

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook — Illinois Edition

Security Deposits, Habitability, Notices, Fair Housing &
Documentation Systems

The complete legal compliance system for Illinois landlords: lease terms, security deposit rules, habitability standards, repair-and-deduct, notice requirements, Fair Housing Act compliance, eviction procedures, and documentation best practices.

130+ Page Professional Guide	\$39.99	Revised & Expanded Edition — 2026
---	----------------	--------------------------------------

Michael Blucker — Goal Investment, Inc. | 132 W Woodstock St Unit A, Crystal Lake, IL 60014 | (815) 669-0846

LEGAL DISCLAIMER & TERMS OF USE: This document is published by Goal Investment, Inc. DBA Handyman for educational and informational purposes only. Nothing contained herein constitutes legal advice, engineering advice, licensed contractor specifications, or a substitute for professional consultation. All trade work, code compliance determinations, permit requirements, and safety-critical decisions should be reviewed by a licensed professional in your jurisdiction. Building codes, ordinances, and regulations vary by state, county, municipality, and Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). Always verify current local requirements with your AHJ before beginning any work. The author and publisher disclaim all liability for damages, injuries, code violations, or losses arising from the use or misuse of information in this document. Illinois residents: consult a licensed Illinois attorney for legal questions and a licensed Illinois contractor for trade work. Copyright © 2026 Goal Investment, Inc. All rights reserved. No portion of this document may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form without written permission from the publisher. Published in Crystal Lake, Illinois.

Legal Disclaimer & Safe Use Notice

LEGAL DISCLAIMER & TERMS OF USE: This document is published by Goal Investment, Inc. DBA Handyman for educational and informational purposes only. Nothing contained herein constitutes legal advice, engineering advice, licensed contractor specifications, or a substitute for professional consultation. All trade work, code compliance determinations, permit requirements, and safety-critical decisions should be reviewed by a licensed professional in your jurisdiction. Building codes, ordinances, and regulations vary by state, county, municipality, and Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). Always verify current local requirements with your AHJ before beginning any work. The author and publisher disclaim all liability for damages, injuries, code violations, or losses arising from the use or misuse of information in this document. Illinois residents: consult a licensed Illinois attorney for legal questions and a licensed Illinois contractor for trade work. Copyright © 2026 Goal Investment, Inc. All rights reserved. No portion of this document may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form without written permission from the publisher. Published in Crystal Lake, Illinois.

INSURANCE NOTICE: This guide does not constitute advice on insurance coverage, claims, or policy interpretation. Consult your property, liability, or builder's risk insurer before beginning any significant repair or renovation project.

ILLINOIS-SPECIFIC NOTE: Illinois statutes referenced in this guide include the Illinois Residential Landlord and Tenant Act (765 ILCS 720), Illinois Property Maintenance Code, and various municipal codes. Laws change — verify current statutes at ilga.gov before relying on any legal reference.

Published by: Goal Investment, Inc. DBA Handyman | 132 W Woodstock St Unit A, Crystal Lake, IL 60014 | goalinvestment.biz | Copyright © 2026 All rights reserved.

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook

RLTO - Tenant Rights - Lease Law

115 Pages - Digital Edition

Built for Illinois rental property owners navigating one of the most tenant-protective legal

environments in the country. Covers lease compliance, habitability, deposits, notices,

disclosures, documentation, and local ordinance overlap.

Important Legal Notice

This handbook is educational and not legal advice. Local ordinances, subsidized housing rules, court practice, and lease facts can change the answer.

Verify with an Illinois landlord-tenant attorney before serving notices, withholding deposits, filing eviction, or changing lease terms.

Michael - GOAL Investment Inc.

How to Use This Handbook

Use this handbook as a field guide before advertising a unit, signing a lease, collecting a deposit, entering the property,

responding to a repair complaint, serving a notice, or closing out a move-out. It is written for practical decision-making: what to

document, what to verify, and what not to assume.

Illinois landlord-tenant compliance is layered. State law gives the baseline, but Chicago, suburban Cook County, home-rule

municipalities, subsidized housing, condo associations, and court orders can add rules. The safest habit is to identify the

property location first, then apply the strictest applicable rule.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Start every file with the property address, municipality, county, unit type, lease dates, and ordinance coverage.
- Never rely on a verbal understanding when a notice, disclosure, receipt, inspection report, or lease addendum should be in writing.

