



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: ILLEGAL LOCKOUTS

- In general, it is illegal for your landlord or roommate to change the locks, shut off utilities, or physically remove your belongings without a court order for eviction.

CARRY PROOF OF RESIDENCY

- When you leave the apartment, always carry proof of residency like a government issued ID or a utility bill with your name and address. If you do not have either of these, then any piece of mail with your name and address is the best alternative.
- Take pictures of these documents on your phone immediately as a backup in case you get locked out without access to the physical copies. If you have a written lease, take pictures of the pages that display your name, the address, and the date that the lease ends.

CALL 911 IF YOU ARE ILLEGALLY LOCKED OUT (OR 311 IF YOU PREFER NOT TO INVOLVE THE POLICE)

- If you call 911:
 - Explain to the dispatcher that your landlord or roommate is illegally evicting you. The police will be sent to your address. If possible, call a lawyer, social worker, or community group leader and ask them to be present when the police arrive.
 - Show the police your proof of residency. The police might ask you to call your landlord or roommate, but this should not be necessary. The police can supervise you while you break into your own apartment or pay a locksmith to do so.
 - If you cannot show proof of residency, ask other tenants, a building super, or even your landlord or roommate as a last resort to confirm your tenancy.
- If the police leave without resolving your illegal lockout or you do not want to involve the police, call the City's Tenant Helpline (311) or Housing Court Answers (212-962-4795) to obtain basic legal information and connect with free legal services. Both hotlines operate Monday through Friday, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.