

TENANT TOOLKITS

Past judgment

Sometimes life happens.

There are times where you were not properly informed about a court order for eviction and a judgment was decided without your knowledge. Or maybe, you don't agree with the decision of the court. The Heartland Center staff has gathered the following information for you. This toolkit will cover tenants' rights in Missouri, tenants' options when in this situation, as well as a guide to lingo and other resources available.

Please note: This information is **not legal advice** and, unless you've been specifically told otherwise by Heartland Center staff, no attorney has reviewed your information or performed an analysis of facts or risks. Heartland Center is providing this legal information for educational purposes.

HEARTLAND CENTER FOR JOBS AND FREEDOM

816.278.1344
www.jobsandfreedom.or
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Overview.

Housing issues are stressful and can be overwhelming.

We hope this tool kit can provide you with some resources and options to take. Here we include a quick overview and checklist of the information in this toolkit. Refer to this as many times as needed, and feel free to reach out to info@jobsandfreedom.org if you have any further questions. We will respond to you as soon as we are able.



Know Your rights. (pg. 3)

Review the rights here and on our website.



Weigh your options. (pg. 4)

You may feel backed into a corner, however, you do have options. Review your options and determine which is the best for you.



Know the lingo. (pg. 5)

Sometimes the language used for housing is odd. We've provided some definitions to level the playing field and help as you navigate your issue.



Find support. (pg. 6)

There are options for resources and support. Connect with KC Tenants to engage with tenants fighting for and supporting tenants.



Reach out for more information.

Housing issues and eviction can be overwhelming. We created this in hopes of answering some basic questions and providing information. If you find yourself in need of more information and support, call our hotline at (816) 278-1344 to get further advice and support.

NEXT: Your Options.

Your Rights.

Tenants have a right to be notified of an eviction lawsuit before the case concludes.

Tenants also have a right to defend themselves against it. Further, tenants have a right to know what information is being used against them when applying for housing or credit.



NEXT: **Your Options**

Your Options.

SEEK AN ATTORNEY IF THIS EVICTION OCCURRED LESS THAN ONE YEAR AGO OR IF YOU WERE NEVER SERVED WITH THE LAWSUIT.

Other options for tenants include:



ASK TO SEE THE RECORD.

If a person is denied housing or credit, they have a right to see the information that the management company is using to make the decision. It's best to get a copy of the report. Call our office if you're denied access to the report.



CHALLENGE NOTIFICATION.

Tenants must be notified of a lawsuit and given an opportunity to defend themselves in court. It may be possible to challenge an eviction judgment if the tenant wasn't served properly. Call us back to discuss this in more detail.



NEGOTIATE.

Tenants have the right to negotiate with their landlord. Start by contacting the landlord or their attorney, if they had an attorney. Our office can help you locate the attorney's contact information. As part of the negotiation ask the attorney to vacate the judgment and dismiss the case. Tenants may also want to ask to have the debt removed from their credit report.

Make sure to get the agreement in writing. We have a **negotiation form** that tenants can use. If the landlord is willing to dismiss the case but didn't use an attorney, the tenant can provide the **motion and order form** is [here](#), and the **settlement form** is [here](#). The landlord will need to file the documents.

Tenants have a right to offer less than what they owe.

NEXT: **The Lingo**

The Lingo.

Tenant, a.k.a. renter – a person who rents a space from another individual or company. Sometimes there is a written lease or it can be a verbal agreement. Not all tenants have agreements that require them to pay rent.

Eviction – a legal court process that would conclude with a judge issuing a judgment for eviction and law enforcement officers executing that judgment no sooner than 10 days after the judgment is issued by the Judge. These officers can allow a landlord to remove tenants possessions and change the locks.

Damages – this is what a landlord asks the court to give him when he sues a tenant. In eviction cases, the damages are often the past due rent, late fees, attorney's fees and court costs. Damages aren't referring to actual damage of property.

Eviction Record – Evictions can be listed on a few different records. It may be listed on: CaseNet (Missouri's court website), credit reports, or other report pulled by the landlord. The eviction could be one any one of those records or a combination.

Service – The process of being given a court summons and lawsuit, notifying the tenant that they're being sued for eviction and have court. Service may happen when someone hands a resident the lawsuit or it can be posted on the door and mailed.

NEXT: **The Resources.**

The Resources.



Heartland Center for Jobs and Freedom

816.278.1344

www.jobsandfreedom.org

Heartland Center's website. You can find links to toolkits for other situations and other up-to-date resources for tenants.

Other Tenant resources and Toolkits -

<http://www.jobsandfreedom.org/tenant-rights-attorney>



United Way - 211

Call 211

<https://uwgkc.myresourcedirectory.com/>

United Way's hotline for local resources and services.



KC Tenants

816.533.5435

www.kctenants.org

They are an organization led by a multiracial, multigenerational base of poor and working-class tenants in Kansas City. KC Tenants are organizing to ensure that everyone in KC has a safe, accessible, and truly affordable home.