

TENANT RIGHTS: FRIDGE & STOVE

IN CALIFORNIA, LANDLORDS MUST PROVIDE A WORKING STOVE AND A WORKING REFRIGERATOR. (CAL. CIV. CODE § 1941.1.)

This is part of the law that requires rental units to be safe and livable.

- Appliances must be installed and working at move-in.
- Landlord must repair or replace the stove or refrigerator if they break.
- This applies to most apartments and rental homes.

WHEN THIS LAW APPLIES

This rule applies if your lease was:

- Entered into (signed)
- Extended (renewed)*
- Updated (amended)

Any time on or after January 1, 2026.

*Note: This applies only if a new lease agreement was signed, not to automatic renewals.

WHAT “WORKING” MEANS

- The fridge and stove turn on.
- The fridge keeps food cold.
- The stove does not overheat, spark, leak gas, or is unsafe.



WHAT LANDLORDS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR

- Provide the stove and fridge.
- Maintain appliances in safe, working condition.
- When the appliance breaks or is recalled landlords must repair or replace them within 30 days after they are issued a notice to comply from their local code enforcement agency.

CHECKLIST AND TIMELINE

1 FIRST NOTICE

- Notify landlord in writing (text, email, or letter).
- Notify your local code enforcement agency to begin the 30 day compliance period.
- Clearly state what appliance is not working (fridge, stove, or both).
- Save screenshots and copies of all communications.

2 DOCUMENT THE PROBLEM

Photos:

- Appliance plugged in but not working.
- Control panel / inside of fridge.
- Thermometer showing fridge is not cold (if available).

Video (recommended):

- Show appliance not turning on.
- Show temperature issue.
- Narrate date and issue out loud if possible.

Tip for clients:

- Take photos/videos with today's date visible (phone screen, calendar, or say it aloud).

3 WAIT A REASONABLE TIME

- 30 days from the notice, and if there are any emergencies it may be shorter than 30 days.
- Landlords should at least respond and schedule repair.
- Silence or long delays can be a habitability violation.

4 FOLLOW UP IF NO RESPONSE*

Send a second message or email:

"Following up on my previous notice regarding the broken refrigerator/stove. Please let me know when repairs will be made."

If the landlord fails to repair, it will result in an administrative hearing, fine and other penalties.

*See page 4 for more sample messages

5 ESCALATE IF NEEDED

If the landlord:

- Ignores you
- Refuses to fix it
- Delays for weeks

Seek outside help

- Do not withhold rent without legal advice

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q MY UNIT NEVER HAD A FRIDGE OR STOVE. IS THAT LEGAL?

A Landlords must provide a fridge and stove if your lease started or was renewed on or after January 1, 2026.

Q MY LEASE SAYS “APPLIANCES NOT INCLUDED”—DOES THAT MATTER?

A No. Habitability laws override lease language. Landlords cannot waive this responsibility in the lease.

Q WHAT IF THE FRIDGE BROKE AND THE LANDLORD SAYS IT’S MY PROBLEM?

A If the landlord provided the appliance, it is their responsibility to fix or replace it, unless the tenant caused the damage. If the damage was caused by the tenant even if accidental or for misuse, the landlord may charge for repairs. Normal wear and tear is not the tenant’s responsibility.

Q CAN I WITHHOLD RENT IF THEY DON’T FIX IT?

A Do not withhold rent without legal advice. Tenants should notify the landlord in writing, give reasonable time to repair, and seek legal help.

Q DOES THIS APPLY IF I RENT JUST A ROOM OR LIVE IN SHARED HOUSING OR A SHELTER?

A Some limited exceptions may apply, especially in shared housing situations (like shared kitchens). A housing counselor or legal aid can review your situation.

Q WHAT CAN I DO IF I DON’T HAVE A FRIDGE OR STOVE?

A

- Document the issue (photos and dates).
- Notify the landlord in writing (text, email, or letter).
- Keep copies of all communications.
- Seek legal help if the landlord refuses or delays.

STEP 1: INITIAL REPAIR REQUEST

(TEXT, EMAIL, OR LETTER)

Use this message to first notify the landlord. You can send it by text, email, or letter.

Hello, I am notifying you that the refrigerator/stove in my unit is not working.

Under California habitability laws (Cal. Civ. Code §1941.1), this appliance must be provided and kept in working condition.

Please let me know when it will be repaired or replaced.

Thank you.

STEP 2: FOLLOW-UP MESSAGE

(TEXT, EMAIL, OR LETTER)

Use this if the issue is not fixed or you don't receive a response.

Hello, I am following up regarding my previous request about the refrigerator/stove not working in my unit.

This issue has not yet been resolved.

Under California Civil Code §1941.1, landlords are required to provide and maintain a working stove and refrigerator.

Please confirm when this will be repaired or replaced. I am requesting that this be addressed within a reasonable time.

Thank you.

OUTSIDE HELP AND SUPPORT

Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County

Habitability, evictions, tenant rights

Phone: 800-433-6251

Website: nlsla.org

LA County Health Department

Habitability, unsafe living conditions,
public health complaints

Phone: 888-700-9995

Website: publichealth.lacounty.gov

Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD)

Tenant complaints, rent stabilization
violations, illegal evictions

Phone: 866-557-7368

Website: housing.lacity.org

Housing Rights Center (HRC)

Rental fraud, discrimination,
landlord-tenant disputes

Phone: 800-477-5977

Website: housingrightscenter.org

SAJE Law Firm

Tenant Rights, unlawful detainer,
civil, harassment, habitability,
evictions, discrimination

Phone: 213-745-9961

Email: info@saje.net

LA Law Library

Legal information and 20 minute
consultation

Phone: 213-785-2529

Website: lalawlibrary.org

Free Legal Help Directory

800-433-6251,

calbar.ca.gov/Public/Need-Legal-Help/Free-Legal-Help

Tip: Ask these agencies and organizations for assistance with habitability regarding AB 628. Additionally, submit a complaint with LA County Health Department or the Los Angeles Housing Department. Some helpful documents to have on hand are any written communications with the landlord as well as other pictures and videos you have.

WHEN & HOW TO ESCALATE YOUR ISSUE

WHEN SHOULD YOU SEEK HELP?

- You should escalate if:
 - The landlord does not respond after your first message
 - The landlord promises to fix it but delays for weeks
 - The landlord refuses to fix or replace the appliance
 - The issue is urgent (no fridge, unsafe stove, gas smell)
- General rule:
 - No response after a few days → follow up
 - No action after follow-up → seek outside help

BEFORE YOU ESCALATE

Make sure you have:

- Sent at least one written notice
- Sent a follow-up message
- Taken photos or videos
- Saved all texts/emails

STEP 1: CONTACT A TENANT OR LEGAL ORGANIZATION

- Ask for help with:
 - "Habitability issue"
 - "Landlord not fixing fridge/stove"
- They can:
 - Explain your rights
 - Contact landlord
 - Help you take next legal steps

STEP 2: IF YOU LIVE IN THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Contact the Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD)

- Call: 866-557-7368 (866-557-RENT)
- File a complaint online through LAHD
- Visit a public counter in person

STEP 2: IF YOU LIVE IN UNINCORPORATED LA COUNTY

Contact LA County Department of Public Health – Environmental Health

- Call: (888) 700-9995

Contact LA County Building & Safety

- Call: (888) 524-2845

Contact LA County Planning – Code Enforcement

- Call: (800) 339-6993
- Email: ZoningEnforcement@planning.lacounty.gov
- Use "The Works" app to submit a complaint

If you're not sure who to call → Start with 211

