



## Harassment

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Harassment is a course of conduct by an owner intended to force a tenant out of their apartment, or to cause a tenant to give up rights granted to the tenant by the rent laws. An owner, or anyone acting on behalf of an owner, is prohibited from interfering with a tenant's privacy, comfort, or quiet enjoyment. Harassment may take the form of, among other things, willful interruption or denial of essential services, multiple instances of frivolous litigation, filing of false documents with or making false statements to DHCR and/or the illegal discontinuance of a tenant's preferential rent.

Harassment is a serious violation of a tenant's rights. The New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) established the Enforcement Unit specifically to handle harassment cases. The Unit is staffed with attorneys who specialize in this area of the rent laws. They respond to all complaints of harassment made within New York State related to rent regulated housing.

Upon receipt of a properly completed complaint form, RA-60H "*Tenant's Statement of Complaint(s) - Harassment,*" the complaint is reviewed to determine an appropriate course of action. The review process may determine that the tenant actually needs to file a different complaint such as a failure to renew a lease or a decrease in service complaint instead of a harassment complaint. If so, the agency will provide the tenant with the needed form. If the complaint alleges facts that would constitute harassment, the case is opened and assigned to an attorney in the Enforcement Unit.

A copy of the complaint will be served on the owner and the Enforcement Unit attorney will schedule a conference for the tenant and owner. The purpose of the conference is to investigate the tenant's complaint of harassment and to attempt to resolve outstanding issues.

The conference may result in agreements, agency directives or any other action that is necessary and appropriate under the circumstance including continued case monitoring to ensure any harassing behavior has ceased or to ensure repairs are completed.

If an owner continues to engage in an unlawful behavior or course of conduct, or fails to follow agency directives, the Enforcement Unit may commence a formal proceeding against such owner with the DHCR Hearings Unit seeking civil penalties set forth in the rent laws. In these cases, a formal hearing is conducted by an Administrative Law Judge at which the tenant and owner are required to appear and provide testimony. In many instances, this may require several days of attendance.

Owners found guilty of tenant harassment are subject to a minimum fine of \$3,000 for a first offense, and up to \$11,000 for each subsequent offense or conduct directed at more than one tenant. In addition, DHCR will not permit rent increases once there has been a finding of harassment. This restriction remains until DHCR issues an order lifting the finding of harassment.

If you think you are a victim of harassment, you may obtain a “Tenant’s Statement of Complaint(s) - Harassment” (DHCR Form RA-60H) from your Borough or County Rent Office, or write to:

DHCR Enforcement Unit  
Gertz Plaza  
92-31 Union Hall Street  
Jamaica, NY 11433



➤ **Rent Connect:**  
[rent.hcr.ny.gov](http://rent.hcr.ny.gov)

✉ **Ask a question:**  
[portal.hcr.ny.gov/app/ask](http://portal.hcr.ny.gov/app/ask)

🗣️ **For translation help:**  
[hcr.ny.gov/language-accessibility](http://hcr.ny.gov/language-accessibility)

➤ **Our website:**  
[hcr.ny.gov/rent](http://hcr.ny.gov/rent)

**To visit a Borough Rent Office, by appointment only, please contact:**

**QUEENS**  
92-31 Union Hall Street  
6th Floor  
Jamaica, NY 11433  
718-482-4041

**UPPER MANHATTAN**  
163 W. 125th Street  
5th Floor  
New York, NY 10027  
212-961-8930

**BRONX**  
1 Fordham Plaza  
4th Floor  
Bronx, NY 10458  
718-430-0880

**BROOKLYN**  
55 Hanson Place  
6th Floor  
Brooklyn, NY 11217  
718-722-4778

**LOWER MANHATTAN**  
25 Beaver Street  
New York, NY 10004  
212-480-6238

**WESTCHESTER**  
75 South Broadway  
3rd Floor  
White Plains, NY 10601  
914-948-4434