Colorado Eviction Process: Notices, Court Steps and Timeline

Summary for landlords and property managers. Last reviewed October 29, 2026. Full guide: https://www.generationadvisory.com/laws/colorado-eviction-process

Colorado evictions are filed in county court as forcible entry and detainer cases. Since April 2024 a landlord needs a listed cause to end most residential tenancies, and a nonpayment case starts with a 10 day written demand.

Key points

- A landlord may not end a residential tenancy or refuse to renew it without a cause listed in the statute, such as nonpayment, a material violation or nuisance, or a qualifying no fault reason like owner move in, sale or major renovation. Many no fault reasons require at least 90 days of written notice.
- Eviction cases are filed as forcible entry and detainer actions in the county court for the county where the property is located.
- Generally, for unpaid rent, the landlord serves a written demand giving the tenant 10 days to pay or move out before filing.
- Most lease violations need a written notice giving 10 days to fix the problem, while substantial violations such as serious criminal activity allow a 3 day notice to quit.
- The summons sets a return date, generally one to two weeks after it is issued, by which the tenant must file an answer or appear.

Colorado at a glance

Rule	Colorado	Law
Notice for unpaid rent	Generally, for unpaid rent, the landlord serves a written demand giving the tenant 10 days to pay or move out before filing.	Colorado Revised Statutes, title 13, article 40 (forcible entry and detainer)
Notice for a lease violation	Most lease violations need a written notice giving 10 days to fix the problem, while substantial violations such as serious criminal activity allow a 3 day notice to quit.	Colorado Revised Statutes, title 13, article 40 (forcible entry and detainer)

Rule	Colorado	Law
Ending a tenancy without cause	A landlord may not end a residential tenancy or refuse to renew it without a cause listed in the statute, such as nonpayment, a material violation or nuisance, or a qualifying no fault reason like owner move in, sale or major renovation. Many no fault reasons require at least 90 days of written notice.	C.R.S. section 38-12-1303 (HB 24-1098)
Where the case is filed	Eviction cases are filed as forcible entry and detainer actions in the county court for the county where the property is located.	Colorado Revised Statutes, title 13, article 40
Tenant response time	The summons sets a return date, generally one to two weeks after it is issued, by which the tenant must file an answer or appear.	Colorado Revised Statutes, title 13, article 40
Removal after judgment	If the landlord wins, the court can issue a writ of restitution after a waiting period, and the sheriff carries out the removal.	Colorado Revised Statutes, title 13, article 40
Typical overall timeline	An uncontested case often takes about five to eight weeks from demand to removal.	Court practice (estimate)

Timeline

Step	Typical time	Rule
Notice period for unpaid rent	10 days	Colorado Revised Statutes, title 13, article 40 (forcible entry and detainer)
Notice period for a lease violation	10 days	Colorado Revised Statutes, title 13, article 40 (forcible entry and detainer)
Tenant response after the case is served	Set by the court	Colorado Revised Statutes, title 13, article 40
From judgment to removal	Short waiting period	Colorado Revised Statutes, title 13, article 40
Whole case, uncontested	A few weeks	Court practice (estimate)

Mistakes to avoid

- Demanding more than the rent actually owed in a notice for unpaid rent, for example by adding late fees or utilities.
- Counting the notice period wrong and filing a day too early.
- Taking partial rent after serving a notice without knowing how it affects the case.
- Keeping no proof of service. Write down who delivered the notice, how and when, and keep a copy.
- Trying to speed things up with a lockout, a utility shutoff or by moving belongings out.

Verify current law

Laws named in this summary:

- Colorado Revised Statutes, title 13, article 40 (forcible entry and detainer)
- C.R.S. section 38-12-1303 (HB 24-1098)
- Colorado Revised Statutes, title 13, article 40
- C.R.S. section 38-12-510
- C.R.S. sections 38-12-1301 to 38-12-1303 (HB 24-1098)
- C.R.S. sections 38-12-503 to 38-12-507 (SB 24-094)
- C.R.S. section 38-12-103 (HB 25-1249)

Official sources:

- Colorado General Assembly: Colorado Revised Statutes and bills: https://leg.colorado.gov/colorado-revised-statutes
- Colorado Office of Legislative Legal Services: Renters' Rights law summary (November 2024): https://content.leg.colorado.gov/sites/default/files/renters_rights_-_colorado_law_summary.pdf
- Colorado Judicial Branch: https://www.coloradojudicial.gov/

> General information, not legal advice. Check current law and talk to a Colorado attorney before you act. Last reviewed October 29, 2026.