

TENANT TOOLKITS

# Short on rent

Sometimes life happens.

If you get late or short on rent, the Heartland Center staff 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.

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HEARTLAND CENTER FOR JOBS AND FREEDOM

816.278.1344  
www.jobsandfreedom.org  
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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](mailto: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.

## Tenant's rights in Missouri are limited.

Tenants have the right to engage in negotiations with a landlord. A tenant may not be forced from the home unless the landlord has sued you in court, won, and gotten a judgment.

Missouri tenant rights don't cover:

- **A grace period** – Landlords are able to file suit as soon as rent is past due.
- **Required notice** – If a tenant is late on rent the landlord may file suit without first notifying the tenant.
- **Medical reasons, job loss, etc** – A tenant may be late on the rent due to no fault of their own, but the law does not provide these tenants with protection. Find this to be unfair? We agree! The answer is to organize.



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NEXT: **Your Options**

# Your Options.

**If a tenant is behind on rent, the landlord may file suit at any time.**

However, there are some options for tenants:



**Seek out rental assistance.**

At this time, many organizations have received additional funds to assist tenants with rent. The easiest first call should be to the United Way's 2-1-1 line. This can be called from any phone within the metro area as they serve the surrounding 26 counties.



**Negotiate.**

Tenants have the right to negotiate with their landlord. Any agreement should be put in writing, signed, and dated by both parties (tenant and landlord). We have a **negotiating form** [here](#) that tenants may use. Keep a copy of any agreements and always obtain receipts for payments made towards the rent balance.

# The Lingo.

**Tenant, a.k.a. renter** – a person who rents a space from another individual or company. Sometimes there is a written lease and sometimes the agreement is made without one.

NEXT: **The Resources.**

# The Resources.



## **Heartland Center for Jobs and Freedom**

816.278.1344

[www.jobsandfreedom.org](http://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](http://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.