

Ohio 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/ohio-squatters-rights>

Ohio sets one of the longest adverse possession periods in the country, 21 years. Owners deal with people who never had permission through the same forcible entry and detainer case used for tenants.

Key points

- A claim to land by adverse possession requires 21 years of open, continuous and hostile possession.
- Ohio has no shorter period for someone holding a title document; the 21 year period still applies.
- Owners usually remove someone who never had permission through a forcible entry and detainer case, or by asking police to treat them as trespassers.

Ohio at a glance

Rule	Ohio	Law
Adverse possession period	A claim to land by adverse possession requires 21 years of open, continuous and hostile possession.	Revised Code section 2305.04
Claim under a document (color of title)	Ohio has no shorter period for someone holding a title document; the 21 year period still applies.	Revised Code section 2305.04
How owners remove occupants	Owners usually remove someone who never had permission through a forcible entry and detainer case, or by asking police to treat them as trespassers.	Ohio Revised Code chapter 1923

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:

- Revised Code section 2305.04
- Ohio Revised Code chapter 1923
- Revised Code chapter 1923
- Revised Code section 5321.15

Official sources:

- Ohio Revised Code (Ohio Laws and Administrative Rules, LAWriter):
<https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code>
- Supreme Court of Ohio: courts and rules: <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/>

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