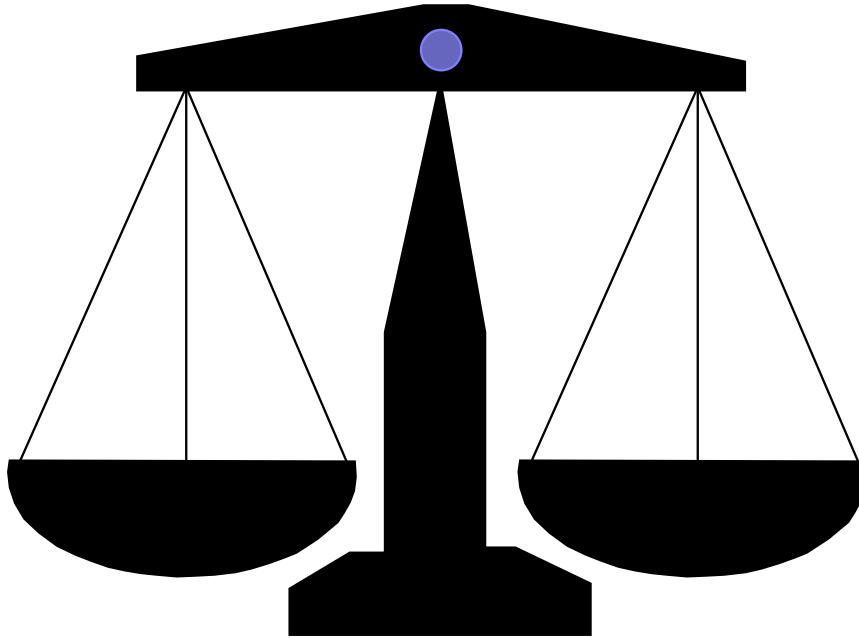


KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



INTERFERENCE WITH TENANCY

&

ILLEGAL EVICTIONS

PREPARED BY

Western Michigan Legal Services

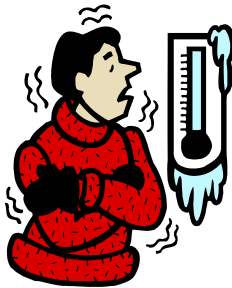
For locations see www.wmichls.org

CAN MY LANDLORD LOCK ME OUT?



NO!

CAN MY LANDLORD CUT
OFF THE HEAT?



NO!

CAN MY LANDLORD THROW
MY THINGS OUT?



NO!

Your landlord has to go to court to evict you. This is true even if you owe lots of back rent and even if the landlord thinks that you are damaging the rental unit (the house or apartment). In other words, your landlord cannot put you out or evict you for any reason without first getting a court order signed by a judge. This is the law in Michigan.

Your landlord also cannot hassle you or try to make you move out by doing any of the following things:

1. using force or violence or threatening you with force or violence;
2. changing or adding locks to the rental unit (your place) without giving you a key right away;
3. taking, keeping or destroying your things;
4. boarding up the doors and/or windows so that you either cannot get back in or have a hard time getting back in;
5. taking the doors, windows or locks off the rental unit (your place);
6. putting your things out in the street;
7. turning off your electricity, heat, water, hot water, etc. no matter whose name they are in;
8. not paying a utility bill which is in the landlord's name so that your gas, heat, water or hot water, etc. is cut off by the utility company;
9. doing anything else to put you out or make you move without going to court first.

The only exception is when it is necessary to turn off water, gas or electricity to make repairs or when the landlord has to take off a window, door or lock to repairs. The landlord has to give you notice that he/she will be doing it and the interruption can only be for as long as reasonably necessary to make the repair. (For example: The landlord cannot turn off water to stop a leak then wait a week to call a plumber.)

If your landlord puts you out, hassles you or tries to make you move without a court order, you can sue your landlord. The law says that if you win in court, the landlord has to pay you at least \$200.00 and maybe more depending on what the landlord did and how much you and your things were hurt.

You can also sue your landlord to get back in to your place or to have the

utilities turned back on. But if you want to do that, you should call a lawyer.

If you only want to sue for money damages and your claim is for \$3,000.00 or less, you can do it yourself in small claims court.

Keep in mind that if you need the court to do something right away or if you want to sue for more than \$3000.00, you cannot do it in small claims court. You should probably talk to a lawyer.