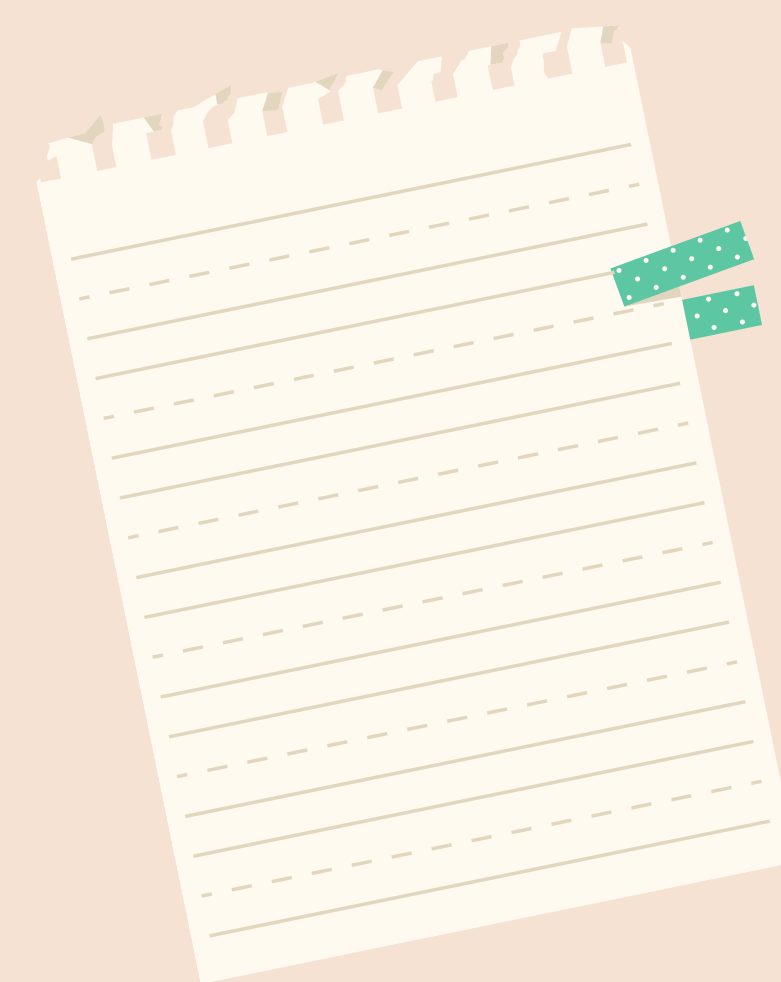


HABITABILITY 104: DOCUMENTING PROBLEMS & REQUESTING REPAIRS

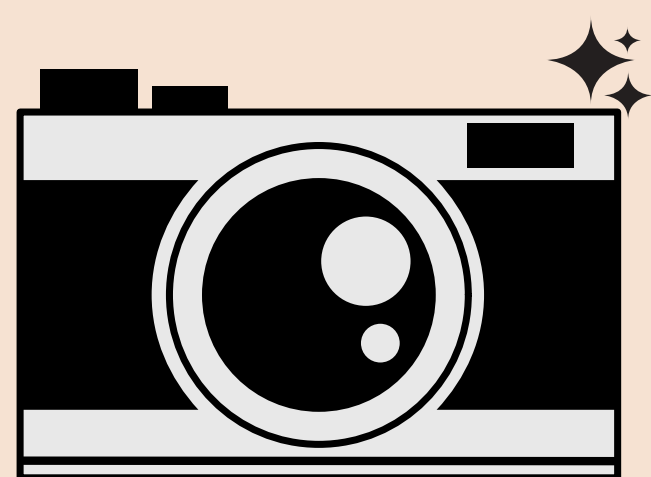


Under California Civil Code section 1942.5, it is illegal for a landlord to retaliate against a tenant who makes requests for repairs. The best way to protect yourself from possible retaliation is keeping a comprehensive record of problems in your unit.

1

Thoroughly document the issue in your unit

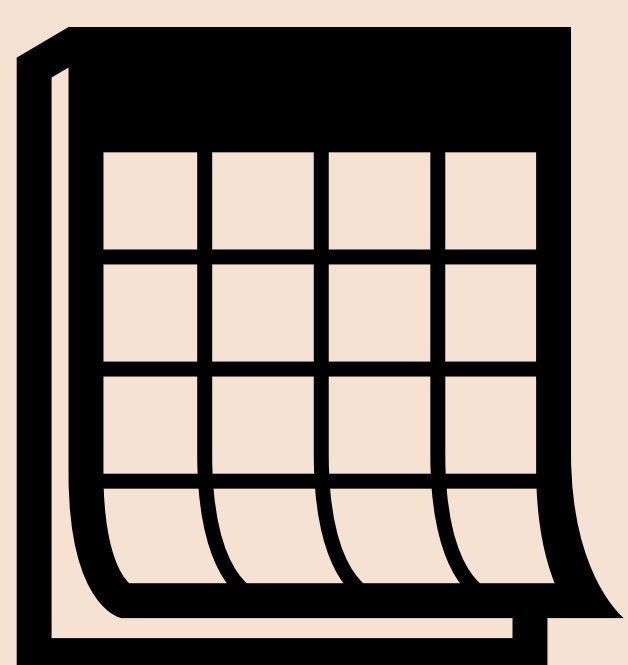
- Take detailed notes of all communication with landlord with time & date
 - if you are using a repairs request (for large apartment buildings etc), make sure to save your request as a PDF once submitted so you have documentation of when you submitted your requests
- Take pictures of the problem (and create copies in case you lose original pictures)
- Keep contact information for witnesses, such as friends, neighbors, repairmen etc.
- Keep all receipts of items personally bought for repair and healthcare receipts if the housing conditions have affected health.

**2**

Write a formal repair request letter to the landlord

- Write a letter to your landlord specifically requesting the repair and explaining the issue, with the time/date you contacted them about the issue
 - Make sure to include the date, your landlord's name/address, your name/address, Keep a copy of the letter that you send
- Send the letter via certified mail to have proof of mailing details, if possible
- Make copies of the letter and keep them for your records, but send original to the landlord
 - You may also send a copy of the letter to the building manager/management company
- If you don't get a response, follow up with your landlord by repeating these steps

*** It is possible and equally valid to make verbal repair requests to your landlord, but best practice is through written communication***

**3**

Request an inspection

- Call your city's inspection agency to report the problems in your unit and request an official inspection.
 - You can also hire an independent inspector, plumber, electrician etc. to come and make a report, which you can then give to the landlord along with your request
- When inspectors come to your home, make sure to point out all of the problems and ask for a copy of the official inspection report.
 - If an inspection request is made from a city agency, like code enforcement, make sure you ask *how* you can get a copy of the report for your records (code enforcement doesn't always send a report to the tenant, too).



IMPORTANT: Tenants should speak to a lawyer if they have specific issues with their rental units. This flyer is for general information only.

For more information: