

KIT: Tenant Rights - Maintenance & Repair PART 1

Legal Rights Literacy Kits

This is one of nine kits designed for Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs in Ontario. The kits provide ready-made materials for LBS practitioners to help learners improve their literacy skills while learning about legal rights.

The kits were developed by CLEO, adapting content created by the Community Law School (Sarnia-Lambton). They relate to three areas: Workplace Rights, Tenant Rights and Consumer Rights. Each kit includes learning activities and tasks that can be used to facilitate learning, and to demonstrate, track and document learners' progress towards completion of their goal path.

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Legal Rights Literacy Kits for LBS

KIT: The Steps to Justice Website

Employment Rights

KIT: Workplace Posters

KIT: Wages

KIT: Injuries at Work

Consumer Rights

KIT: Payday Loans

KIT: Collection Agencies

Tenant Rights

KIT: Paying Rent

KIT: Maintenance and Repair, Part 1

This KIT!

KIT: Maintenance and Repair, Part 2

Introduction to the Kit

This kit includes learning activities and task sets related to locating, reading and understanding information (from a booklet and/or a website) about landlord responsibilities with respect to maintenance and repair, and the steps tenants can take to solve problems.



Task Sets

This kit includes two task sets. Both task sets involve locating information on the Steps to Justice website and demonstrating the ability to identify information related to maintenance and repair.

Steps to Justice (<http://stepstojustice.ca/>) gives clear reliable information on common legal problems for people in Ontario. ***Important Note:** Ensure that learners are somewhat familiar with Steps to Justice. You can facilitate the kit titled Steps to Justice first.



You may choose to use one or both of the task sets to demonstrate, track and document learner progress towards completion of their goal path. Success criteria is indicated on the task set answer sheets.

OALCF Cover Sheet and Task Performance Indicators

These learning materials are aligned to the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF). If you choose to use a task set in this kit to demonstrate learner progress towards goal completion, then complete the cover sheet and scoring rubric on the final pages of this kit. Include them in the learner file, along with other assessment items, such as Initial Assessment results, Milestones and Culminating Tasks.

The task sets in this kit are offered as examples; feel free to modify the task questions, OALCF cover page and rubric to suit learner needs. Please note that if you adapt the task questions, they may not comply with the level and complexity of the original scoring rubric.

Ongoing Assessment: If you choose to use a task set for ongoing assessment purposes, learners should attempt the task set independently.

Learning Activities

This kit also includes sample learning activities. You can facilitate learning activities prior to having learners attempt a task set, so that learners can improve their literacy skills. This can involve providing background information on related laws and legal problems, and providing practise with reading comprehension strategies. Ideas for learning activities are provided within the kit.

Introduction to the Kit, *continued*



Background Information on Legal Rights

On the Steps to Justice website, the following questions on tenant rights related to maintenance and repairs are addressed, in the Housing Law topic under [Landlord and Tenant Responsibilities](#).

- Who is responsible for repairs and maintenance?
- How much heat does my landlord have to provide?
- What if my place has cockroaches, mice, or other pests?
- Can my landlord cut off my electricity or other utilities?
- What are the rules about air conditioners?
- What if I or my guests damage the place I am renting?
- Can I withhold rent to get my landlord to do something?

Note: The information in the activities are not a substitute for legal advice.

Learners with concerns should get legal help. Tenants can contact a local community legal clinic. To find a local community legal clinic, visit www.legalaid.on.ca or call Legal Aid Ontario toll-free at 1-800-668-8258.

Additional Resources

Resources for Tenants

- **CLEO Resource: [Maintenance and Repairs](#)**
This resource explains landlord and tenant responsibilities around maintenance and repairs. A PDF version of the resource can be printed or downloaded at: <https://www.cleo.on.ca/en/resources-and-publications> (Select Housing Law, then select the title).
*Note: This resource may be unavailable due to updates.
- **CLEO Resource: [Repair Request Form for Tenants](#)**
Tenants can use this illustrated form to communicate with their landlord about necessary repairs.
- **Brochures on the Tribunals Ontario Website**
<https://tribunalsontario.ca/ltb/resources/>
Brochures include:
 - Information for New Tenants
 - A Guide to the Residential Tenancies Act
 - Maintenance and Repair
 - Rent Increase Guideline





Literacy Skills

It's a good idea to review and provide practice with the reading and comprehension strategies below. They are related to the OALCF competency Find and Use Information, and the following associated task groups: Read Continuous Text and Interpret Documents.