- Treat every tenant file as if a judge, housing inspector, or attorney may review it later.

Document first. Act second. Escalate to counsel before any lockout, utility shutoff, retaliation risk, deposit dispute, eviction filing, or discrimination

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

1. Illinois Rental Compliance Map - State vs. local rules, coverage questions, and risk tiers.
2. Lease Intake and Screening Boundaries - Fair process, written criteria, and file setup.
3. Lease Compliance Checklist - Core lease terms, house rules, addenda, and required disclosures.
4. Security Deposits and Move-In Money - State rules, Chicago RLTO, Cook RTLO, receipts, interest, return files.
5. Habitability and Code Violations - What tenants can use against you and how to respond.
6. Repairs, Entry, and Documentation - Notices, work orders, photos, and contractor records.
7. Notices and Non-Renewal Strategy - Entry notices, cure notices, termination notices, and service proof.
8. Chicago RLTO and Cook County RTLO - High-risk local overlays and compliance habits.
9. Lead Paint, Radon, Smoke/CO and Safety Disclosures - Before lease signing and renewal.
10. Move-In / Move-Out Documentation Guide - Inspection forms and deposit-proof records.
11. Disputes, Complaints, and Failed Compliance - How to organize facts and avoid escalation mistakes.
12. Sample Notice Library - Educational templates and service-proof worksheets.
13. Landlord File System - Logs, checklists, audit worksheets, and retention habits.
14. Source and Verification Notes - Official resources and local-rule reminders.

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 1 - State Baseline vs. Local Overlay

The first mistake landlords make is treating Illinois as one uniform rental market. A unit in Chicago can be subject to the

Chicago Residential Landlord and Tenant Ordinance, a unit in suburban Cook County may fall under the Cook County

Residential Tenant Landlord Ordinance, and another Illinois municipality may have its own local rules. State law still matters,

but local overlays often control day-to-day risk.

Before you quote a deposit, serve a notice, deny a renewal, or deduct for damage, identify the exact legal environment.

County, municipality, building size, owner occupancy, lease type, subsidized status, and property condition can all change the

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm city/village, county, and whether the property is inside or outside Chicago.
- Check whether the lease or renewal requires a statutory summary or disclosure packet.
- When rules conflict, treat the more tenant-protective rule as the safer operating standard until counsel confirms otherwise.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

Never say, "Illinois says..." until you know whether Chicago RLTO, Cook County RTLO, or another local ordinance applies.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 1 - The Address Controls the Law

The first mistake landlords make is treating Illinois as one uniform rental market. A unit in Chicago can be subject to the

Chicago Residential Landlord and Tenant Ordinance, a unit in suburban Cook County may fall under the Cook County

Residential Tenant Landlord Ordinance, and another Illinois municipality may have its own local rules. State law still matters,

but local overlays often control day-to-day risk.

Before you quote a deposit, serve a notice, deny a renewal, or deduct for damage, identify the exact legal environment.

County, municipality, building size, owner occupancy, lease type, subsidized status, and property condition can all change the

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm city/village, county, and whether the property is inside or outside Chicago.
- Check whether the lease or renewal requires a statutory summary or disclosure packet.
- When rules conflict, treat the more tenant-protective rule as the safer operating standard until counsel confirms otherwise.

Never say, "Illinois says..." until you know whether Chicago RLTO, Cook County RTLO, or another local ordinance applies.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 1 - Covered Unit Decision Tree

The first mistake landlords make is treating Illinois as one uniform rental market. A unit in Chicago can be subject to the

Chicago Residential Landlord and Tenant Ordinance, a unit in suburban Cook County may fall under the Cook County

Residential Tenant Landlord Ordinance, and another Illinois municipality may have its own local rules. State law still matters,

but local overlays often control day-to-day risk.

Before you quote a deposit, serve a notice, deny a renewal, or deduct for damage, identify the exact legal environment.

County, municipality, building size, owner occupancy, lease type, subsidized status, and property condition can all change the

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm city/village, county, and whether the property is inside or outside Chicago.
- Check whether the lease or renewal requires a statutory summary or disclosure packet.
- When rules conflict, treat the more tenant-protective rule as the safer operating standard until counsel confirms otherwise.

