

## HOUSING AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE FOR THE CITY OF BRISTOL

The Bristol Burlington Health District enforces the Housing and Property Maintenance Code of the City of Bristol. This City Ordinance is intended to provide minimum and uniform standards governing the condition, occupancy and maintenance of occupied premises and establish reasonable safeguards for the health, safety and welfare of the occupants and users of said premises.

It is the goal of the Bristol Burlington Health District to protect and promote the existence of sound and wholesome residential building and dwelling units by enforcement of such standards, regulations and procedures as will remedy the existence of, or prevent the development of dangerous, substandard or deficient residential buildings and dwelling units.

Tenants shall make all housing complaints to their landlords, preferably in writing. If the landlord does not make the necessary repairs within a reasonable time frame, you can call the Bristol Burlington Health District and file a complaint. All legitimate complaints will then be investigated. The Bristol Burlington Health District will identify and facilitate the abatement and/or repair of violations of the Housing and Property Maintenance Code of the City of Bristol, and follow-up as necessary.

Connecticut law allows a tenant to file a lawsuit against the landlord if the landlord fails to make necessary repairs. If a tenant does not pay the rent (and pay it on time) you risk being evicted. The Housing Code Enforcement Lawsuit (or Payment into Court Action) allows you to pay your rent to the clerk office in the New Britain Court House, instead of the landlord. At a hearing, the Judge can order the landlord to make the necessary repairs. Paying your rent into the court clerk office will protect you from eviction due to non-payment of rent. (See fact sheet & forms)

### **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS:**

**Q:** If I want proof that I did not damage my apartment can I call the Health Department for an inspection?

**A:** You can call the Health Department if you have housing violations that exist after you have properly notified your landlord regarding your concerns, and the landlord has not attempted to make any repairs. However, the Health Department can not verify who caused the damage (violations) and will not testify or report that the tenant did not damage the apartment.

**Q:** I am in an eviction process and would like a report to bring to court, should I call the Health Department?

**A:** You can call the Health Department if you have housing violations that exist after you have properly notified your landlord regarding your concerns, and the landlord has not attempted to make any repairs. Any and all reports or letters in a complaint file are subject to the laws of the Freedom of Information Act and therefore may not be immediately available if the case is open.

**Q:** I pay my rent every month and on time, however my landlord will not fix any problems in my apartment, should I stop paying my rent?

**A:** Continue to pay your rent each month and on time. However, if you have notified the landlord of your concerns and he has not made any repairs, and if you have filed a complaint with the Bristol Burlington Health District, you can file a Housing Code Enforcement Lawsuit with the New Britain Housing Court Clerk. You would start to pay your rent into court, and it protects you from being evicted for non-payment of rent. A hearing will be scheduled by the court and you will be heard in front of a Judge. After hearing both sides the Judge will decide what will happen to the rent money. (See Fact Sheet : Housing Code Enforcement Lawsuit)

**Q:** I think I am paying the electrical bill for the common areas or other apartments, what should I do?

**A:** Contact CL&P and file a complaint of mixed metering.

**Q:** The landlord does not remove snow from my driveway or walkway, what can I do?

**A:** The Bristol Burlington Health District does not enforce snow removal on private property. Read your lease and determine who is responsible for snow removal. If the landlord is responsible and is not honoring his obligation, contact legal aide or an Attorney for further advice. If the responsible party is not removing snow from a City sidewalk, you may call the Bristol Police Department and file a complaint.

**Q:** I have moved out and the landlord will not return my security deposit, what should I do?

**A:** The Bristol Burlington Health District does not have enforcement powers for security deposits or the return of security deposits. A tenant who feels that his/her security deposit is being wrongfully withheld, may bring a small claims suit against your landlord, provided that the dollar amount claimed is under \$5,000. You may file this suit in the Housing Session in New Britain or in the Small Claims area location. A more detailed explanation of the small claims process is available in booklet form at all Housing Session locations and Small Claims area locations. A tenant or landlord who has questions about security deposits may contact:

Security Deposit Investigator  
State Banking Department  
260 Constitution Plaza

Hartford, CT 06103  
860-240-8299

**Q:** My neighbors dog keeps going to the “bathroom” on my property, what should I do?

**A:** Contact the animal control officer and report an animal that is not properly leashed. Also contact your neighbor and let them know what is happening and that you are not happy with this.

### ON-LINE RESOURCES:

City Ordinance – Housing and Property Maintenance code of the City of Bristol  
([http://library6.municode.com/default-test/home.htm?infobase=10284&doc\\_action=whatsnew](http://library6.municode.com/default-test/home.htm?infobase=10284&doc_action=whatsnew))

New Britain Housing Court  
(<http://www.jud.ct.gov/faq/landlord.html>)

CT General Statutes, Rights and Responsibilities of Landlord and Tenant  
(<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2009/pub/chap830.htm>)

Housing Publications – CT Judicial System  
(<http://www.jud.ct.gov/pub.htm#housing>)

### FORMS:

Housing Code Enforcement Lawsuit – Complaint Form  
(<http://www.jud2.ct.gov/webforms/forms/hm035.pdf>)

Housing Code Enforcement Lawsuit – Notice of Suit  
(<http://www.jud2.ct.gov/webforms/forms/hm019.pdf>)

### FACT SHEETS:

Housing Code Enforcement Lawsuit (Payment into Court Action)  
Bed Bugs