- **Skim for gist:** Direct learners to glance at the table of contents, pay attention to the headings and glance at parts of the document. Inform them that this helps them determine what the document is about, and whether it applies to them. Encourage learners to predict what information the document contains, and when they may need it.
- **Questioning:** Engage learners in posing questions that they want answered by the text. This helps them read for a purpose.
- **Scanning for specific information:** When searching for details, guide learners in first determining where to search, by first locating the relevant section in the table of contents, or heading within the text, then looking over the information for key words.
- **Using layout:** Encourage learners to notice how the documents are organized and the visual layout (e.g., table, chart, headings), and to use the layout to locate information.
- **Using pictures and illustrations:** Draw learners' attention to images, logos or icons and their meaning.
- **Using features of lists and tables:** Guide learners in using the list/table features, such as titles, headings, bullets/numbering, and row/column headings to find information and understand purpose.
- **Identifying the source of information:** Guide learners in locating the source of information and its date. This will help them determine whether the information is trustworthy.
- **Retelling or summarizing:** Encourage learners to retell the information in their own words.
- **Vocabulary development:** Encourage learners to identify words or phrases they are unfamiliar with. Guide them in predicting what they mean based on the surrounding text. Learners can look up words in an online dictionary (e.g., dictionary.com) to confirm their predictions.

Learning Activities: Practitioner Notes

Pre-reading Discussion (p. 5)

Engage learners in a pre-reading discussion on tenant rights. This will help to activate their background knowledge, and spark interest in the topic. This discussion can help you determine their need for information, and help them read for a purpose.

Learners can work in groups to brainstorm possible maintenance and repair problems in a rental unit. They can share their experience (or the experience of someone they know) about maintenance and repair problems. They can ask the following questions about each other's experiences:

- What was the problem?
- What did you do? Who did you tell?
- What other action did you take?
- Did it solve the problem?
- What questions do you still have based on your experience?

If learners agree, discuss one or two examples as a class. Record unanswered questions on the board or flip chart.

Vocabulary Development (p. 5)

Ensure learners understand basic terms related to tenant rights and maintenance and repair, with activities such as this one. Encourage learners to add unfamiliar terms and definitions to their notes.

Answers: 1. C, 2. E, 3. F, 4. G, 5. A, 6. D, 7. B

Previewing the Steps to Justice Website (p. 6)

Before learners attempt the task sets, have them explore the [Steps to Justice](#) website. They should understand that information is organized by questions and answers related to a legal topic, and includes a few steps. You can use the activity on this page, or you can also facilitate the kit titled "The Steps to Justice Website" with learners. It provides learning activities that help familiarize learners with the features of Steps to Justice and how to navigate within it.

Answers:

1. There are seven questions (note that information on [the website](#) may change; check for the actual number of questions)
2. Who is responsible for repairs and maintenance?
How much heat does my landlord have to provide?
What if my place has cockroaches, mice or other pests?
3. a-steps, b-Step 3: Call an inspector
4. Name of Service: Canadian Centre for Housing Rights (CCHR)
Phone number: 416-944-0087, or toll-free: 1-888-263-1139

Learning Activity: Pre-Reading Discussion

In small groups or as a class, discuss your experience with maintenance and repairs in a rented unit. You can talk about your experience or the experience of someone you know. The questions below can guide your discussion.

Think about an example of a needed repair in a home you or a friend/family member rented.

- What was the problem?
- How did the problem begin?
- What did you do about it? Who did you tell?
- What other action did you take?
- How did the problem get solved?
- What questions do you have based on your experience?



