

# YOU HAVE RIGHTS AS A TENANT!

## **You don't have to move just because the landlord says so.**

As long as you have been in your apartment for more than 30 days (**even if you owe rent**), your landlord has to take you to court and prove that you should be evicted. Your landlord may tell you to move because you owe rent, or because he or she needs your room for a family member, or another reason. Don't move until a **judge** says you have to. Only a Judge can evict you and only a Marshall with a court order can actually move your belongings.

## **Harassment by landlords is illegal.**

Harassment is any behavior by the landlord which disturbs your peace and quiet or your ability to enjoy your home in comfort, especially if it is intended to force you to move out. This may include physical violence, threats of eviction, turning off your heat and hot water, damaging your room or your personal property, or making sexual remarks and gestures.

## **You have the right to live in a safe, clean, decent home.**

Your landlord must maintain your building in good repair, keep the hallways and public areas clean, paint your apartment every three years, exterminate rats, mice, roaches, bedbugs, other vermin, and deal with any other matter dangerous to life or health, in a timely manner. Your landlord must also maintain electrical, plumbing, sanitary, heating, and ventilating systems, and appliances installed by your landlord, in good working order. If you landlord violates this right, **you have the right to sue your landlord in court for repairs.**

## **You have the Right to Organize!**

You have the right to form, join, and participate in a Tenant Association for the purpose of protecting your rights. Tenant Associations have the right to use common areas of the building, including the lobby if a community room is not available, free of charge for meetings. Your landlord is forbidden by law to harass you for tenant-organizing activities.

## **You have even MORE rights if you are a Rent Stabilized Tenant!**

**How do you know if you are Rent Stabilized? Most likely you are a rent stabilized tenant if you:**

1. live in a building that was built before 1974, and you
2. live in a building that has more than 6 apartments, and you
3. pay less than \$2500/month in rent.

**To find out for sure if you are protected by the laws of Rent Stabilization, call HCR at 718-739-6400.**

## **If you are Rent Stabilized, YOU HAVE A RIGHT:**

- To stable rents; The City (not your landlord) determines how much rents can be increased each year.
- To go on living in your apartment as long as you want to, as long as you don't violate the law. The landlord has to offer you a renewal lease every 1-2 years.
- To Petition the State (DHCR) to reduce your rent because of bad conditions, to intervene if you are being harassed, and to make sure that you are paying the correct, legal rent.
- To apply for help with your rent increases if you are elderly or disabled.

**You have even more rights that aren't listed here!! To find out more or to learn how to organize a Tenants Association, get involved with CASA--Community Action for Safe Apartments! Call CASA at 718-716-8000. [www.casapower.org](http://www.casapower.org)**

