



# Residential Tenant Lockout

## Know Your Rights

*NOTICE: This guidance is subject to change during the COVID-19 pandemic. As of May 7, 2020, the Illinois Supreme Court has delayed "all non-essential court matters and proceedings," which includes eviction proceedings. Additionally, the Governor of Illinois issued Executive Order No. 30, which prohibits most residential and non-residential evictions. Lawful evictions pursuant to a court order will not occur until the Illinois Supreme Court and the Governor of Illinois withdraw these orders, which will be reflected by guidance updating this notice.*

### WHAT IS A LOCKOUT?

A "lockout" has occurred any time a landlord does or threatens to take any of the following actions with regard to a residential tenant's home or apartment:

- Change or disable the locks
- Block any entrance
- Remove doors or windows
- Shut off or interfere with utility services, including heat, electricity, gas, hot or cold water, plumbing, and phone service
- Remove appliances or fixtures
- Remove the tenant's personal property
- Use or threaten violence against the tenant or their property
- Any other act making the property inaccessible or uninhabitable

### HOW DO I REPORT A LOCKOUT?

Lockouts are illegal. Affected tenants should call 311 to report a lockout and ask for a case report.

### WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I REPORT A LOCKOUT?

It is the policy of the Chicago Police Department (CPD) and a requirement of the Chicago Municipal Code that whenever a complaint of a lockout is received, the CPD will investigate and take appropriate action when a violation has occurred. Please note that lockouts are not a civil matter.

### HOW WILL CPD INVESTIGATE?

When a CPD officer is assigned to a landlord-tenant dispute alleging a lockout, the officer will determine whether a lockout has occurred. It is not necessary for the tenant to have a written lease.

A lockout has not occurred if the Cook County Sheriff has enforced a court order stating that the tenant should be evicted from the property, but be advised that evictions are currently not allowed because of COVID.

### HOW WILL A LOCKOUT BE RESOLVED?

If CPD is on scene and has determined that the landlord has committed or threatened to commit a lockout of a residential tenant, the Officer should instruct the offending landlord to immediately end the threats or actual lockout, or risk being arrested. Whether or not the lockout is resolved, the officer will provide the complainant with a Miscellaneous Incident Exception Report (CPD-11.419) and inform them to call 311 for additional help.

