

504B.212 TENANT RIGHT TO ORGANIZE; TENANT ASSOCIATIONS.

Subdivision 1. **Tenant's right to organize.** (a) Residential tenants of a residential building have the right to establish and operate a tenant association for the purpose of addressing issues related to their living environment, which includes the terms and conditions of their tenancy as well as activities related to housing and community development. Owners of residential rental units and their agents must allow residential tenants and tenant organizers to conduct activities related to the establishment or organization of a residential tenant organization, including but not limited to:

(1) distributing information or leaflets in the common areas of the residential building, including bulletin or community boards;

(2) distributing information or leaflets to individual units in a residential building;

(3) initiating contact with tenants through mail, telephone, or electronically;

(4) initiating contact with tenant units to offer information on tenant organizations or survey tenants on interest in tenant associations;

(5) assisting tenants in participating in tenant association activities; and

(6) convening tenant association meetings in a space at the residential building.

(b) Nothing in this section requires a landlord to provide a tenant association or tenant organizer with information about a tenant, including the tenant's mailing address, telephone number, or electronic contact information.

(c) A tenant association using the rights provided in this chapter must adopt bylaws or an operating agreement related to the internal governance of the tenant association.

(d) A tenant association must be completely independent of owners, management, and their representatives. To preserve the independence of the tenant association, management representatives from the owner of a residential tenant building may not attend meetings unless invited by the tenant association to specific meetings to discuss a specific issue.

(e) A tenant organizer who is not a residential tenant of the landlord must be accompanied in the residential building by a tenant who resides in the building.

(f) No landlord shall prohibit or adopt any rule prohibiting residential tenants or nonresident tenant organizers from peacefully organizing, assembling, canvassing, leafleting, or otherwise exercising within the building their right of free expression for tenant organizing purposes. A landlord may not require tenants and tenant organizers to obtain prior permission to engage in protected activities. A landlord may not adopt and enforce rules that set unreasonable limits as to time, place, and manner of the meetings or communication with tenants in the building.

Subd. 2. **Retaliation prohibited.** (a) A landlord may not increase rent, decrease services, alter an existing rental agreement, file a legal action against a tenant, contact federal or state law enforcement related to a tenant's immigration status, or seek to recover possession or threaten any such action in whole or in part in retaliation after a tenant:

(1) reports a code violation to a government agency, elected official, or other government official responsible for the enforcement of a building, housing, health, or safety code;

(2) reports a building, housing, health, or safety code violation, or a violation of this chapter, to a community organization or the news media;

(3) seeks the assistance of a community organization or others, including but not limited to a media or news organization, for assistance with a code violation or a violation of this chapter;

(4) makes a request that the landlord of a residential building make repairs to the premises as required by this chapter, or remedy a building or health code, other regulation, or uphold portions of the residential rental agreement;

(5) joins or attempts to join a tenant association or similar organization; or

(6) testifies in any court or administrative proceeding concerning the condition of the premises or exercised any right or remedy provided by law.

(b) In any proceeding in which retaliation is alleged, the burden of proof shall be on the landlord, if the landlord's alleged retaliatory action was within 90 days of the tenant engaging in any of the activities identified in this subdivision. If the challenged action began more than 90 days after the resident engaged in the protected activity, the tenant claiming the landlord is retaliating has the burden of proof.

Subd. 3. Penalties. If a landlord, an agent, or other person acting under the landlord's direction or control unlawfully and in bad faith violates this section, the tenant may recover from the landlord up to \$1,000 per occurrence and reasonable attorney fees.

History: 2024 c 118 s 21