Never say, "Illinois says..." until you know whether Chicago RLTO, Cook County RTLO, or another local ordinance applies.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 1 - Subsidized Housing and Special Programs

The first mistake landlords make is treating Illinois as one uniform rental market. A unit in Chicago can be subject to the

Chicago Residential Landlord and Tenant Ordinance, a unit in suburban Cook County may fall under the Cook County

Residential Tenant Landlord Ordinance, and another Illinois municipality may have its own local rules. State law still matters,

but local overlays often control day-to-day risk.

Before you quote a deposit, serve a notice, deny a renewal, or deduct for damage, identify the exact legal environment.

County, municipality, building size, owner occupancy, lease type, subsidized status, and property condition can all change the

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm city/village, county, and whether the property is inside or outside Chicago.
- Check whether the lease or renewal requires a statutory summary or disclosure packet.
- When rules conflict, treat the more tenant-protective rule as the safer operating standard until counsel confirms otherwise.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

Never say, "Illinois says..." until you know whether Chicago RLTO, Cook County RTLO, or another local ordinance applies.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 1 - Home-Rule Ordinance Risk

The first mistake landlords make is treating Illinois as one uniform rental market. A unit in Chicago can be subject to the

Chicago Residential Landlord and Tenant Ordinance, a unit in suburban Cook County may fall under the Cook County

Residential Tenant Landlord Ordinance, and another Illinois municipality may have its own local rules. State law still matters,

but local overlays often control day-to-day risk.

Before you quote a deposit, serve a notice, deny a renewal, or deduct for damage, identify the exact legal environment.

County, municipality, building size, owner occupancy, lease type, subsidized status, and property condition can all change the

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm city/village, county, and whether the property is inside or outside Chicago.
- Check whether the lease or renewal requires a statutory summary or disclosure packet.
- When rules conflict, treat the more tenant-protective rule as the safer operating standard until counsel confirms otherwise.

Never say, "Illinois says..." until you know whether Chicago RLTO, Cook County RTLO, or another local ordinance applies.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 1 - Compliance Risk Tiers

The first mistake landlords make is treating Illinois as one uniform rental market. A unit in Chicago can be subject to the

Chicago Residential Landlord and Tenant Ordinance, a unit in suburban Cook County may fall under the Cook County

Residential Tenant Landlord Ordinance, and another Illinois municipality may have its own local rules. State law still matters,

but local overlays often control day-to-day risk.

Before you quote a deposit, serve a notice, deny a renewal, or deduct for damage, identify the exact legal environment.

County, municipality, building size, owner occupancy, lease type, subsidized status, and property condition can all change the

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm city/village, county, and whether the property is inside or outside Chicago.
- Check whether the lease or renewal requires a statutory summary or disclosure packet.
- When rules conflict, treat the more tenant-protective rule as the safer operating standard until counsel confirms otherwise.

Never say, "Illinois says..." until you know whether Chicago RLTO, Cook County RTLO, or another local ordinance applies.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 1 - Owner-Occupied and Small-Building Exceptions

The first mistake landlords make is treating Illinois as one uniform rental market. A unit in Chicago can be subject to the

Chicago Residential Landlord and Tenant Ordinance, a unit in suburban Cook County may fall under the Cook County

Residential Tenant Landlord Ordinance, and another Illinois municipality may have its own local rules. State law still matters,

but local overlays often control day-to-day risk.

Before you quote a deposit, serve a notice, deny a renewal, or deduct for damage, identify the exact legal environment.

County, municipality, building size, owner occupancy, lease type, subsidized status, and property condition can all change the

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm city/village, county, and whether the property is inside or outside Chicago.
- Check whether the lease or renewal requires a statutory summary or disclosure packet.
- When rules conflict, treat the more tenant-protective rule as the safer operating standard until counsel confirms otherwise.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

Never say, "Illinois says..." until you know whether Chicago RLTO, Cook County RTLO, or another local ordinance applies.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 2 - Advertising Without Creating Liability

Good compliance starts before the lease. Every advertisement, phone call, showing, application, approval, denial, and

holding-money conversation can become part of the record. Use objective written standards and apply them consistently.

