FREE LEGAL HELP FOR TENANTS

Washington State Office of Civil Legal Aid

Appointed Counsel for Indigent Tenants

EVICTION FILINGS ARE AT RECORD HIGHS

July 2026 brought 2,413 eviction filings statewide, the most of any month on record. Filings in FY 2026 ran about 47% above the FY 2019 level. For thousands of low-income Washingtonians each year, a lawyer is the difference between staying housed and losing everything.

Since 2021, Washington law **(RCW 59.18.640)** has required courts to appoint a free attorney for eligible tenants facing eviction. OCLA funds legal aid providers to deliver that right in all 39 counties. **Tenants do not have to find us: courts refer them, and their attorney makes sure every available resource is used before anyone is displaced.**

PROGRAM IMPACT

- **38,947 cases** opened for low-income tenants since the program began.
- **Full representation, not a hotline:** 74% of closed cases received full legal representation.
- **$74.9 million saved** for tenants through reduced debt, preserved subsidies, and other relief.
- **Housing Stability:** 82% of closed cases secured permanent housing; 54% kept tenants in their homes.
- **No Writ Issued:** 74% of closed cases ended without a writ sending the sheriff to the door.
- **Serving the Most Vulnerable:** 47% BIPOC; 40% people with disabilities.

CLIENT STORY

A tenant fell behind on rent because her ex-partner demanded money from her every payday. Her attorney helped her build a safety plan to stop further contact, set a realistic budget, and apply for child support through DSHS. With rental assistance from the Eviction Prevention Program, **the attorney was able to keep her in her home.**

CONNECT A TENANT TO COUNSEL

Who qualifies: tenants facing eviction who receive public assistance or have income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.

Eviction Defense Screening Line

1-855-657-8387

Mon to Fri, 9am to 5pm, or leave a voicemail.
Scan for county-by-county help.

Or apply online: nwjustice.org/apply-online

New in 2026: Medicaid-eligible residents facing discharge from adult family homes, assisted living, or enhanced services facilities can call **(888) 437-0017**.

Outcome rates are for closed cases with a known outcome or housing status. Program data as of September 15, 2026.