6. Can a housing provider share the information I provide about the abuse with others?

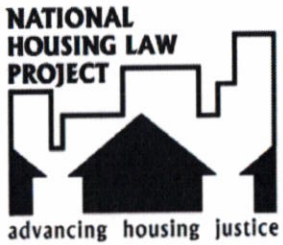
No, except in limited cases. The housing authority or landlord cannot give the information you provide about the abuse to others. The information may be shared only if you agree in writing, if it is needed to evict the abuser from the housing, or if disclosure is required by law.

7. Does this mean that a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking cannot be evicted at all?

No. You still can be evicted for serious or repeated lease violations that aren't related to the abuse. The landlord or housing authority must hold you to the same standard as other tenants. The landlord also may be able to evict if there is a real and immediate threat to other tenants if you are not evicted. **If you receive any type of eviction notice, call a legal aid office immediately.**

8. Who can help me?

Contact an attorney, fair housing agency, or domestic violence agency to see if VAWA can help you.



614 Grand Ave, Suite 320
Oakland, CA 94610
510-251-9400

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Know Your Rights: Domestic Violence and Assisted Housing

The Violence Against Women Act

Are you a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking?
Do you live in public housing, Section 8 housing, or supportive housing for the elderly or disabled?

A law called VAWA, the Violence Against Women Act, may help you.

The Rights of Domestic Violence Victims Living in Assisted Housing

1. Am I covered by VAWA's housing protections?

VAWA applies only to tenants in certain assisted housing programs:

- public housing,
- Section 8 vouchers,
- project-based Section 8,
- Section 202 housing for the elderly, or
- Section 811 housing for people with disabilities.

The law does not cover tenants who live in private housing with no rental assistance.

VAWA protects victims of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. It also covers the victim's immediate family members, except for the abuser. You don't have to be married to or living with the abuser to be covered by VAWA.

2. What rights does VAWA offer?

Rights for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking include:

- If you are applying for housing, you can't be denied simply because you are a victim.
- You can't be evicted or lose your voucher based solely on violence against you.
- Acts of violence against you cannot be "serious or repeated violations" of your lease or "good cause" for evicting you or ending your voucher.

3. What if I need to get the abuser out of the home?

If a member of your household uses violence against you, the housing authority or your landlord may evict the abuser alone, and let you and your family stay in the home.

4. What if I need to move to escape the abuse?

If you have a Section 8 voucher, VAWA states that the housing authority may permit you to move and keep your voucher, even if your lease has not ended. The housing authority may ask you to prove that you are moving because of violence.

VAWA does not cover emergency moves for public housing tenants. You can still ask the housing authority to transfer you to another unit. The housing authority may ask you to put your request in writing and to prove that you are moving for safety reasons.

5. How do I prove that I can use VAWA's protections?

To see if you can use VAWA, the housing authority or your landlord may ask for a document showing that you are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking. There are three ways you can show that you are a victim:

- Complete a certification form. The form will ask for your name, the name of your abuser, the abuser's relationship to you, the date, time and place of the violence, and a description of the violence. To get the form, call the housing authority or a legal aid office.
- Provide a letter signed by a victim service provider, attorney, or medical professional who has helped you with the abuse. You must also sign this letter.
- Provide a police or court record, such as a restraining order.

The housing authority or your landlord must give you at least 14 business days (weekends and holidays do not count) to provide proof of the violence.