



WASHINGTON LOW INCOME  
**Housing Alliance**

# How Secure Is Your Housing If You Don't Have a Lease?

## *No-Cause Terminations in Washington State*

If a tenant is renting month-to-month, a landlord can issue a **20-day notice** requiring the tenant to leave. The landlord does not even need to specify a reason.

Is there a reason to believe that the landlord is **discriminating or retaliating** against a tenant for asserting their rights?

**Yes:** Landlord discrimination and retaliation are illegal, so the tenant should keep close documentation and seek legal counsel immediately. However, both are very difficult to prove, and tenants must often move out anyway. **No-cause terminations, in effect, make discrimination legal for landlords.**

If tenant is able to find an affordable home, they have **overcome significant odds.**

- **In fact, their rent will likely increase as a result of moving.**

- For every 100 households that are extremely low-income (30% AMI), there are only **28 affordable units.**

- 71% of extremely low income renters in Washington spend more than half their income on rent.

- **Apartment searching is expensive**, with application fees of \$40 or more, in addition to the deposit and other fees.

- Moving may **uproot the tenant's children from their school**, isolate them from their networks, and increase their transportation costs.

**No:** There is no legal protection for tenant to stay in their home, so they must **find a new home in just 20 days.**

If the tenant can't find or afford another home and stays in their home, the landlord can begin the eviction process and **force them to move out.** Once an eviction is filed in court, it can show up on future tenant screenings, unless tenant gets an order of limited dissemination.

## **We Must End No-Cause Terminations in Washington State**

Prepared for WLIHA using information they provided, by Seattle University's Project on Family Homelessness.