

# PUBLIC HOUSING TENANTS – KNOW YOUR RIGHTS! Family Members Listed on Your Lease

A step-by-step guide  
to help you navigate  
the legal system.

The Public Housing Authority's (PHA) lease describes policies with respect to adding adults to the lease by the head of the household. Families must be informed that only those persons listed on the most recent certification form and lease shall be permitted to occupy the dwelling unit.



## Please read these answers to frequently asked questions

- 1. Do I need to notify anyone if I have family come to live with me?**  
Yes. The head of house must notify the PHA of additional household members living with you, including adoption or newly gained custody of a child. You must do this in writing and be sure to receive a written approval from the PHA.
- 2. What happens if I do not inform the PHA of a new household member?**  
If you allow an unauthorized occupant to live with you; you are not in compliance with the lease and may be subject to immediate eviction or termination of tenancy. Furthermore, the unauthorized occupant will be considered a trespasser and may face criminal charges.
- 3. What are some examples of unauthorized occupants?**  
A former resident of the PHA who has been evicted from a PHA development; family members over age 17 or emancipated minors who moved from the PHA unit to establish new households; a person (often a relative) that came to the unit as an extended visitor because the resident needed support, for example, after a medical procedure, but stayed on in the unit beyond the time needed by the resident.
- 4. What happens to my family if I move or die?**  
If you permanently move or die, the remaining family members on the lease may continue to occupy the unit, as long as there is at least one person of legal age and have the capacity to execute a new lease. This does not include a live-in aide. The PHA will only consider members of the household who are on the lease or related to the current lease holder.
- 5. What if I am behind on my rent when I die?**  
Whoever becomes the new head of household would be charged for any outstanding debt incurred by you.



PHA has the right to refuse additions to the lease. Families have the right to **utilize the grievance procedure** if a request for an addition to the household is denied. Contact LSHV if you need assistance!