

# Landlords Won't Rent to Me. What can I do?

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## I Have Been Evicted Before

- Tell the truth on your application!
- Landlords can see all of your past evictions on the internet.
- There is no rule about how far back they can look.
- If you were evicted due to circumstances that have now changed, be sure to tell potential landlords how the changes in your life will allow you to be a good tenant.
- Explain why you can be a good tenant and deserve another chance.

## I won my eviction case and it was dismissed

- Get a copy of the dismissal "Entry" to show potential landlords that the eviction case was dismissed.

## Can I Get My Record Off the Internet?

- Only if it was dismissed.
- Hamilton County has a form you can file to ask to have your eviction removed from the internet.
- You can get the form from the Clerk of Courts in Rm. 115 of the Courthouse at Court & Main.
- The Clerk will schedule a hearing before a magistrate and you'll have a chance to explain why your record should be removed.
- Your former landlord may attend the hearing.
- Warning: There's a good chance you will be denied.

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## I owe money to Duke

- Call the Community Action Agency at (513) 569-1840 to schedule an appointment to discuss payment plans.
- You can also contact Duke Energy directly to try to set up a payment plan.
- If you can't afford a payment plan, you could file bankruptcy, wipe out the debt, and start over.
- Call Lawyer Referral (see below), for bankruptcy lawyers in your area.

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## Former Landlords Claim I Owe Money

I agree that I owe it, but need time to pay:

- Ask your former landlord for a statement of what you owe.
- Offer to work out a re-payment plan.
- Get and keep receipts for any money you pay.

I disagree, but court records show he has a judgment against me:

- Even if you don't agree, the judgment means you owe the money. You'll have to pay unless it is discharged in bankruptcy.

**I disagree, there's no judgment, but the former landlord is telling new landlords that I owe money:**

- Tell the landlord you don't owe the money and show them your rent receipts.

## I Have A Criminal Record

### Expungement

Some Ohio criminal convictions can be sealed and Legal Aid may be able to help. Call Legal Aid to see if you would qualify for help with an expungement.

### My convictions cannot be expunged

Show potential landlords how your life is different now and why you can be a good tenant. List references like a faith leader or others that a potential new landlord could call. Explain why you deserve another chance.

## Common Features of Public Housing & HUD Housing

- You must provide proof of your income when you apply—and any time your income or family situation changes.
- Rent plus estimated utility cost is no more than 30% of household income.
- Some buildings include utilities in the rent. If you are responsible for paying utilities, your rent will be lower.
- If you need an accessible apartment because of a disability, the landlord must offer you one if it is available.
- You can be evicted only for serious lease violations—such as not paying rent, drugs and other crimes, sharing your home with persons not on the lease.

If your application for Public housing or HUD housing is denied, you have a right to an informal hearing to dispute the denial.

Ask for a hearing as soon as you receive the denial letter.

## Applying for Subsidized Housing

When you live in “Subsidized housing” the government pays part of your rent.

Your share of the rent is usually no more than 30% of the total or “market” rent.

### Public Housing

In public housing, your landlord is the “housing authority.” Each county has its own housing authority.

- Most public housing apartments are in large complexes. Examples in Hamilton County include Winton Terrace and Millvale.
- There are also “scattered site” homes which include smaller buildings and single family homes.
- Some public housing buildings are for elderly and disabled tenants.

### Application Hurdles

- Your application may be denied because of a criminal record, including convictions for drugs, violent crimes, and sex offenses.
- You may also be denied if you have been evicted from public housing for drugs.
- You may also be denied if you have been evicted from public housing for any reason in the past year.
- If your application is denied, you have a right to appeal the denial. Ask for a hearing immediately.

### How to Apply for CMHA Housing

Call (513)421-2642

Applications are accepted at CMHA’s leasing office, 1635 Western Ave., from 8:00am - 4:30pm, Mon-Fri.

### Project-Based Section 8 “HUD Housing”

In project-based or “HUD” housing, a private landlord has a contract with the federal government (HUD) to provide subsidized housing.

- There are numerous project-based landlords. These include some large complexes like Villages at Roll Hill and Brickstone Management.