



Rental Housing Property Management By-law

A guide for tenants

- ▲ Capital maintenance plans
- ▲ Tenant service requests
- ▲ Tenant support registry
- ▲ Information for tenants
- ▲ Pest management



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ottawa.ca
3-1-1    
TTY 613-580-2401

Introduction

Beginning in September 2021, the City of Ottawa's [Rental Housing Property Management By-law \(No. 2020-255\)](#) will introduce new standards for rental housing.



Under the new rules, landlords will be required to:

1. maintain capital maintenance plans for all apartment buildings
2. establish a procedure for tenant service requests
3. create and distribute an information for tenants document to all lease holders
4. maintain a tenant support registry
5. develop an integrated pest management plan

Tenants are also required to cooperate with their landlord to prevent and treat pest infestations.

This document provides information to help residents enjoy a successful tenancy. Information for landlords can be found at ottawa.ca/landlords.

Finding a place to rent in Ottawa

Step #1: Research available housing rental options

Ottawa's rental housing market compares favourably to other major Canadian cities, but it can still be a challenge to find a quality unit, at an affordable price, in the neighbourhood of your choice.

As a tenant, it is important to research available housing options prior to signing any lease agreement. Rental housing listings can be published online, in local newspapers, on community notice boards, signs posted in front of buildings, through the community, friends, or family.

Figure 1 - Finding a place to live



The City of Ottawa’s Community and Social Services website provides information regarding subsidized housing, long-term care, and addressing homelessness.

- ottawa.ca/en/family-and-social-services/housing
- www.housingregistry.ca

Residents can dial **3-1-1** and press **4** to receive information on social assistance benefits, emergency heat and social services, childcare assistance, Ontario Renovates Program, and other programs and services offered by the Community and Social Services Department of the City of Ottawa.

Residents can also call **2-1-1** to access provincial information and referral services or search for resources online using the [Community Navigation of Eastern Ontario database](#).

Before renting

Know your rights

Your rights and responsibilities under City of Ottawa by-laws

The City of Ottawa has enacted a number of by-laws which directly or indirectly regulate rental housing. These include:

- The **Rental Housing Property Management By-Law (2020-255)** regulates the management of residential rental properties.
- The **Building By-law (2014-220)** regulates the administration and enforcement of the *Ontario Building Code Act, 1992* respecting the construction, renovation, or any change of use of buildings and designated structures.
- The **Heat By-law (2010-210)** regulates the maintenance of adequate heat in rented dwelling accommodations.
- The **Licensing By-law (2002-189)**, Schedule 26, licenses and regulates rooming houses.
- The **Property Maintenance By-law (2005-208)** regulates the clearing and cleaning of refuse, debris, or snow and ice from all properties.
- The **Property Standards By-law (2013-416)** prescribes minimum maintenance standards for properties. This by-law regulates residential properties, non-residential properties, vacant buildings, vacant lands, open space land, and heritage properties.

Copies of these by-laws are available at ottawa.ca/en/living-ottawa/laws-licences-and-permits/laws/laws-z or by calling **3-1-1**.

The City of Ottawa also provides basic information for tenants available in Arabic, Hindi, Indonesian, Mandarin, Spanish, and Urdu. For more information, see <https://ottawa.ca/en/living-ottawa/laws-licences-and-permits/consumer-awareness>.

Your rights and responsibilities under provincial law

The Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990 prohibits any action that discriminates against people based on their age, colour, race, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, family status, or disability. A landlord cannot refuse to rent to you based on any of the above protected grounds. You can also visit the **Ontario Human Rights Commission** website for more information, at ohrc.on.ca/en

As a tenant in Ontario, you have specific rights. The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 sets out responsibilities for both tenants and landlords. The Act includes rules for:

- Tenancy or lease agreements
- Landlord and tenant responsibilities
- Rules regarding when a landlord can enter your unit
- Information on what you need to rent (ID, proof of income, etc.)
- Termination of leases
- Assignment or sublet of units
- Maintenance standards
- The Landlord and Tenant Board

More information is available at ontario.ca/page/renting-ontario-your-rights.

