

Experiencing a Lockout?

FREE HOUSING LEGAL ASSISTANCE

To report a lockout, affected tenants should call **311** to request to file a report or to seek assistance from the Chicago Police Department.

Renters can seek free legal assistance from the Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing's Rentervention Line at www.rentervention.com or **(312) 347-7600**. Interpreter services are available for those who prefer to communicate in a language other than English or Spanish.

Callers to the Rentervention Line should be prepared for the following:

- Leave a voicemail with your name and contact information
 - A staff member will call back within one business day to ask some basic questions regarding the situation
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A "lockout" occurs when a landlord does or threatens any of the following actions:

- Change or disable the locks
- Block any entrance
- Remove doors or windows
- Shut off or interfere with utility services, like heat, electricity, gas, water or plumbing
- Remove appliances or fixtures
- Remove the tenant's personal property
- Use or threaten violence against the tenant or their property
- Any other act making the property inaccessible or uninhabitable

Lockouts are illegal under the Chicago Residential Landlord Tenant Ordinance (Municipal Code, §5-12-160).

Renters do not need a lease to be protected against lockouts, the rule applies to all residential tenancies in Chicago, even smaller, owner-occupied dwellings. Exceptions exist for some shelters and hotels.

For more information, contact the Department of Housing at (312) 744-3653 or DOH@cityofchicago.org.