legal document that formally notifies the tenant that the tenancy will be terminated on a specific date. A Notice to Quit is **not** an order to leave your apartment on the date of the lease termination.

**NOTE: IF YOU RECEIVE A NOTICE TO QUIT YOU DO NOT NEED TO IMMEDIATELY LEAVE YOUR UNIT. YOU ARE ENTITLED TO A LEGAL PROCEEDING IN WHICH YOU CAN DEFEND AGAINST THE EVICTION. ONLY A COURT ORDER CAN FORCE YOU TO LEAVE YOUR UNIT.**

If you have received a Notice to Quit for nonpayment of rent, do not ignore or discard it. You should immediately contact your landlord to try to work out a payment plan and use the Massachusetts Legal Resource Finder to connect with legal assistance and other resources. Contact information listed below.

In addition, you may be temporarily protected from eviction by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) order in effect through December 31, 2020. You are only covered by the CDC order if:

- You are individual with a net household income under \$99,000 or a couple with a net household income under \$198,000
- You are unable to pay rent due to a substantial loss in income or extraordinary medical expenses
- You would likely become homeless if evicted,
- You have tried to obtain state or local rental assistance, and
- You are making best efforts to pay as much rent as possible.

If you can attest that you meet all of these criteria, you should fill out a [CDC Moratorium Declaration Form](#) and provide it to your landlord. The Declaration form is attached.

Please be aware that even if you are protected by the CDC order, your landlord can still begin the process of evicting you. You may receive a complaint and summons, and may need to appear in court. You should not ignore a summons to appear in court, even if you believe you are protected by the CDC order, or a judge may enter a default judgment against you.

Even if the CDC order applies to you, you are at risk of eviction when the CDC moratorium expires on December 31. The CDC order does not eliminate your obligation to pay rent or late fees. To increase the chance you are able to stay in your home when the moratorium ends, you should pay as much rent as you can and you should seek rental assistance if you need help.

Legal Resource Finder (<http://www.masslrf.org/>) will connect you to information for legal aid programs, nonprofits, government agencies, and court programs that may be able to help you with your legal issue for free or at a low cost. You can then contact your local Housing Consumer Education Center (HCEC) to learn if you are eligible for rental assistance. The HCECs are regional, therefore you should contact the HCEC closest to your home address.

- Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority
  - *Address:* 1 Fenn Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Pittsfield, MA 01201
  - *Phone Number:* 413-499-1630 Ext.168
  - *Website:* <https://berkhousing.wpengine.com/financial-assistance-programs/>
- Community Teamwork, Inc.
  - *Address:* 17 Kirk Street, Lowell, MA 01852
  - *Phone Number:* 978-459-0551
  - *Website:* <https://www.commteam.org/hcec>
- Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority
  - *Address:* 241 Millers Falls Road, Turners Falls, MA 01376
  - *Phone Number:* 413-863-8791 Ext. 150
  - *Website:* <http://www.fcrhra.org/emergency-assistance/RAFT>
- Housing Assistance Corporation
  - *Address:* 460 West Main Street, Hyannis, MA 02601
  - *Phone Number:* 508-771-5400 ext 0
  - *Website:* <https://haconcapecod.org/programs/homeless-prevention>
- Metro Housing Boston
  - *Address:* 1411 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02120
  - *Phone Number:* 617-425-6700
  - *Website:* <https://www.metrohousingboston.org/what-we-do/rental-relief-and-eviction-prevention/>
- NeighborWorks Housing Solutions
  - *Address:* 169 Summer Street, Kingston, MA 02364 (all offices are currently closed)
  - *Phone Number:* 781-422-4204
  - *Website:* <https://nhsmass.org/covid-19>
- RCAP Solutions, Inc.
  - *Address:* 191 May Street, Worcester, MA 01602
  - *Phone Number:* 978-630-6771
  - *Website:* <http://www.rcapsolutions.org/homelessness-prevention/>
- South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc.
  - *Address:* 7 Bishop Street, Framingham, MA 01702
  - *Phone Number:* 508-872-0765
  - *Website:* <https://www.smoc.org/housing-consumer-education-center.php>
- Way Finders
  - *Address:* 1780 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103
  - *Phone Number:* 413-233-1600
  - *Website:* <https://www.wayfinders.org/apply-financial-assistance>