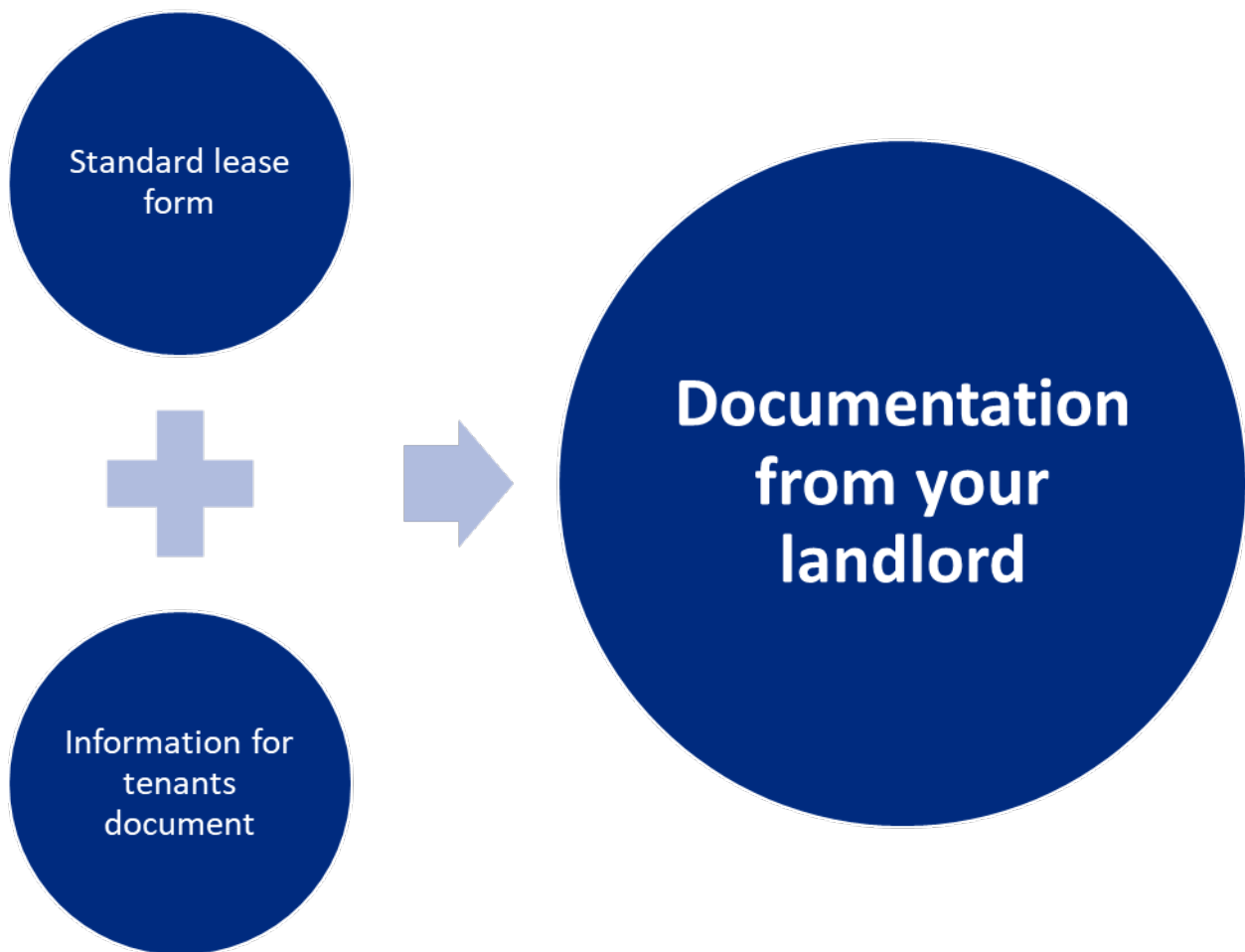
The Basics

- ✗ A landlord cannot shut off or deliberately interfere with the supply of a vital service (heat, electricity, fuel, hot or cold water) unless the services are shut off temporarily due to repairs.
- ✗ A landlord cannot lock you out of your rental unit without an eviction order from the Landlord Tenant Board.
- ✗ A landlord cannot take your personal property if you don't pay your rent and you are still living in the unit.

Make sure you receive all documentation from your landlord

The City of Ottawa requires landlords to develop and maintain an information for tenants document. For new tenants, this document must be provided with the standard lease form required by the Province of Ontario. For tenancies established prior to Sept 1st, 2021, a copy must be provided to the tenant by December 1st, 2021.

