

Retaliatory Action legislation aims to protect renters by empowering them to stand up for their rental rights without having to fear retaliation from landlords. This ordinance strengthened and clarified language from the legislation which was passed in 2018.

Columbus City Council passed Ordinance No. 1156-2023 to amend Section 4509.07 of the Columbus City Codes, in order to address retaliatory eviction language and to repeal existing Section 4509.07 of the Columbus City Codes.

Owners are prohibited from threatening or taking action to recover a rental property or causing a renter to leave their home against their will, they cannot raise rents, reduce services provided to the renter, or refuse to renew the lease in retaliation against the following actions:

- A tenant's good faith complaint, or intent to make a complaint or report of conditions in, or affecting a tenant's housing, or
- The tenant joining with other tenants for the purpose of negotiating or dealing collectively with the owner or person having control of the premises on any of the terms and conditions of a rental agreement.

What actions can tenants take if they have an issue to report with their housing?

- Renters may complain or report the conditions of their unit to a governmental authority or their property owner
- Renters may also join with other renters on to negotiate or deal collectively with the property owner.

What actions are considered "retaliatory"?

One of the following actions would need to have occurred within close proximity to the time of the protected activities taken by the tenant:

- Increasing rent or any other obligations of the tenant;
- A reduction of any services to the tenant;
- A warning or a threat of eviction, formal or informal;
- Filing of an eviction proceeding;
- Termination or non-renewal of a lease agreement in close temporal proximity to the occurrence of any event referred to in C.C.C. Section 4509.07(a);
 - Property owner trespassing on the property or forcing entry;
 - Shutting off utilities or water services;
 - Not accepting rent payment;
 - Interfering with the tenant's quiet use and enjoyment of the property; or,
 - Prohibiting the right of access to any part of the premises that the tenant is lawfully entitled to use or occupy.

What is the penalty for violating this ordinance?

- **Violators are guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree. What are the penalties?**

Where can residents report violations of this ordinance?

- **Would this still be legal aid or directly to Columbus City Council?**



Please contact Legal Aid if you need assistance. Visit ColumbusLegalAid.org or call **614.241.2001**

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