Two additional RAFT/ERMA Agencies:

- Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development
  - *Address:* 39 Curwin Terrace, Lynn, MA 01905
  - *Phone Number:* 339-883-2342

- Website: <http://www.lhand.org/fsc.aspx>
- Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance
  - Address: 6 Institute Road, Worcester, MA 01609
  - Phone Number: 508-791-7265 x172
  - Website: <https://www.cmhaonline.org/>

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Other than HCECs, there are a number of resources you may contact for assistance with your eviction proceeding:

### **Massachusetts Legal Resource Finder**

*Serving:* All Massachusetts residents, all incomes. Legal Resource Finder search results will give you contact information for legal aid programs, nonprofits, government agencies and court programs that may be able to help you with your legal issue for free or at a low cost. It will also give you links to legal information and self-help materials.

*Website:* [www.MassLRF.org](http://www.MassLRF.org)

### **Community Legal Aid**

*Serving:* Low-income individuals in communities in central and western Massachusetts.

*Phone Numbers:*       Central MA - 800-649-3718  
                                   Western MA - 855-252-5342

*Website:* <https://communitylegal.org/>

### **Court Service Centers**

- *Serving:* This webpage provides general information about the Commonwealth's Court Service Centers. The Centers are available to all court users without legal representation. There are no income or immigration status requirements to access the Centers.
- *Website:* <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/learn-about-court-service-centers>
  - **NOTE:** The Court Service Center locations are closed to the public until further notice due to the COVID-19 outbreak, but remote services are available via Zoom Meeting for emergency cases. See the following website for information about Court Service Center operations during COVID:  
<https://www.mass.gov/alerts/important-update-about-court-service-centers>

### **Greater Boston Legal Services**

*Serving:* Low-income individuals in the greater Boston area.

*Phone Number:* 617-371-1234

*Website:* <https://www.gbls.org/>

### **Harvard Legal Aid Bureau**

*Serving:* Low-income individuals in the Boston area.

*Phone Number:* 617-495-4408

*Website:* <https://www.harvardlegalaid.org/>

**Massachusetts 211**

*Serving:* Commonwealth-wide confidential and toll-free telephone service to connect Massachusetts residents to community services and public information.

*Telephone Number:* 211

*Website:* <https://mass211.org/about/>

**Massachusetts Bar Association Lawyer Referral Program**

*Serving:* Provides free legal referral services. No income requirements.

*Phone Number:* 617-654-0400

**MassLegalHelp**

*Serving:* All Massachusetts residents, all incomes. Free legal information and self-help materials for Massachusetts residents, including links to guided online interviews to help you complete a CDC declaration and an answer to a summons and complaint.

*Website:* [www.masslegalhelp.org/covid-19/housing](http://www.masslegalhelp.org/covid-19/housing)

**MetroWest Legal Services**

*Serving:* Low-income individuals in communities immediately west of Boston.

*Phone Number:* 508-620-1830

*Website:* <https://mwlegal.org/>

**Northeast Legal Aid**

*Serving:* Low-income individuals in communities in northeast Massachusetts.

*Phone Number:* 978-458-1465

*Website:* <https://www.northeastlegalaid.org/>

**Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT)**

*Services:* Provides short-term financial assistance to families who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.

*Phone Number:* 800-224-5124

*Website:* <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/learn-about-residential-assistance-for-families-in-transition-raft>

**South Coastal Counties Legal Services**

*Serving:* Low-income individuals in communities in southeast Massachusetts and the Cape.

*Phone Numbers:* 800-244-9023

*Website:* <http://www.sccls.org/default.asp>

**Volunteer Lawyers Project**

*Serving:* Low-income individuals in the greater Boston area.

*Phone Number:* 617-603-1700

*Website:* <https://vlpnet.org/>