

Massachusetts Rent Control Laws: Caps, Exemptions and Local Rules

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

Massachusetts voters banned rent control statewide in 1994, and that ban still applies. A 2026 ballot effort to lift it was removed from the ballot by the state's highest court.

Key points

- Rent control is banned statewide by a 1994 law approved by voters, so cities and towns cannot adopt it on their own.
- There is no statewide limit on rent increases.
- Rent cannot change during a fixed term lease; for a tenant at will, a new rent generally needs written notice of a full rental period or 30 days, whichever is longer.

Massachusetts at a glance

Rule	Massachusetts	Law
Rent control status	Rent control is banned statewide by a 1994 law approved by voters, so cities and towns cannot adopt it on their own.	G.L. c.40P (Rent Control Prohibition Act)
Statewide cap on increases	There is no statewide limit on rent increases.	G.L. c.40P
Notice before a rent increase	Rent cannot change during a fixed term lease; for a tenant at will, a new rent generally needs written notice of a full rental period or 30 days, whichever is longer.	G.L. c.186 (tenancy at will notice)

Mistakes to avoid

- Assuming a unit is exempt without checking the exemption rules and any notice the exemption requires.
- Following state rules and missing a stricter city ordinance.
- Raising rent in the middle of a fixed term when the lease does not allow it.
- Giving less notice than the increase requires.

Verify current law

Laws named in this summary:

- G.L. c.40P (Rent Control Prohibition Act)
- G.L. c.40P
- G.L. c.186 (tenancy at will notice)

Official sources:

- General Laws of Massachusetts (Massachusetts Legislature):
<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws>
- Mass.gov: The Attorney General's Guide to Landlord and Tenant Rights:
<https://www.mass.gov/guides/the-attorney-generals-guide-to-landlord-and-tenant-rights>
- Mass.gov: Frequently asked questions about residential rental broker's fees:
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/frequently-asked-questions-about-residential-rental-brokers-fees>
- Massachusetts Trial Court: Housing Court: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/housing-court>

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