

Tennessee 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/tennessee-landlord-tenant-rights>

In counties covered by Tennessee's Uniform Residential Landlord and Tenant Act, landlords must keep the home fit and supply essential services, cannot retaliate against tenants who complain, and must allow a five day grace period before any late fee.

Key points

- If the landlord fails to supply heat, utilities or other essential services after written notice, a tenant in a covered county may buy the service and deduct the cost, recover reduced rental value or move to substitute housing and stop paying rent.
- In covered counties a landlord may not raise rent, cut services or bring or threaten an eviction because a tenant complained or used the Act's remedies, unless the tenant is behind on rent or caused the problem.
- In covered counties a late fee cannot exceed 10 percent of the rent that is past due.
- A five day grace period, counting the due date, applies before a late fee; if the last day falls on a Sunday or legal holiday, rent paid the next business day is on time.
- Tenants may not unreasonably refuse entry for inspections, repairs or showings, and in covered counties a landlord may show the unit in the last 30 days of the lease with 24 hours of notice if the lease allows it.

Tennessee at a glance

Rule	Tennessee	Law
Notice before entry	Tenants may not unreasonably refuse entry for inspections, repairs or showings, and in covered counties a landlord may show the unit in the last 30 days of the lease with 24 hours of notice if the lease allows it.	Uniform Residential Landlord and Tenant Act
Tenant repair remedies	If the landlord fails to supply heat, utilities or other essential services after written notice, a tenant in a covered county may buy the service and deduct the cost, recover reduced rental value or move to substitute housing and stop paying rent.	Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-502

Rule	Tennessee	Law
Retaliation protection	In covered counties a landlord may not raise rent, cut services or bring or threaten an eviction because a tenant complained or used the Act's remedies, unless the tenant is behind on rent or caused the problem.	Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-514
Late fees	In covered counties a late fee cannot exceed 10 percent of the rent that is past due.	Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-201(d)
Grace period	A five day grace period, counting the due date, applies before a late fee; if the last day falls on a Sunday or legal holiday, rent paid the next business day is on time.	Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-201(d)
Deadline to return the deposit	The Act sets no fixed number of days to refund a deposit; the landlord sends notice of any refund due to the tenant's last known address, and if the tenant does not respond within 60 days the landlord may keep it.	Uniform Residential Landlord and Tenant Act

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:

- Uniform Residential Landlord and Tenant Act
- Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-502
- Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-514
- Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-201(d)
- Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-201(a)
- Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-301
- Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act (42 U.S.C. 4852d)

Official sources:

- Tennessee General Assembly: <https://www.capitol.tn.gov/>
- Tennessee Code (official publisher, public access): <https://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/tncode/>
- Tennessee State Courts: <https://www.tncourts.gov/>

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