Figure 2 - Required documents



Want to learn more? Read more on the guide to the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006: <https://tribunalsontario.ca>

What is the information for tenants document (City of Ottawa)?

Under the City of Ottawa's [Rental Housing Property Management By-law \(By-law No. 2020-255\)](#), landlords must provide all tenants with an information for tenants document. Make sure to get this document when you sign your lease. It will provide you with lots of helpful information, such as:

- how to reach your landlord
- how to make a service request
- how to register for tenant support
- where to park
- where to put out your garbage and recyclables

What is a standard lease form (Province of Ontario)?

According to the [Residential Tenancies Act, 2006](#), landlords of most private residential rental units must use this lease when they enter into a tenancy agreement with a tenant. As of March 1, 2021, all landlords must use the updated version of the standard lease for their tenancy agreement.

- ✓ <https://www.ontario.ca/page/guide-ontarios-standard-lease>

Renting responsibly

Be a good tenant and know your responsibilities

As a tenant, you and anyone living with you must comply with all ***of the responsibilities outlined in the [Residential Tenancies Act, 2006](#) and your lease.***

Your responsibilities as a tenant under the City of Ottawa By-law

Under the [City of Ottawa Rental Housing Property Management By-Law \(2020-255\)](#), you are responsible to ensure that you:

- Report any service requests to your landlord through the method prescribed in the information for tenants document
- Advise your landlord of any assistance required
- Read and sign the information for tenants document provided by your landlord and share the document with any other adults who are residents of their rental unit
- Cooperate with landlords on pest control and follow pest treatment plans
- Ensure that you and any other occupants of your rental unit follow all other City of Ottawa By-laws, including the [Noise By-law](#) and the [Solid Waste Management By-law](#).

Figure 3 - Do your part

Report:

service requests to your landlord.

Advise:

your landlord of assistance required.

Cooperate:

with landlords on pest control and read and sign the information for tenants document.

Comply:

with City of Ottawa By-laws.

Tenant responsibilities according to the Province of Ontario

According to the [Province of Ontario](#), tenants have responsibilities to their landlords. Some of the responsibilities include:

- Give proper written notice to your landlord when you move out, (unless you are ordered to move out by the [Landlord and Tenant Board](#))
- Allow entry into your unit when the reasons for entry comply with the Residential Tenancies Act or your lease
- Pay your rent on time
- Keeping your home clean and in good condition
- Let your landlord know about any repairs which may be needed in your unit
- Be responsible for your actions and actions of the other members of your household, your visitors, your guests, their pets and your pets
- Respect your neighbours by not making too much noise
- Keep common areas clean
- Use the garbage and recycling facilities properly
- Ensure that the utilities (such as gas and hydro) are paid on time
- Get written permission from your landlord before making any changes or alterations to your unit or property.

I am behind on my rent, what should I do?

If you are behind on your rent, visit ottawa.ca/en/family-and-social-services/housing for additional information. Tenants can dial **3-1-1** and press **4** to receive information on social assistance benefits, emergency heat and social services, childcare assistance, Ontario Renovates Program, and other programs and services offered by Community and Social Services Department.

Pest infestations

Effective pest control is a partnership between the landlord and the tenant. The tenant is responsible to keep the unit clean, to report any sign of pests, and to prepare the unit for pest treatment. The landlord will maintain the unit and provide the pest treatment. If you need support to prepare for pest treatment, speak to your landlord.

