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Rights of Maine Renters: Landlord Coming Into Your Home [1]

Can my landlord come into my house or apartment at any time?

No. If your landlord wants to come into your home to make non-emergency repairs, or inspect the apartment, they must give you "reasonable notice." This means at least 24 hours notice. If the landlord does give you "reasonable notice" you can't refuse them entry to the unit. You don't have to be home for the landlord to enter if they have given you reasonable notice.

Your landlord can come in only at "reasonable times." This generally means during the daytime or evening. For example they can't enter in the middle of the night. There may be other factors that make certain times "unreasonable" for you.

Exception: If there is an emergency, your landlord can enter after a shorter notice or without notice. For example, the pipes burst or there is a fire in your apartment.

What can I do if my landlord comes in without giving me reasonable notice?

You can sue your landlord if they don't follow these rules or try to come in without good reason to the point you feel harassed. You should keep a log of each time the landlord enters your unit without giving reasonable notice. This can help your case if you do choose to sue your landlord. Your log should include the following information:

- Date and time landlord entered
- Reason for entry
- A summary of what happened
- Any witnesses that were there at the time

The judge can order your landlord to pay you for your "actual damages" or \$100.00, whichever is more. The Judge can also order the landlord to stop coming into your apartment without good reason and without fair notice. You may be entitled to have your lawyer's fees paid if represented at a hearing.

If you can't get a lawyer and you need protection quickly from serious, repeated harassment, you can file a [Protection from Harassment](#) [2] complaint in District Court.

Is it legal to change the locks to keep my landlord out?

No. If you need to change the locks for any reason, you must tell your landlord. You must give them a key within 48 hours of the locks being changed. Victims of domestic violence, sexual violence or stalking who need to change the locks for safety reasons may do so. In these situations you have 72 hours to provide a new key to the landlord.

Your landlord may give you a 7 day eviction notice if you change the locks without following these rules. [Read more about evictions.](#) [3] You could also have to pay for any damage caused if they need to enter in an emergency and are locked out.

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