Learning Activity: Vocabulary

You will read about tenant rights related to maintenance and repair. Before you read, think about what the words below mean. Match them with their meanings by writing the correct letter beside each term.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. _____ Repair | A. For example, heat and electricity |
| 2. _____ A lease | B. A law that sets out rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants in Ontario |
| 3. _____ Maintain | C. Fix |
| 4. _____ Tenant | D. Similar to a court, but focused on disputes between landlord and tenants |
| 5. _____ Utilities | E. A rental contract |
| 6. _____ Landlord and Tenant Board | F. To keep in good working order |
| 7. _____ Residential Tenancies Act | G. Renter |

Learning Activity: Previewing the Steps for Justice website

Go to this link to watch a video on how to locate and use **Steps to Justice**:

<https://vimeo.com/448907424/4645a8a934>

Then go to the **Steps to Justice** website. Answer the questions below.



1. Go to the homepage of Steps to Justice. Select the topic Housing Law, and then select **Repairs and Maintenance**. Choose **Landlord and Tenant Responsibilities**. How many questions are there?

2. Copy the first three questions.

3. Select the question: *How much heat does my landlord have to provide?* Fill in the blanks below.

a) This question has an answer and four _____ to follow.

b) Copy Step 3: _____

4. Select the **Find Services** button. Copy the details of the second service in the list.

Name of service: _____

Phone number: _____

Task Set 1

TITLE: Locate and identify information on the Steps to Justice website to identify rights and responsibilities related to maintenance/repair issues.

Go to the Steps to Justice website. Select the topic Housing Law, then select **Repairs and Maintenance** and choose **Landlord and Tenant Responsibilities**. Then select the question *Who is responsible for repairs and maintenance?* Answer questions 1 to 4.

Task 1. Circle 3 things your landlord is responsible for fixing or replacing.

- a. a stove that does not work
- b. a couch that belongs to you, that is ripped
- c. a leaking roof
- d. water damage to your couch because of a leaking roof

Task 2. List three examples of common areas the landlord must keep clean and maintained.

Task 3. Go to STEP 1: “Tell your landlord if there is a problem.”

If you asked your landlord to repair something, and the landlord does not fix the problem, what action can you take to get things fixed?

Task 4. Why do you think it could be helpful to take photos of the problem and put dates on them?

Go to STEP 4 “Apply to the Landlord and Tenant Board.” Answer questions 5 to 7 on the next page.

Task Set 1, *continued*

Task 5. What is the Landlord and Tenant Board?

Task 6. Describe what happens if you take your problem to the Landlord and Tenant Board.

Task 7. It is very important to bring evidence to your hearing. List **three examples** of evidence that you could bring to the hearing.

Task Set 1 Answer Sheet

TITLE: Locate and identify information on the Steps to Justice website to identify rights and responsibilities related to [maintenance/repair issues](#).

NOTE: no points should be deducted for grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors unless they impact the clarity of the ideas.

Task 1. Circle 3 things your landlord is responsible for fixing or replacing. **(3 points)**

- a. a stove that does not work
- c. a leaking roof
- d. water damage to your couch because of a leaking roof

Task 2. List three examples of common areas the landlord must clean and maintain. **(3 points)**

- hallways
- stairways
- driveways and sidewalks outside building
- elevators
- lobby
- lawn and area outside building
- garbage room
- laundry room

Task 3. If you asked your landlord to repair something, and the landlord does not fix the problem, what action you can take to get things fixed?

Response should include ideas from: Send a letter or email asking your landlord to do the repairs or if your landlord has a special form for repair requests, fill out the form.

Task 4. Why could it be helpful to take photos of the problem and put dates on them? **(2 points)**

Response should include a rationale for why taking photos and recording the dates might be helpful. For example: Can use the photos to show the problem and the seriousness of it. Writing the dates on the photo can show when the problem started.

Task 5. What is the Landlord and Tenant Board? **(1 point)**

The Board is like a special court that decodes disputes between tenants and landlords.

Task 6. Describe what happens if you take your problem to the Landlord and Tenant Board. **(2 points)**

Answer must include ideas from at least two of the points below.

- The Board will schedule a hearing
- Both you (tenant) and landlord can explain the problem to a member of the Board
- At the hearing, you (tenant) must convince the Board member about the problem
- Tenant should bring evidence of the problem

Task 7. It is very important to bring evidence to your hearing. List **three examples** of evidence that you could bring to the hearing. **(3 points)**

- Witnesses
- Audio or video recordings
- Work orders
- Photos
- Inspector's report
- Letters, Notes

Success: at least 11 out of 15

Task Set 2

TITLE: Locate information on the **Steps to Justice** website to determine steps to take to resolve a maintenance/repair issue.