Common Pests

Figure 4 -Bedbugs



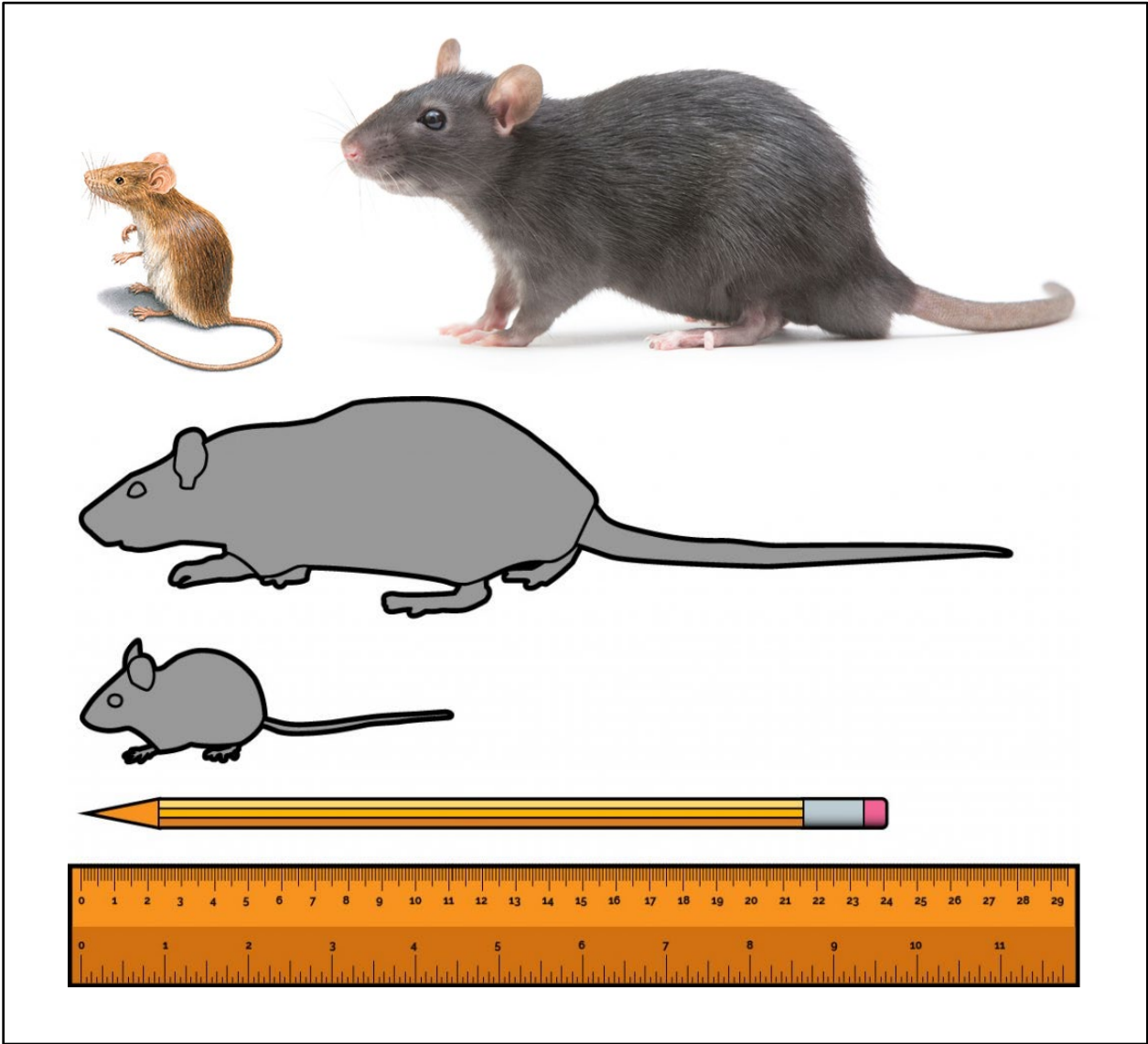
See: ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/bed-bugs.aspx

Figure 5 - Cockroaches



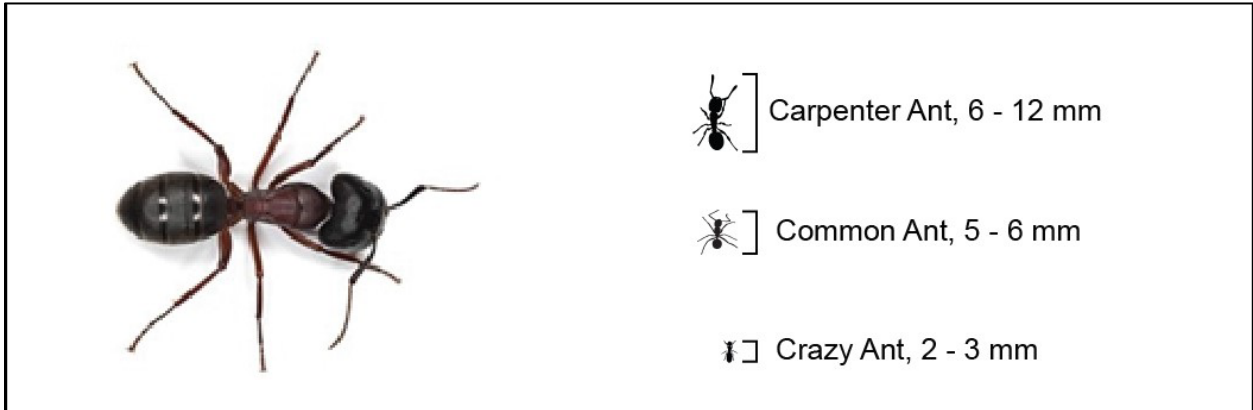
See: ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/cockroaches.aspx

