

Tips for Tenants and Landlords

For both Tenants and Landlords:

- Create a clear and easy to understand written lease/agreement.
- Comply with lease terms.
- Keep a copy of your signed written lease and any written addendums.
- Create a clear and open system of communicating rental issues.
- Document all matters related to the tenancy.

For Landlords:

- Make repairs promptly.
- Give proper notices for changes in rental terms and entering property.
- Return the balance of the security deposit, with a list of any deductions and receipts, within 21 days after the tenant leaves.

For Tenants:

- Pay rent timely.
- Maintain the property in good condition.
- Notify the landlord promptly of any needed repairs.

Contact the Rental Housing Helpline

The San Mateo County Rental Housing Helpline is able to provide assistance over the phone and through e-mail for tenants and landlords throughout San Mateo County. The helpline provides information on all types of tenant-landlord issues and offers dispute resolution options.

Se habla Español.

Marunong mag-Tagalog.

Direct Line: (650) 399-2149

Toll Free: 1-888-324-7468

TTY: (800) 735-2929

E-mail: info@housing.org

Website:

www.housing.org

Facebook:

[facebook.com/PSProjectSentinel](https://www.facebook.com/PSProjectSentinel)

Twitter:

[@ProjSentinel](https://twitter.com/ProjSentinel)

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San Mateo County

Rental Housing Helpline



(650) 399-2149

Tenant & Landlord

Information &
Referral

Counseling &
Dispute Resolution

How Can We Help?

The San Mateo County Housing Helpline provides assistance with many rental situations:

Disputes Concerning:

Apartments
Subsidized Housing
Mobilehome Parks
Emergency Housing
Single Family Homes
Room Rentals
Homeowner's Association

Common Issues :

Rent Increase	Evictions
Deposits	Pets
Notices	Noise
Parking	Repairs
Harassment	Roommates
House Rules	Privacy Issues
Neighbor	Discrimination

NOTE: Project Sentinel does not provide housing. Referrals to both temporary and permanent housing providers will be given upon request.

The Rental Housing Helpline hours are Monday to Friday 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM and 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who may use our services?

Services are available to all tenants and landlords within the county regardless of income or immigration status.

What to expect when you call?

A case manager will listen to your housing problem and provide counselling about your situation. The case manager will describe relevant laws, refer you to applicable services and resources, and offer dispute resolution options.

Examples:

1. Case manager explained allowable deductions that a landlord can make on a tenant's security deposit and contacted the landlord to negotiate the deposit's return.
2. Case manager explained that a landlord has the duty to make necessary repairs and referred callers to the city code inspector.
3. Through conciliation, the case manager negotiated additional time for the tenant to find new housing and move out.

What is Dispute Resolution?

Dispute resolution is an effective, voluntary way to resolve conflicts. The case manager will actively encourage all callers to participate in out-of-court dispute resolution. The process may be done over the phone (conciliation) or face-to-face (mediation). Face-to-face mediation is facilitated by the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center (PCRC). If a resolution is reached the case manager or mediator will offer to provide a written agreement.

What are the benefits of dispute resolution?

The dispute resolution process is *faster and more cost-effective* than going to court. It can be completed within one to two weeks versus months or years in court. Dispute resolution participants are in control of the outcome versus a judge or jury. The process costs dramatically less than filing a court case and paying attorney fees.