

Missouri 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/missouri-squatters-rights>

Missouri's adverse possession period is ten years. Since 2024, owners can also petition the court for a fast order removing unlawful occupants from a residential property.

Key points

- An owner who has not possessed the land within ten years before suing generally cannot recover it from an adverse possessor.
- An owner can file a verified petition in the county where a residential property sits to have unlawful occupants removed, and the court can issue an ex parte order that the sheriff enforces.

Missouri at a glance

Rule	Missouri	Law
Adverse possession period	An owner who has not possessed the land within ten years before suing generally cannot recover it from an adverse possessor.	RSMo 516.010
How owners remove occupants	An owner can file a verified petition in the county where a residential property sits to have unlawful occupants removed, and the court can issue an ex parte order that the sheriff enforces.	RSMo 534.602

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:

- RSMo 516.010
- RSMo 534.602
- RSMo 535.020
- RSMo 441.233

Official sources:

- Revised Statutes of Missouri, chapter 441 (Missouri Revisor of Statutes):
<https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneChapter.aspx?chapter=441>
- Revised Statutes of Missouri, chapter 535 (Missouri Revisor of Statutes):
<https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneChapter.aspx?chapter=535>
- Revised Statutes of Missouri, chapter 534 (Missouri Revisor of Statutes):
<https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneChapter.aspx?chapter=534>
- Missouri Courts: <https://www.courts.mo.gov/>

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