Figure 6 - Mice and Rats



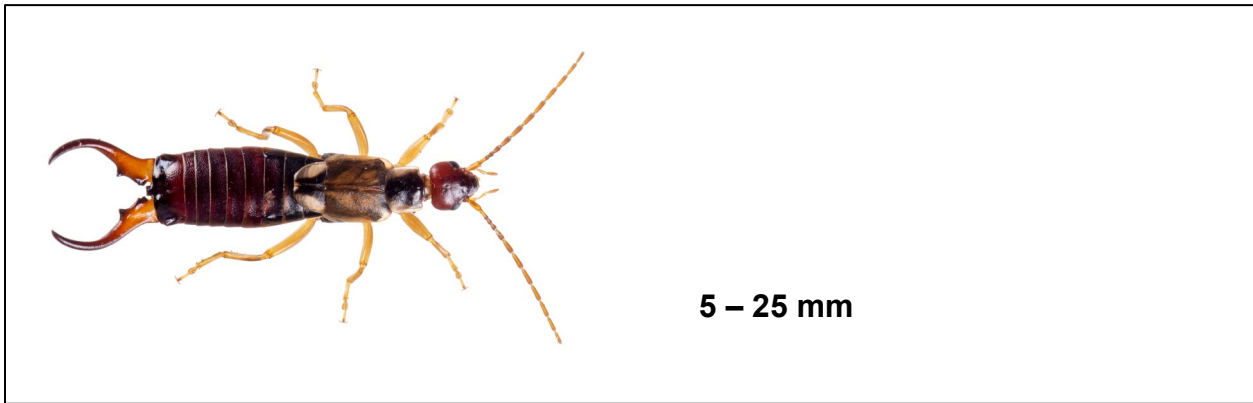
See: ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/rat-control.aspx

