



# THE LEGAL ADVISOR

*The official newsletter of Scranton Road Legal Clinic*



## Tenant's Rights in Ohio

by Natalie Thomas, Esq., Director

Ohio tenants have several rights and responsibilities under Ohio Law. Tenants have the right to the following.

1. **A Habitable residence.** A place that is safe and secure. The premises must meet all health and safety codes and have functioning plumbing and heat. If the premises are uninhabitable (you cannot live there for safety reasons) then it may be considered constructive eviction.
2. **The right against retaliation.** It is illegal for a landlord to retaliate against a tenant by refusing to make repairs, raising rent or decreasing services to the tenant in response to a complaint or issue tenant has brought to the landlord's attention. A landlord cannot harass or intimidate to force them to move. This may be considered retaliatory eviction.
3. **Notice before entry.** A landlord must provide notice to tenants prior to entry into the tenants dwelling. Landlord's have to provide quiet enjoyment of the premises.
4. **Notice of rent increase.** A landlord must provide reasonable notice (30 days typically) of any change in rent. The landlord cannot change rent in the middle of a lease.
5. **Right to counsel.** In Cleveland Municipal Court, tenants who live at or below the poverty line have a right to an appointed attorney during the eviction process. Anyone may privately retain an attorney for any housing court regardless of income.

A tenant's major responsibilities include paying rent on time, maintaining the cleanliness of the property, and not destroying or defacing the property. **However, do not withhold rent payments, even if your rights are violated - seek the advice of an attorney to determine your next steps.** If you are experiencing safety or other issues involving your landlord please contact the Scranton Road Legal Clinic.

## Divorce vs. Dissolution

### COMMON LEGAL MISCONCEPTION



Ohio Courts allow three different ways to end a marriage. Annulment is very uncommon. Here we look at divorce and dissolution.

Dissolution is a process where the parties to the divorce agree on every aspect of the divorce including, parental rights, visitation, child support, spousal support, division of property, and payment of debts. The parties then submit their agreement to the court for approval.

Divorce is where the parties petition the court to settle all aspects of the ending of the marriage, including any fault based reasons. This can include, adultery, extreme cruelty, being separate and apart for 1 year or more, or incompatibility.

In Cuyahoga County the Domestic Relations court handles divorce, dissolution, annulment, and custody and support issues between parties who are or have been married. The Juvenile Court handles all custody and support issues for non-married parents and Child Services cases.

## UNUSUAL LAWS

### *Strange Laws Around the US*

- In Cleveland it's illegal to catch mice without a hunting license.
- In Canton, OH if you lose your pet tiger you must notify the authorities within one hour.
- You cannot eat a doughnut and walk backwards on a city street in Marion, Ohio.



Formed in 2012, Scranton Road Legal Clinic educates and empowers our neighbors to make educated and prudent legal decisions, while providing the holistic support for the spiritual, emotional and relational problems that often accompany legal concerns. We offer brief advice via our brief advice telephone line at 216.861.5323 or via our online intake form at [www.scrantonroadministries.org/legal](http://www.scrantonroadministries.org/legal). Contact us today to discuss your legal need.