

The Quick Guide to How to Keep Your Rental

1. **ALWAYS pay your rent.**
2. **Understand** your rental agreement. **KNOW:**
 - The amount of rent
 - When it is due
 - The penalty for not paying on time
 - The address where you should send your rent payments or the person allowed to collect your rent
 - Any additional costs such as electricity and water
 - Any damage repair policies and any house rules such as policies for visitors and quiet hours
3. Keep records and receipts of all rent payments, damages, repairs, complaints, and visitors that you invite to your home.

Helpful Housing Organizations

The Arc of Maui 242-5781

Group homes (4 locations) for individuals with mental developmental disabilities.

Family Life Center 877-0880

A housing program that address the needs of the homeless or at-risk homeless through emergency shelter, permanent housing, and rental assistance.

Harvest Chapel Help for Homeless . . 667-1959

Provides meals for the hungry. Can also provide shelter when other resources have been exhausted for the homeless.

Ka Hale A Ke Ola 242-7600

Emergency shelter and transitional shelter for men, women, and children. Both individuals and families are allowed.

Maui Economic Opportunity 249-2970

Provides transportation for youths, seniors, and disabled. Other services include: case management, financial aid, food basket, providing clothing, and rent aid.

Maui Mental Health Kokua 244-7405

Two week crisis shelter for individuals who are in emotional distress and need immediate intervention.

Maui Youth & Family Services 579-8414

Emergency 10-bed shelter for youths ages 10 to 17. May stay up to 90 days. Also offers emergency satellite shelter home program for youths age 10 to 17.

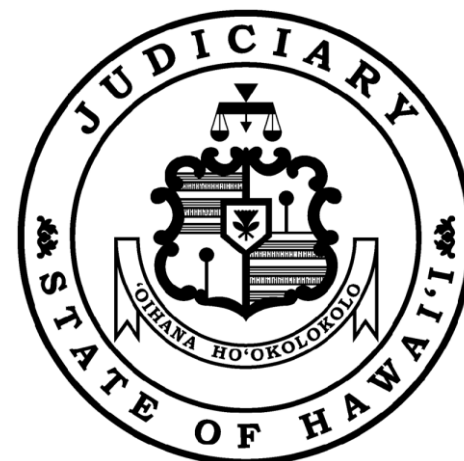
Salvation Army Social Services 760-8600

Various extensive services to people in need. Also provides showers, lockers, mail, laundry, clothing, health care, case management, food basket, outreach programs, rehabilitation, and emergency financial assistance.

Women Helping Women 242-6600

Shelter for women, with or without children, who have experienced domestic abuse. No one is turned away due to lack of funds if she is in danger.

STEPS TO AVOID EVICTION



HOW TO AVOID HOUSING PROBLEMS AND EVICTION

1. Pay Rent/Mortgage on Time

Failure to pay rent or a mortgage on time is the most frequent reason why people lose their housing. Paying for housing costs should take priority over most other bills, especially in subsidized housing or for people that own their own homes. It is usually best to borrow money from elsewhere to pay your rent if you live in subsidized housing, or pay your mortgage if you own your home. Owing money to your landlord or the bank that holds your mortgage will inevitably result in losing your housing.

2. Do Not Withhold Rent

Never withhold rent without first obtaining advice from an attorney or before you first carefully review and understand the applicable rules. You may be able to withhold rent in some circumstances, but this must be done in a **VERY SPECIFIC** way. Even if your landlord did something wrong, you can still be evicted if you withhold your rent.

3. Request Rent Adjustments Promptly

If a tenant who receives a rent subsidy of some kind suffers a reduction in

income, the tenant should request a rent adjustment as soon as possible.

4. Know the Rules and Follow Them

Don't violate the rules of the lease and the house rules; you will eventually get evicted. Common violations include unauthorized guests or occupants, noise violations, and damaging the apartment. Read your lease before you move in. If your tenancy is subject to the landlord-tenant code, get a copy and read it *before* problems develop.

5. Be a Good Neighbor

Most problems, other than those created by failure to pay rent, can be avoided by being pleasant to your landlord and your neighbors. Even when you disagree with your neighbors or your landlord, try to resolve the problem cordially by focusing on resolving the problem, not attacking the person you think created it.

6. Be Conscientious

If there are any obligations that you have as part of your tenancy, it is important that you comply with those obligations and do so promptly. This is especially important in subsidized housing where tenants are required to periodically meet with their landlord and provide information regarding their income, assets, and family composition. Failing to promptly comply with these obligations can lead to eviction.

7. Talk to Your Landlord if Problems Arise

If you run into problems keeping your obligations for your tenancy, often the best policy is to talk with your landlord to inform him or her of the problems so that you can try to work out a solution together. Of course the approach you take will depend on your relationship with your landlord. It is common for people to avoid their landlords when problems arise, but doing so often makes landlords resentful.

8. Maintain Your Home

Keep your home clean and safe. If you own your home, maintaining it well will increase its value. If you rent, you are less likely to run into problems with your landlord if you take care of your rental. In extreme cases, families can be evicted for failing to properly maintain their home. Landlords will often refuse to return tenants' security deposits for damages caused to the property.

9. Keep Good Records

It is important to keep track of all your rental documents (e.g., leases, house rules, rent receipts, etc.) in case you need to refer to them in the future. Never pay rent in cash unless the landlord will immediately provide you with a receipt—use checks or money orders if your landlord refuses to provide receipts.

Legal Information & Mediation

Maui Self Help Center: Free legal information from volunteer attorneys. Open Thursdays 9:00 am to 12:00 pm on the first floor of the Wailuku Courthouse. No appointments necessary.

Legal Aid Society of Hawaii: May be able to provide free legal representation if you apply and qualify (800) 499-4302

Maui Mediation Services: Serving Maui County since 1982, MMS offers mediation services to help resolve a variety of disputes including those between a landlord and tenant and also between condominium owners and associations 244-5744