Figure 7 - Ants



See: orkincanada.ca/pests/ants/

Figure 8 - Earwigs



See: orkincanada.ca/pests/other/earwigs/

Figure 9 - Silverfish



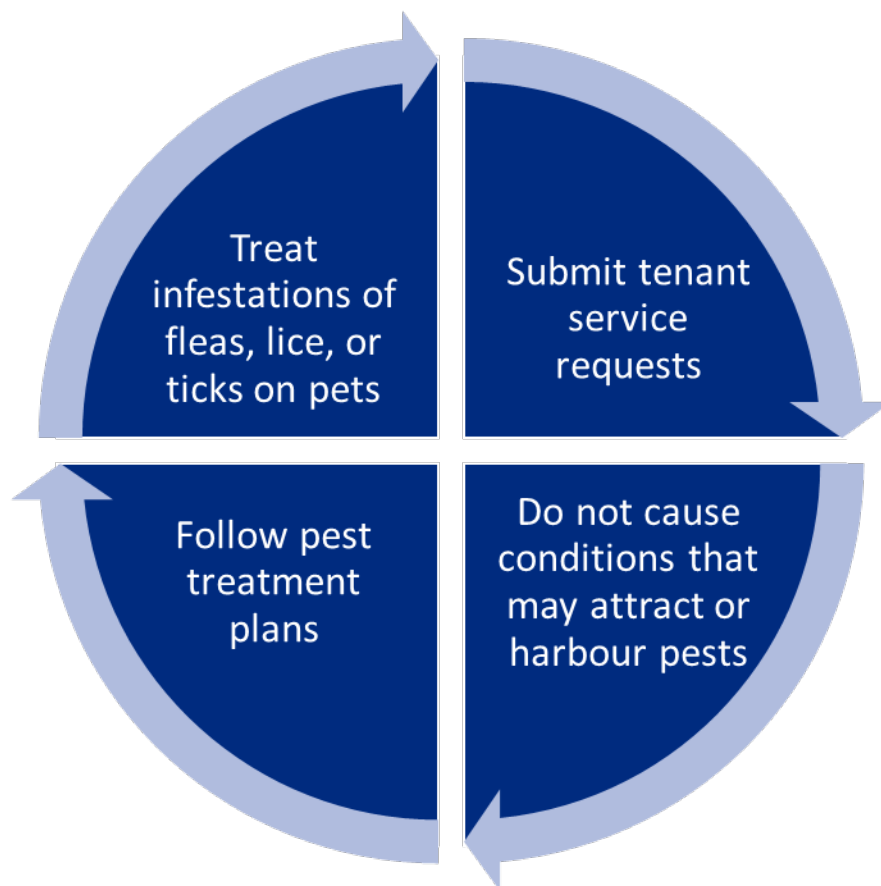
See: orkin.com/other/silverfish

Tenant responsibility for pest management under the Rental Housing Property Management By-law

While pest treatment is the landlord's responsibility, tenants have the following obligations to help prevent pest infestations in their unit:

- Do not cause conditions which may attract or harbour pests
- Follow a pest treatment plan
- Treat infestations of fleas, lice or ticks on pets
- Submit a tenant service request to report an infestation, suspected infestation, or conditions likely to cause an infestation.

Figure 10 - Pest management for tenants



What are my landlord's responsibilities for pest control and treatment?

- Treat pest infestations
- Establish and maintain an integrated pest management plan which includes preventative inspections
- Prevent conditions which may attract or harbour pests
- Provide educational information for prevention of pests to tenants;
- Establish reporting processes for suspected infestations
- Provide tenants with a copy of a pest treatment plan prior to treating an infestation within their unit.

I want to know more about pest treatment and control, what other resources are available?

- ✓ [Ottawa Public Health home safety webpage](#) provides information on bed bugs, cockroaches, and rat control.
- ✓ [Orkin Canada pest library](#) provides information about several pests and how to treat and prevent infestations.
- ✓ [Ottawa Community Housing pest management page](#) provides a checklist for pest prevention for tenants.
- ✓ [Pest control - Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#) provides guidelines on pest prevention and pest control measures.
- ✓ Section 20 of the [Residential Tenancies Act](#) provides information for when a landlord is required to pay for pest management.

Requesting repairs or other services

Step #6: Communicate with your landlord

The City of Ottawa’s [Rental Housing Property Management By-law \(By-law No. 2020-255\)](#) includes instructions on how to make a service request. The by-law sets timelines for service response:

- **Landlords must respond to urgent requests within 24 hours.**
- For non-urgent requests, landlords have seven (7) days to respond.

Responding means that the landlord has contacted you and set repairs in motion. For various reasons, the necessary repairs may not be completed within 24 hours or 7 days. If the landlord does not respond in time, or there is a delay in resolving the problem, you can contact the City for assistance by calling 3-1-1. The information for tenants document provided by your landlord when you signed your lease will provide further information on how to make a request.

What is an urgent repair versus a non-urgent repair?

An urgent service request, which must be responded to within 24 hours, is one that includes:

- a loss or interruption in vital services
- security concerns about the rental unit, building or property
- problems with accessibility features and equipment
- any issue that can reasonably be expected to make a unit uninhabitable.

