



GETTING OUT OF A LEASE

- » Secure and stable housing is critical for survivor safety. Some survivors may need help terminating a lease in order to escape abuse or violence. A survivor of family violence ([Texas Property Code §92.016](#)), sexual assault ([Texas Property Code §92.0161](#) and [Texas Penal Code §22.011](#)), and stalking ([Texas Property Code §92.0161](#)) living in a rental property has the right to terminate a lease without penalty. Some conditions to be aware of:
 - If a survivor does not reside with their abuser, they can terminate a lease after providing a 30-day notice of termination of the lease to the landlord with a temporary ex parte order, a final protective order, or a temporary injunction.
 - If a survivor resides with their abuser, they can terminate a lease without a 30-day notice if they have a final protective order or a temporary injunction to stop family violence within a divorce.
 - See the specific statutes for documentation and condition requirements. Contact TCFV for case specific technical assistance.
 - » Check out Texas Law Help's [Right to Break a Lease Q&A](#) and TCFV's [Advocate's Guide to Lease Termination](#) for more information and template notices.
-

UTILITY WAIVERS

- » Utility waivers are deposit waivers for identified utilities including electricity, gas, and landline telephone, created to assist survivors in establishing service.
 - » Check out [TCFV's Survivor Resources](#) tab to learn more about which utility companies accept these waivers and who can complete the form.
-

EVICITION

- » Eviction is the removal of a tenant from a property. Eviction is a legal proceeding and a property owner must go to court to evict a tenant. A Notice to Vacate is not a legal document from a court, rather it is a notice typically preceding a formal eviction.
 - » Contact TCFV for more information on how to support a survivor with an eviction.
-

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- » Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) enacted Housing Protections for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual abuse of a child, dating violence and stalking. These protections apply to federally funded "covered housing programs." Public housing authorities, owners and managers of participating covered housing programs must comply with VAWA 2013.
 - » Survivors asserting their VAWA protections as a qualified tenant, participant, applicant, and or affiliated individual may be requested to provide documentation of the victimization to the public housing authority, owner, and or manager of participating in the covered housing programs.
 - » Under [Texas Property Code § 92.015](#), a victim of family violence residing in any rental property has the right to seek police and emergency assistance in response to family violence.
-

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- » [Texas Law Help](#) - Assistance in locating local, free legal service providers
- » [VAWnet](#) - Online resources and guidance around Housing and Domestic Violence
- » [TCFV](#) - Assistance in connecting survivors and advocates to local housing experts in the community. If you are encountering difficulty with a property owner not accepting the termination, call 512-794-1133.



Find more of our Advocacy Tip Sheets at [tcfv.org/policy/creating-safer-spaces/](https://www.tcfv.org/policy/creating-safer-spaces/)