The goal is not just to fill the unit. The goal is to create a clean file showing that the rental decision was business-based,

consistent, documented, and not retaliatory or discriminatory.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use the same application checklist for every applicant.
- Save the ad copy that was active when the tenant applied.
- Separate application screening from repair promises or lease negotiations.
- Do not promise occupancy dates until required work, inspections, and utilities are ready.

Accepting money before the unit, lease, disclosures, and move-in condition are fully documented.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 2 - Application Criteria and Fair Process

Good compliance starts before the lease. Every advertisement, phone call, showing, application, approval, denial, and

holding-money conversation can become part of the record. Use objective written standards and apply them consistently.

The goal is not just to fill the unit. The goal is to create a clean file showing that the rental decision was business-based,

consistent, documented, and not retaliatory or discriminatory.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use the same application checklist for every applicant.
- Save the ad copy that was active when the tenant applied.
- Separate application screening from repair promises or lease negotiations.
- Do not promise occupancy dates until required work, inspections, and utilities are ready.

Accepting money before the unit, lease, disclosures, and move-in condition are fully documented.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 2 - Screening File Checklist

Good compliance starts before the lease. Every advertisement, phone call, showing, application, approval, denial, and

holding-money conversation can become part of the record. Use objective written standards and apply them consistently.

The goal is not just to fill the unit. The goal is to create a clean file showing that the rental decision was business-based,

consistent, documented, and not retaliatory or discriminatory.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use the same application checklist for every applicant.
- Save the ad copy that was active when the tenant applied.
- Separate application screening from repair promises or lease negotiations.
- Do not promise occupancy dates until required work, inspections, and utilities are ready.

Accepting money before the unit, lease, disclosures, and move-in condition are fully documented.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 2 - Holding Deposits and Application Fees

Good compliance starts before the lease. Every advertisement, phone call, showing, application, approval, denial, and

holding-money conversation can become part of the record. Use objective written standards and apply them consistently.

The goal is not just to fill the unit. The goal is to create a clean file showing that the rental decision was business-based,

consistent, documented, and not retaliatory or discriminatory.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use the same application checklist for every applicant.
- Save the ad copy that was active when the tenant applied.
- Separate application screening from repair promises or lease negotiations.
- Do not promise occupancy dates until required work, inspections, and utilities are ready.

Accepting money before the unit, lease, disclosures, and move-in condition are fully documented.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 2 - Denials and Adverse Action Notes

Good compliance starts before the lease. Every advertisement, phone call, showing, application, approval, denial, and

holding-money conversation can become part of the record. Use objective written standards and apply them consistently.

The goal is not just to fill the unit. The goal is to create a clean file showing that the rental decision was business-based,

consistent, documented, and not retaliatory or discriminatory.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use the same application checklist for every applicant.
- Save the ad copy that was active when the tenant applied.
- Separate application screening from repair promises or lease negotiations.
- Do not promise occupancy dates until required work, inspections, and utilities are ready.

Accepting money before the unit, lease, disclosures, and move-in condition are fully documented.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 2 - Before Lease Signing

Good compliance starts before the lease. Every advertisement, phone call, showing, application, approval, denial, and

holding-money conversation can become part of the record. Use objective written standards and apply them consistently.

The goal is not just to fill the unit. The goal is to create a clean file showing that the rental decision was business-based,

consistent, documented, and not retaliatory or discriminatory.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use the same application checklist for every applicant.
- Save the ad copy that was active when the tenant applied.
- Separate application screening from repair promises or lease negotiations.
- Do not promise occupancy dates until required work, inspections, and utilities are ready.

Accepting money before the unit, lease, disclosures, and move-in condition are fully documented.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 3 - Lease Names and Property Description

A lease is not only a payment agreement. It is the operating manual for the tenancy. It should identify who lives there, what

they pay, what they control, what you control, what requires permission, how notices are delivered, and what local laws are

Do not use a generic internet lease without adapting it to Illinois, local ordinances, the property condition, utility arrangement,

deposit type, and actual house rules. A lease provision that violates a local ordinance may be unenforceable and may create

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use full legal names of adults and identify permitted occupants.
- Attach required local summaries, lead, radon, smoke/CO, utility, HOA, and house-rule documents when applicable.
- Make repair reporting, access, emergency contact, and after-hours protocol clear.
- Do not put illegal penalty clauses, lockout language, or self-help eviction threats in the lease.

