Pennsylvania Landlord-Tenant Laws: Rights and Duties for Both Sides

Summary for landlords and property managers. Last reviewed October 29, 2026. Full guide: https://www.generationadvisory.com/laws/pennsylvania-landlord-tenant-rights

Pennsylvania's main statute, the Landlord and Tenant Act of 1951, focuses on notices, deposits and court steps. Much of the rest, including the duty to keep a home livable, comes from court decisions and local codes.

Key points

- A landlord may not end or refuse to renew a residential lease because the tenant or a family member takes part in a tenants' organization.
- Within 30 days after the lease ends or the tenant surrenders the unit, the landlord must return the deposit or send a written list of damages with the balance.
- No statute sets a notice period for landlord entry, so the lease generally governs, and reasonable advance notice is expected.
- Residential leases carry an implied warranty of habitability, and in some cities tenants can pay rent into escrow when a home is certified unfit.

Pennsylvania at a glance

Rule	Pennsylvania	Law
Notice before entry	No statute sets a notice period for landlord entry, so the lease generally governs, and reasonable advance notice is expected.	Landlord and Tenant Act of 1951 (no entry notice rule)
Tenant repair remedies	Residential leases carry an implied warranty of habitability, and in some cities tenants can pay rent into escrow when a home is certified unfit.	Pennsylvania case law and the Rent Withholding Act
Retaliation protection	A landlord may not end or refuse to renew a residential lease because the tenant or a family member takes part in a tenants' organization.	Landlord and Tenant Act of 1951, section 205
Deadline to return the deposit	Within 30 days after the lease ends or the tenant surrenders the unit, the landlord must return the deposit or send a written list of damages with the balance.	Landlord and Tenant Act of 1951, section 512

Mistakes to avoid

- Entering a unit without the notice the lease or the law requires.
- Letting a written repair request sit without a reply or a plan.
- Leaving required disclosures out of the lease packet.
- Applying screening criteria differently from one applicant to the next.
- Raising rent or ending a tenancy soon after a complaint without a documented, unrelated reason.

Verify current law

Laws named in this summary:

- Landlord and Tenant Act of 1951 (no entry notice rule)
- Pennsylvania case law and the Rent Withholding Act
- Landlord and Tenant Act of 1951, section 205
- Landlord and Tenant Act of 1951, section 512
- Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act (42 U.S.C. 4852d)
- Landlord and Tenant Act of 1951, section 511.2
- Landlord and Tenant Act of 1951, section 511.1

Official sources:

- Pennsylvania General Assembly: Unconsolidated Statutes, Landlord and Tenant Act of 1951: https://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/LI/US/HTM/1951/0/0020..HTM
- Pennsylvania General Assembly: Consolidated Statutes: https://www.palegis.us/statutes/consolidated
- Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania: rules: https://www.pacourts.us/

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