

Maryland 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/maryland-squatters-rights>

Maryland's adverse possession period is 20 years. Owners can remove a person who holds property without any right to it through a wrongful detainer case in the District Court.

Key points

- An owner who does not sue or retake the land within 20 years can lose it to someone in adverse possession.
- An owner can file a wrongful detainer case in the District Court against a person who holds the property without any right of possession and was never a tenant.

Maryland at a glance

Rule	Maryland	Law
Adverse possession period	An owner who does not sue or retake the land within 20 years can lose it to someone in adverse possession.	Md. Code, Courts and Judicial Proceedings 5-103
How owners remove occupants	An owner can file a wrongful detainer case in the District Court against a person who holds the property without any right of possession and was never a tenant.	Md. Code, Real Property 14-132

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:

- Md. Code, Courts and Judicial Proceedings 5-103
- Md. Code, Real Property 14-132
- Md. Code, Real Property 8-401 and 8-402
- Md. Code, Real Property 8-216

Official sources:

- Maryland Code, Real Property Article, Title 8 (Maryland General Assembly):
<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/site/Laws/StatuteText?article=grp&section=8-401&enactments=false>
- Renters' Rights and Stabilization Act of 2024, HB 693, Chapter 124 (Maryland General Assembly):
<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/site/Legislation/Details/hb0693?ys=2024RS>
- Tenant Safety Act of 2024, HB 1117, Chapter 125 (Maryland General Assembly):
<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/site/Legislation/Details/hb1117?ys=2024RS>
- Maryland Courts: landlord and tenant cases: <https://www.mdcourts.gov/>

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