

The Quick Guide **How to Keep Your** **Rental**

1. **ALWAYS** pay your rent.
2. **Understand** your rental agreement. **KNOW:**
 - The amount of rent
 - When it is due
 - The penalty for not paying on time
 - The address where you should send your rent payments or the person allowed to collect your rent
 - Any additional costs such as electricity and water
 - Any damage repair policies and any house rules such as policies for visitors and quiet hours
3. Keep records and receipts of all rent payments, damages, repairs, complaints, and visitors that you invite to your your home. **ALL AGREEMENTS MADE BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR LANDLORD SHOULD BE PUT IN WRITING AND SIGNED BY BOTH PARTIES.**

Helpful Housing Organizations

County of Kauai Housing Agency.....241-4444

Provides greater opportunities to choose and secure affordable, safe, decent and sanitary housing.

Kauai Economic Opportunity, Inc..... 245-4077

KEO assists qualified families/individuals with security deposits, rent, past-due rent, and past-due utility bills. KEO runs a homeless shelter and transitional housing facilities, while providing free or discounted mediation, home energy assistance, weatherization services, and Meals on Wheels delivery.

Legal Aid Society of Hawaii Kauai1-800-499-4302

Legal Aid Society helps in family law, restraining orders, housing, public benefits and consumer law.

Mental Health Kokua Kauai632-0466

A private non-profit mental health organization providing housing, case management, homeless outreach, psychiatric and counseling services.

Catholic Charities Hawaii (Kauai).....241-4673

Housing assistance programs support homeless and at-risk families and single adults. Services focus on attaining and/or retaining permanent housing & may include housing placement, housing-focused case management, financial & material assistance, as well as financial & tenant education workshops. Other programs support immigrants, families, and elders.

Women In Need (Kauai).....245-1996

A private non-profit organization that currently helps to fulfill the overwhelming need of victims of domestic violence, substance abuse, homelessness, incarceration and at-risk persons.

Family Life Center Kauai.....808-446-2570

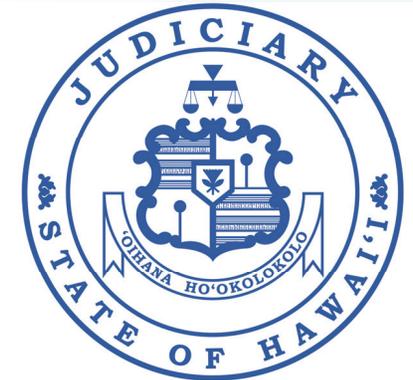
A non-profit organization dedicated to helping families who are either houseless or in an at-risk situation.

The Salvation Army Kauai—Lihue.....245-2571

Hanapepe.....335-0307

The Salvation Army Corp Community Centers provide a wide variety of services to those in need. Assistance with basic needs such as food, shelter, social services, referrals to recovery programs, spiritual services, pastoral care, emergency & disaster assistance, youth & senior programs, day camps, internship & volunteer opportunities, holiday & gift assistance, seasonal employment, soup kitchen, food pantry, and vouchers to their Thrift Stores.

STEPS **TO AVOID** **EVICITION**



HOW TO AVOID HOUSING PROBLEMS AND EVICTION

1. Pay Rent / Mortgage on Time

Failure to pay rent or a mortgage on time is the most frequent reason why people lose their housing. Paying for housing costs should take priority over most bills, especially in subsidized housing or for people that own their own homes. It is usually best to borrow money from elsewhere to pay your rent if you live in subsidized housing, or pay your mortgage if you own your own home. Owing money to your landlord or the bank that holds your mortgage will inevitably result in losing your housing.

2. Do Not Withhold Rent

Never withhold rent without first obtaining advice from an attorney or before you first carefully review and understand the applicable rules. You may be able to withhold rent in some circumstances, but this must be done in a VERY SPECIFIC way. Even if your landlord did something wrong, you can still be evicted if you withhold your rent.

3. Request Rent Adjustments Promptly

If a tenant who received a rent subsidy of some kind suffers a reduction in income, the tenant should request a rent adjustment as soon as possible.

4. Know the Rules and Follow Them

Don't violate the rules of the lease & the house rules; you will eventually get evicted. Common violations include unauthorized guests or occupants, noise violations, and damaging the apartment. Read your lease before you move in. If your tenancy is subject to the landlord-tenant code, get a copy and read it before problems develop.

5. Be a Good Neighbor

Most problems, other than those created by failure to pay rent, can be avoided by being pleasant to your landlord and your neighbors. Even when you disagree with your neighbors or your landlord, try to resolve the problem cordially by focusing on resolving the problem, not attacking the person you think created it.

6. Be Conscientious

If there are any obligations that you have as part of your tenancy, it is important that you comply with those obligations and do so promptly. This is especially important in subsidized housing where tenants are required to periodically meet with their landlord and provide information regarding their income, assets, and family composition. Failing to promptly comply with these obligations can lead to eviction.

7. Talk to Your Landlord if Problems Arise

If you run into problems keeping your obligations for your tenancy, often the best policy is to talk with your landlord to inform him or her of the problems so that you can try to work out a solution together. Of course the approach you take will depend on your relationship with your landlord. It is common for people to avoid their landlord when problems arise, but doing so often makes landlords resentful.

8. Maintain Your Home

Keep your home clean and safe. If you own your home, maintaining it well will increase its value. If you rent, you are less likely to run into problems with your landlord if you take care of your rental. In extreme cases, families can be evicted for failing to properly maintain their home. Landlords will often refuse to return tenants' security deposits for damages caused to the property.

9. Keep Good Records

It is important to keep track of all your rental documents (e.g. leases, house rules, rent receipts, etc.) in case you need to refer to them in the future. **Never pay rent in cash unless the landlord will immediately provide you with a receipt.** Use checks or money orders if your landlord refuses to provide receipts.

10. Comply With Assisted Housing Rules

Rules for those on subsidized housing require strict compliance and failure to follow them may result in eviction and even loss of future eligibility for such housing.

Legal Information & Mediation

Kauai Self Help Center:

Free legal information from volunteer attorneys and Self Help Center staff. Open Mondays through Fridays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. No appointment necessary. **482-2660**

Legal Aid Society of Kauai:

Provides free or low cost legal services to those who qualify for legal assistance. Intake Hotline: **1-800-499-4302.**

Kauai Economic Opportunity (KEO)

Mediation Services:

KEO offers mediation services to help resolve a variety of disputes including those between a landlord and tenant and also between condominium owners and associations. **245-4077**