

# How to Force Your Landlord to Make Repairs!

## Important Steps:

- **Inform your Landlord Directly**

First, always try talking to Management directly (the Super, the Building Manager, the office staff or even the Landlord) about the needed repairs in your apartment or building. If that doesn't seem to work, take these steps...

- **Put your Complaint in Writing** and mail it by certified mail (and return receipt requested) to your landlord. Indicate in the letter that you have already attempted to have the problems dealt with by talking to management, and that you are willing to take legal action if the repairs are not made. Give the landlord a timeline in which to respond to you with his plans for repairs (like 7 or 10 days from the day he receives the letter.) Always make a copy for yourself, and hold onto it!

- **Call 311**

When you call 311 with an apartment complaint, you will be transferred to HPD. HPD is the City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development. They are the agency that enforces the laws around conditions in rental apartments. If HPD does an inspection and finds violations, they will send a letter to your landlord, informing him of the violations and the timelines in which they need to be fixed. If the conditions are serious enough, sometimes HPD will do the repairs itself and bill the landlord.

**In most cases, the steps above are effective enough to put pressure on your landlord to make the needed repairs. But if they don't work, you can take the following steps:**

- **File an HP Action in Housing Court**

If dealing with the landlord directly or calling HPD does not get your problems fixed, you may need to sue your landlord in court for repairs. You can start a case in the "HP" part of Housing Court. You do not need to have a lawyer. If you sue the landlord in court, HPD will inspect your apartment and the judge may order the landlord to do repairs.

- **Withhold Rent**

Some tenants elect to withhold rent. This can be very effective, but you run the risk of being sued by your landlord. If you withhold rent, save it, don't spend it!! We strongly suggest you seek advice from a lawyer or from CASA before you decide to withhold your rent.

- **ORGANIZE!!!**

If you're having a problem with the Landlord, it's likely that many, *many* others in your building are having the same problem. Every single one of the steps above has more power when more people are involved! **There is Power in Numbers!!!**

These steps are just a few of the things you can do. To learn more about how to get repairs, how to organize or how to form a Tenants Association, get involved with CASA! Call at 718-716-8000 [www.casapower.org](http://www.casapower.org)