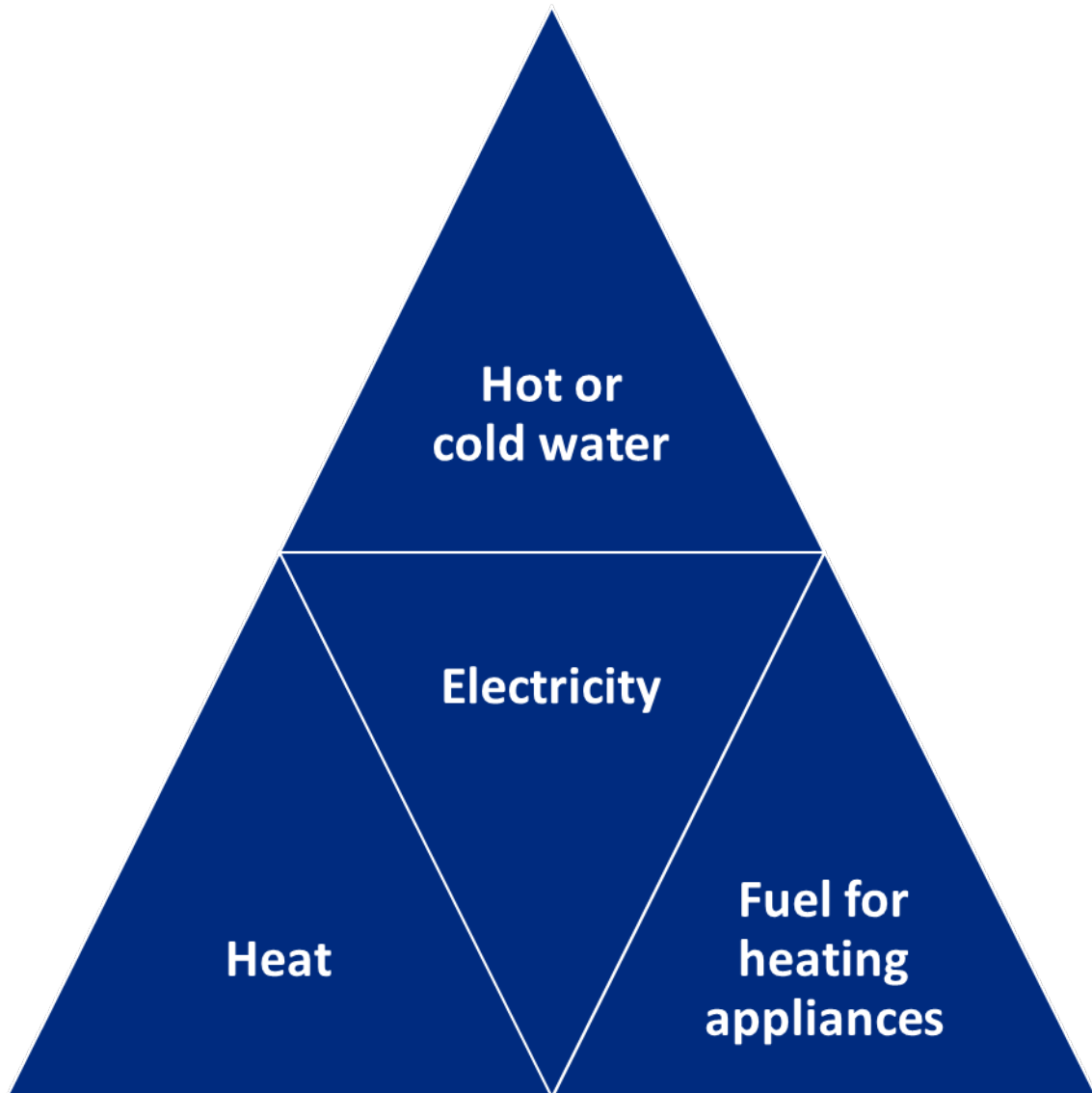
Figure 11 - Is it urgent?

URGENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The heating system is not functioning.• Burst pipes causing flooding.• A defective lock lets anyone enter the unit without a key.
Non-urgent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An interior door doesn't close properly.• A stove element is burnt out.• The kitchen sink has a slow drain.

What is a vital service?

City of Ottawa by-laws define vital services as hot or cold water, electricity, *fuel for heating appliances, where this responsibility has not been assigned to the tenant through the lease agreement, and **heat as prescribed in section 4(1) of Ontario Regulation 516/06 passed under the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006.

Figure 12 - Vital Services



What do I do if my landlord is non-responsive to my service request?

It is important to first submit a service request through your landlord prior to contacting the City of Ottawa. If a landlord has not responded to your request within 24 hours for urgent repairs or 7 days for non-urgent repairs, please follow the steps below to report service requests that have not been attended to by your landlord.



Communicate with your landlord

Follow the process for submitting service requests provided by your landlord. Allow 24 hour response time for urgent requests and 7 days for non-urgent requests.



Report

Report issues by calling 3-1-1. Keep the Service Request Number created for tracking purposes. Your contact information will remain confidential.



Investigate

A By-law Officer will contact you to get complaint details and inspect property if necessary.



Enforce

A Notice of Violation or a Property Standards Order may be issued for non-urgent service requests. Emergency Notice may be issued for immediate dangers.



Monitor

A By-law Officer will return to inspect the property and take further action if needed.

