

Illinois Squatters Rights: Adverse Possession and Removing Occupants

Summary for landlords and property managers. Last reviewed October 29, 2026. Full guide: <https://www.generationadvisory.com/laws/illinois-squatters-rights>

Illinois requires twenty years of possession for adverse possession, or seven years when the claimant has a deed or similar document and pays the taxes. Owners usually remove unauthorized occupants through the eviction process.

Key points

- Adverse possession generally takes twenty years of continuous, open, exclusive and hostile possession.
- A claimant holding a deed or similar document in good faith can win after seven years of possession if they also pay the taxes for those seven years.
- Paying the property taxes for seven years is required for the shorter color of title route, but not for the twenty year route.
- Owners usually remove people who entered without permission through an eviction case, which covers occupants who never had a lease.

Illinois at a glance

Rule	Illinois	Law
Adverse possession period	Adverse possession generally takes twenty years of continuous, open, exclusive and hostile possession.	735 ILCS 5/13-101
Claim under a document (color of title)	A claimant holding a deed or similar document in good faith can win after seven years of possession if they also pay the taxes for those seven years.	735 ILCS 5/13-107 and 13-109
Paying property taxes	Paying the property taxes for seven years is required for the shorter color of title route, but not for the twenty year route.	735 ILCS 5/13-107 and 13-109
How owners remove occupants	Owners usually remove people who entered without permission through an eviction case, which covers occupants who never had a lease.	Eviction Act

Mistakes to avoid

- Waiting months to act after someone moves in.
- Changing locks or removing belongings yourself.
- Accepting rent or utility payments from the occupant.
- Leaving a vacant property unchecked for long stretches.

Verify current law

Laws named in this summary:

- 735 ILCS 5/13-101
- 735 ILCS 5/13-107 and 13-109
- Eviction Act
- Code of Civil Procedure Article IX (Eviction Act), 735 ILCS 5/9
- Eviction Act and local ordinances

Official sources:

- Illinois General Assembly: Illinois Compiled Statutes: <https://www.ilga.gov/Legislation/ILCS/Chapters>
- Illinois Courts: Eviction help: <https://www.illinoiscourts.gov/eviction>

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