A strong lease is specific enough to operate the property but not so aggressive that it violates a tenant-protection ordinance.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 3 - Rent, Fees, Utilities and Late Charges

A lease is not only a payment agreement. It is the operating manual for the tenancy. It should identify who lives there, what

they pay, what they control, what you control, what requires permission, how notices are delivered, and what local laws are

Do not use a generic internet lease without adapting it to Illinois, local ordinances, the property condition, utility arrangement,

deposit type, and actual house rules. A lease provision that violates a local ordinance may be unenforceable and may create

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use full legal names of adults and identify permitted occupants.
- Attach required local summaries, lead, radon, smoke/CO, utility, HOA, and house-rule documents when applicable.
- Make repair reporting, access, emergency contact, and after-hours protocol clear.
- Do not put illegal penalty clauses, lockout language, or self-help eviction threats in the lease.

A strong lease is specific enough to operate the property but not so aggressive that it violates a tenant-protection ordinance.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 3 - Occupancy, Guests and Unauthorized Residents

A lease is not only a payment agreement. It is the operating manual for the tenancy. It should identify who lives there, what

they pay, what they control, what you control, what requires permission, how notices are delivered, and what local laws are

Do not use a generic internet lease without adapting it to Illinois, local ordinances, the property condition, utility arrangement,

deposit type, and actual house rules. A lease provision that violates a local ordinance may be unenforceable and may create

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use full legal names of adults and identify permitted occupants.
- Attach required local summaries, lead, radon, smoke/CO, utility, HOA, and house-rule documents when applicable.
- Make repair reporting, access, emergency contact, and after-hours protocol clear.
- Do not put illegal penalty clauses, lockout language, or self-help eviction threats in the lease.

A strong lease is specific enough to operate the property but not so aggressive that it violates a tenant-protection ordinance.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 3 - Maintenance Responsibilities

A lease is not only a payment agreement. It is the operating manual for the tenancy. It should identify who lives there, what

they pay, what they control, what you control, what requires permission, how notices are delivered, and what local laws are

Do not use a generic internet lease without adapting it to Illinois, local ordinances, the property condition, utility arrangement,

deposit type, and actual house rules. A lease provision that violates a local ordinance may be unenforceable and may create

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use full legal names of adults and identify permitted occupants.
- Attach required local summaries, lead, radon, smoke/CO, utility, HOA, and house-rule documents when applicable.
- Make repair reporting, access, emergency contact, and after-hours protocol clear.
- Do not put illegal penalty clauses, lockout language, or self-help eviction threats in the lease.

A strong lease is specific enough to operate the property but not so aggressive that it violates a tenant-protection ordinance.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 3 - Rules, Pets and Parking

A lease is not only a payment agreement. It is the operating manual for the tenancy. It should identify who lives there, what

they pay, what they control, what you control, what requires permission, how notices are delivered, and what local laws are

Do not use a generic internet lease without adapting it to Illinois, local ordinances, the property condition, utility arrangement,

deposit type, and actual house rules. A lease provision that violates a local ordinance may be unenforceable and may create

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use full legal names of adults and identify permitted occupants.
- Attach required local summaries, lead, radon, smoke/CO, utility, HOA, and house-rule documents when applicable.
- Make repair reporting, access, emergency contact, and after-hours protocol clear.
- Do not put illegal penalty clauses, lockout language, or self-help eviction threats in the lease.

A strong lease is specific enough to operate the property but not so aggressive that it violates a tenant-protection ordinance.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 3 - Renewal, Non-Renewal and Holdover Terms

A lease is not only a payment agreement. It is the operating manual for the tenancy. It should identify who lives there, what

they pay, what they control, what you control, what requires permission, how notices are delivered, and what local laws are

Do not use a generic internet lease without adapting it to Illinois, local ordinances, the property condition, utility arrangement,

deposit type, and actual house rules. A lease provision that violates a local ordinance may be unenforceable and may create

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use full legal names of adults and identify permitted occupants.
- Attach required local summaries, lead, radon, smoke/CO, utility, HOA, and house-rule documents when applicable.
- Make repair reporting, access, emergency contact, and after-hours protocol clear.
- Do not put illegal penalty clauses, lockout language, or self-help eviction threats in the lease.

