

What can the landlord do?

Are you OK?

If someone discloses to you that she has been the victim of domestic violence, there are a number of things you can do to help her address her situation.

Believe her. Remember, her abuser is doing everything he can to make her feel useless and alone. Reassure her that the abuse is not her fault and that there is help for people in her situation.

Help her get help. Give her the number for the **Family Violence Info Line: 310.1818**

If she is a tenant, you could consider...

- Relocating her in another unit if you can.
- Waiving any expenses that you can. If she paid the security deposit, process any refund as quickly and generously as you can. Waive any fees for late payment of rent that you can. She is likely short of money. He may have control of their bank account and he may have ruined their credit rating.
- Getting her permission to call her emergency contact. Many landlords request emergency contact information from their tenants. She may be willing to have you call that person or someone else.

If you think anyone is in danger call the police: 911
If you think children may be at risk, you MUST report it to
Child and Family Services 1.800.638.0715

- Evicting her and any other tenants. Unfortunately, the domestic violence may reach the point where it is affecting your premises or other tenants, you may decide you have to terminate the lease of the occupants. You have the same rights and responsibilities as you have in any other evictions. If the unit has been significantly damaged or someone has been threatened or hurt, you can terminate the tenancy with a 24-hour notice.

Frequently asked questions

One of my tenants is being abused. She wants me to change the locks on her door. Can I?

Unless there is a court order keeping him from being in or near the premises, you cannot take any action to stop the abuser from entering the premises if he is also a tenant. If there is an order, ask for a copy. It may say what to do about the lock and keys. If the order bars him from being on the premises and he shows up, call the police. If the abuser isn't a tenant and doesn't even live on the premises but she has given him a key anyway, you can change the locks.

The abuser just started living in her unit without ever signing the lease. Can I just evict him?

You can issue a notice to vacate the premises to him if he is not a tenant and you haven't consented to him being there. It can be a bit tricky if he has been living there for awhile and you've known about it. You may be considered to have given him permission to be there. Only a court can decide that he has become a tenant. Check your lease to see how well you've covered this situation. It might be good to get it reviewed by a lawyer.

One of my tenants has an emergency protection order. What does that mean to me?

Protection orders vary so you would need to see the particular order that she has. Look to see what it covers. Does it say he can't come near your premises? Does it say the victim has 'exclusive possession' of the premises? If so, it may also say that a peace officer can remove the abuser. However, it may also say that he can go to the premises to get his personal property if he is accompanied by a peace officer. Check the date on the order to see when it expires. If it has expired, ask the victim if it has been reviewed by the Court of Queen's Bench. If so, there may be another order in place. Victims often get confused about the orders they have. A bit of probing may be necessary!

Handy resources

Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta

Laws for Landlords and Tenants in Alberta - website
www.landlordandtenant.org

Service Alberta

Information for Landlords – booklet
<https://bit.ly/2oySTCy>