Your friend has cockroaches in her apartment. She asks you the questions below. Go to the **Steps to Justice** website (stepstojustice.ca) to locate and answer the answers.

Task 1. How do I get to the Steps to Justice website and locate the Repairs and Maintenance section? Please write step-by-step instructions.

Task 2. Does my landlord have to get rid of the cockroaches, or do I have to pay for it myself?

Task 3. What may I have to do before the pest control service comes into my apartment?

Task 4. If my landlord does not deal with the problem, who can I call? Circle **2** correct answers.

- a. The police
- b. The town or city hall
- c. The local health department
- d. The fire department

Task 5. What can happen if I stop paying my rent until the problem is fixed?

Task Set 2: Answer Sheet

TITLE: Locate information on the Steps to Justice website to determine steps to take to resolve a maintenance/repair issue.

Task 1. How do I get to the Steps to Justice website and locate the Repairs and Maintenance section? Please write step-by-step instructions. **(4 points)**

Learner must write instructions that are legible, and can be followed. They must include how to get to the website, then how to locate the repairs and maintenance section (either by using the search box or selecting Housing law from the legal topics).

Task 2. Does my landlord have to get rid of the cockroaches, or do I have to pay for it myself? **(1 point)**

*Learners can answer in their own words, and do not have to use complete sentences.
The landlord must take steps to get rid of pests.*

Task 3. What may I need to do before the pest control service comes into my apartment? **(2 points)**

*Learners can answer in their own words. Responses must include at least two of the following:
You may have to move all your furniture away from the walls, let the pest control service into your place, clear off shelves, or have clothing and bedding laundered.*

Task 4. If my landlord does not deal with the problem, who can I call? **(2 points)**

*b-the town or city hall
c-the local health department*

Task 5. What can happen if I stop paying my rent until the problem is fixed? **(1 points)**

Your landlord can try to have you evicted.

Success: at least 7 out of 10 points

OALCF Task Cover Sheet

<p><i>Choose a task set:</i></p> <p>TITLE: ☐ Task Set 1: Locate and identify information on the Steps to Justice website to identify rights and responsibilities related to maintenance/repair issues.</p> <p> ☐ Task Set 2: Locate information on the Steps to Justice website to determine steps to take to resolve a maintenance/repair issue.</p>		
Learner Name: _____		
Date started: _____ Date completed: _____		
Successful Completion: ☐ YES ☐ NO		
Goal Path: ☐ Employment ☐ Apprenticeship ☐ Secondary School ☐ Post Secondary ☐ Independence		
Competency	Task Group	Level Indicator
A: Find and Use Information	A1: Read continuous text	A1.2: Read texts to locate and connect ideas and information
	A2: Interpret documents	A2.2 Interpret simple documents to locate and connect information
D. Use Digital Technology	n/a	D.2 Perform well-defined, multi-step digital tasks
For Performance Descriptors for each Level Indicator, see Task Performance form, on next page		
Materials Required:		
☐ Digital device with internet connectivity		

Task Performance Form

Choose a task set:

- TITLE:** ☐ Task Set 1: Locate and identify information on the Steps to Justice website to identify rights and responsibilities related to maintenance/repair issues.
- ☐ Task Set 2: Locate information on the Steps to Justice website to determine steps to take to resolve a maintenance/repair issue.

Performance indicators:

For task set 1, 2

- A1.2**
- Makes connections between sentences and between paragraphs in a single text
 - Scans text to locate information
 - Locates multiple pieces of information in simple texts
 - Makes low-level inferences
 - Obtains information from detailed reading
- D2**
- Selects and follows appropriate steps to complete tasks
 - Locates and recognizes functions and commands

Needs Work	Completes task with support from practitioner	Completes task independently
↓	↓	↓
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐

This task: ☐ was successfully completed ☐ needs to be tried again

Learner Comments:

Instructor (print)

Learner signature