Requesting support due to a disability

Under the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#), landlords may be required to provide additional supports for tenants living with a disability, unless doing so would create undue hardship. The City of Ottawa has also included requirements in the [Rental Housing Property Management By-law \(2020-255\)](#) for landlords to maintain a registry for tenants who request support.

The City of Ottawa's tenant support registry

The tenant support registry is the way for tenants to request support for:

- evacuation from the building in case of an emergency
- preparing their unit for pest treatment
- explaining complex rental documents
- any other accommodations that may be required under the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#), [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#) or [Residential Tenancies Act, 2006](#)

Landlords will maintain the tenant support registry and record all requests made for support. Information provided for the tenant support registry may be collected by the City of Ottawa for the purpose of investigating and enforcing landlord compliance [with the Rental Housing Property Management By-law \(2020-255\)](#). Information about how this is used is available on ottawa.ca or by calling 3-1-1.

As a tenant, registering for support is voluntary. You can request to have your name added or removed at any time!

Additional resources

If you live in Ottawa and you have questions about your rental unit, your building, your rights, or if you are at risk of eviction, there are several resources that can provide support and guidance.

[Residential Tenancies Act, 2006](#) – Provincial law that sets out the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants in Ontario. The [guide to the residential tenancies act brochure](#) is a great resource to summarize the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 for landlords and tenants.

[Ontario Human Rights Code](#) – Guarantees equality before the law and prohibits discrimination in specific areas such as housing or employment.

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#) – The main purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act is to improve accessibility standards for Ontarians with physical or mental disabilities to all public places by 2025.

[ACORN Ottawa](#) – ACORN is a multi-issue, membership-based community tenant union of low- and moderate-income people. ACORN promotes tenants' rights through community organizing and workshops.

[Action Housing](#) and [Housing Help](#) – Housing loss prevention organizations in Ottawa. They provide free service to low- and moderate-income people and families to access safe and affordable housing. Both organizations offer similar service, but access is based on geographical area of residency.

[Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation](#) – Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation is a not-for-profit charitable organization dedicated to preventing evictions and ending housing discrimination across Ontario.

[Clinique Juridique Francophone d'Ottawa](#) – This organization is part of the [Vanier Community Service Centre](#) and offers free legal assistance to francophone residents.

[Community Legal Services of Ottawa](#) – Contact one of their 3 office locations to make an appointment: West, at 613-596-1641; South, at 613-733-0140; Downtown, at 613-241-7008.

[Landlord and Tenant Board](#) – This tribunal resolves disputes between landlords and tenants. It is like a court and through mediation or settlement, it will help the landlord and tenant come to an agreement. The Landlord and Tenant Board also provides information about the rights and responsibilities of landlords under the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006.

[Legal Aid Ontario](#) – Legal Aid Ontario is a publicly funded, not for profit organization that provides free legal assistance for low-income people. Legal Aid Ontario deals with many issues and provides this service in both English and French.

[Pro Bono Ontario](#) – This registered charity helps Ontarians who need a lawyer and can't afford one. Pro Bono Ontario can help with issues such as repairs and maintenance needed in your rental unit, going to small claims court, or practical advice on consumer awareness.

[Rent Supplement Program \(City of Ottawa\)](#) – The Rent Supplement Program provides affordable housing to eligible low-and moderate-income families in social housing. Once enrolled, households pay no more than 30 per cent of their income towards rent. To make an application for subsidized housing in Ottawa, please contact the Social Housing Registry. The Registry is located at 2197 Riverside Drive and can be reached by phone at 613-526-2088.

[Steps to Justice, Housing Law](#) – Steps to Justice gives reliable and practical information on common legal problems.

[University of Ottawa Community Legal Clinic](#) – The Clinic provides legal services to the Ottawa community. Staffed by lawyers and law students, the Clinic provides public legal education, legal advice, and representation at court for a variety of criminal, family and tenant-related matters.

Contact us

If you would like a paper copy of this document, please contact us:

Public Policy Development

bylawreviews@ottawa.ca

613 580-2400 ext. 29529

Notice: This document is for information and convenience only, and while every effort has been made to include relevant resources City staff recognize that this guide does not capture all available sources of information for tenants. Some of these links may take you to an external website that is not owned by the City. Your access to and use of any external site is subject to that website's own rules and regulations.