A strong lease is specific enough to operate the property but not so aggressive that it violates a tenant-protection ordinance.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 3 - Required Addenda and Local Summaries

A lease is not only a payment agreement. It is the operating manual for the tenancy. It should identify who lives there, what

they pay, what they control, what you control, what requires permission, how notices are delivered, and what local laws are

Do not use a generic internet lease without adapting it to Illinois, local ordinances, the property condition, utility arrangement,

deposit type, and actual house rules. A lease provision that violates a local ordinance may be unenforceable and may create

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use full legal names of adults and identify permitted occupants.
- Attach required local summaries, lead, radon, smoke/CO, utility, HOA, and house-rule documents when applicable.
- Make repair reporting, access, emergency contact, and after-hours protocol clear.
- Do not put illegal penalty clauses, lockout language, or self-help eviction threats in the lease.

A strong lease is specific enough to operate the property but not so aggressive that it violates a tenant-protection ordinance.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 3 - Lease Language That Backfires

A lease is not only a payment agreement. It is the operating manual for the tenancy. It should identify who lives there, what

they pay, what they control, what you control, what requires permission, how notices are delivered, and what local laws are

Do not use a generic internet lease without adapting it to Illinois, local ordinances, the property condition, utility arrangement,

deposit type, and actual house rules. A lease provision that violates a local ordinance may be unenforceable and may create

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use full legal names of adults and identify permitted occupants.
- Attach required local summaries, lead, radon, smoke/CO, utility, HOA, and house-rule documents when applicable.
- Make repair reporting, access, emergency contact, and after-hours protocol clear.
- Do not put illegal penalty clauses, lockout language, or self-help eviction threats in the lease.

A strong lease is specific enough to operate the property but not so aggressive that it violates a tenant-protection ordinance.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 4 - Security Deposit Baseline

Security deposits are one of the highest-risk areas for Illinois landlords because small paperwork mistakes can become larger

disputes. The safe approach is simple: treat the deposit as tenant money until a legally supportable deduction exists.

Local rules may require specific receipts, separate accounts, interest payments, return deadlines, itemized statements, photos,

invoices, and statutory summaries. Chicago and suburban Cook County are especially documentation-heavy.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Take move-in photos before key delivery and move-out photos before cleaning or repairs erase evidence.
- Separate normal wear from tenant-caused damage using age, useful life, condition at move-in, and objective photos.
- Keep invoices, receipts, and contractor notes tied to each deduction.
- Return undisputed amounts on time; do not hold the entire deposit because of one unresolved item unless counsel confirms the rule.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

Never deduct for routine turnover, old paint aging, normal carpet wear, standard cleaning after normal use, or pre-existing damage documented at

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 4 - Illinois Security Deposit Return Act Awareness

Security deposits are one of the highest-risk areas for Illinois landlords because small paperwork mistakes can become larger

disputes. The safe approach is simple: treat the deposit as tenant money until a legally supportable deduction exists.

Local rules may require specific receipts, separate accounts, interest payments, return deadlines, itemized statements, photos,

invoices, and statutory summaries. Chicago and suburban Cook County are especially documentation-heavy.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Take move-in photos before key delivery and move-out photos before cleaning or repairs erase evidence.
- Separate normal wear from tenant-caused damage using age, useful life, condition at move-in, and objective photos.
- Keep invoices, receipts, and contractor notes tied to each deduction.
- Return undisputed amounts on time; do not hold the entire deposit because of one unresolved item unless counsel confirms the rule.

Never deduct for routine turnover, old paint aging, normal carpet wear, standard cleaning after normal use, or pre-existing damage documented at

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 4 - Security Deposit Interest Act Awareness

Security deposits are one of the highest-risk areas for Illinois landlords because small paperwork mistakes can become larger

disputes. The safe approach is simple: treat the deposit as tenant money until a legally supportable deduction exists.

