



# REQUIRED NOTICE OF RIGHTS IN HOUSING

Landlords in the City of St. Petersburg are required to distribute this notice, and it is not intended to provide legal advice by either the City or the Landlord.

## RENTERS HAVE RIGHTS

**Per City of St. Petersburg Ordinance 422-H, at the time a rental agreement is formalized, all landlords in the city are required to notify tenants as follows:**

Though tenants have responsibilities under Florida law and through lease agreements – including paying rent, keeping the unit clean and in working order under relevant codes and not disturbing the peace - landlords have certain requirements and restrictions as well. This document is meant to educate tenants about their rights and tenants should review their lease regarding their responsibilities and discuss questions with their landlord.

## ALL RESIDENTIAL RENTALS MUST BE FIT FOR HABITATION

A unit must generally include working plumbing and heating, be free from pests and have locking doors and windows, among other requirements<sup>1</sup>. Structures in the City must also meet all applicable building, housing and health codes. If there is an issue with your unit for which you have not assumed responsibility under your lease, contact your landlord as set forth in your lease. If your landlord does not address the needed issue within a reasonable timeframe, certain issues can be reported to the City Codes Department at 727-893-7373. A landlord cannot deny access to a code inspector if access is granted by a tenant.

## RETALIATION AND DISCRIMINATION 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<sup>2</sup>. A landlord cannot treat you differently because of your race, nationality, disability or sexual orientation, among other criteria<sup>3</sup>. If you feel you have been discriminated against or retaliated against, contact the Pinellas County Office of Human Rights at 727-464-4880.

## YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO CHALLENGE AN EVICTION AND OTHER UNLAWFUL ACTION

A lease cannot prevent you from challenging an eviction or limit the liability of a landlord<sup>4</sup>. If a landlord is violating the lease agreement or otherwise damaging your interest (such as utilizing utilities you pay for without your permission) you can always seek relief through the courts. If you challenge an eviction and win, your landlord must generally pay for your attorney. 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.

## HELP IS AVAILABLE

If you face eviction and/or homelessness, financial assistance may be available. There are many local organizations that can help. Contact 211 for a full directory of local services or visit [211tampabay.org](http://211tampabay.org) for more information.

<sup>1</sup> Fla. Stat § 83.51

<sup>2</sup> Fla. Stat § 83.64

<sup>3</sup> Fair Housing Act, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, and Pinellas County Code Chapter 70

<sup>4</sup> Fla. Stat. § 83.47