Local rules may require specific receipts, separate accounts, interest payments, return deadlines, itemized statements, photos,

invoices, and statutory summaries. Chicago and suburban Cook County are especially documentation-heavy.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Take move-in photos before key delivery and move-out photos before cleaning or repairs erase evidence.
- Separate normal wear from tenant-caused damage using age, useful life, condition at move-in, and objective photos.
- Keep invoices, receipts, and contractor notes tied to each deduction.
- Return undisputed amounts on time; do not hold the entire deposit because of one unresolved item unless counsel confirms the rule.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

Never deduct for routine turnover, old paint aging, normal carpet wear, standard cleaning after normal use, or pre-existing damage documented at

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 4 - Chicago RLTO Deposit Rules

Security deposits are one of the highest-risk areas for Illinois landlords because small paperwork mistakes can become larger

disputes. The safe approach is simple: treat the deposit as tenant money until a legally supportable deduction exists.

Local rules may require specific receipts, separate accounts, interest payments, return deadlines, itemized statements, photos,

invoices, and statutory summaries. Chicago and suburban Cook County are especially documentation-heavy.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Take move-in photos before key delivery and move-out photos before cleaning or repairs erase evidence.
- Separate normal wear from tenant-caused damage using age, useful life, condition at move-in, and objective photos.
- Keep invoices, receipts, and contractor notes tied to each deduction.
- Return undisputed amounts on time; do not hold the entire deposit because of one unresolved item unless counsel confirms the rule.

Never deduct for routine turnover, old paint aging, normal carpet wear, standard cleaning after normal use, or pre-existing damage documented at

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 4 - Cook County RTLO Deposit Rules

Security deposits are one of the highest-risk areas for Illinois landlords because small paperwork mistakes can become larger

disputes. The safe approach is simple: treat the deposit as tenant money until a legally supportable deduction exists.

Local rules may require specific receipts, separate accounts, interest payments, return deadlines, itemized statements, photos,

invoices, and statutory summaries. Chicago and suburban Cook County are especially documentation-heavy.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Take move-in photos before key delivery and move-out photos before cleaning or repairs erase evidence.
- Separate normal wear from tenant-caused damage using age, useful life, condition at move-in, and objective photos.
- Keep invoices, receipts, and contractor notes tied to each deduction.
- Return undisputed amounts on time; do not hold the entire deposit because of one unresolved item unless counsel confirms the rule.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

Never deduct for routine turnover, old paint aging, normal carpet wear, standard cleaning after normal use, or pre-existing damage documented at

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 4 - Move-In Fees vs. Deposits

Security deposits are one of the highest-risk areas for Illinois landlords because small paperwork mistakes can become larger

disputes. The safe approach is simple: treat the deposit as tenant money until a legally supportable deduction exists.

Local rules may require specific receipts, separate accounts, interest payments, return deadlines, itemized statements, photos,

invoices, and statutory summaries. Chicago and suburban Cook County are especially documentation-heavy.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Take move-in photos before key delivery and move-out photos before cleaning or repairs erase evidence.
- Separate normal wear from tenant-caused damage using age, useful life, condition at move-in, and objective photos.
- Keep invoices, receipts, and contractor notes tied to each deduction.
- Return undisputed amounts on time; do not hold the entire deposit because of one unresolved item unless counsel confirms the rule.

Never deduct for routine turnover, old paint aging, normal carpet wear, standard cleaning after normal use, or pre-existing damage documented at

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 4 - Deposit Receipt and Bank Record

Security deposits are one of the highest-risk areas for Illinois landlords because small paperwork mistakes can become larger

disputes. The safe approach is simple: treat the deposit as tenant money until a legally supportable deduction exists.

Local rules may require specific receipts, separate accounts, interest payments, return deadlines, itemized statements, photos,

invoices, and statutory summaries. Chicago and suburban Cook County are especially documentation-heavy.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Take move-in photos before key delivery and move-out photos before cleaning or repairs erase evidence.
- Separate normal wear from tenant-caused damage using age, useful life, condition at move-in, and objective photos.
- Keep invoices, receipts, and contractor notes tied to each deduction.
- Return undisputed amounts on time; do not hold the entire deposit because of one unresolved item unless counsel confirms the rule.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

Never deduct for routine turnover, old paint aging, normal carpet wear, standard cleaning after normal use, or pre-existing damage documented at

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 4 - Damage vs. Ordinary Wear

Security deposits are one of the highest-risk areas for Illinois landlords because small paperwork mistakes can become larger

disputes. The safe approach is simple: treat the deposit as tenant money until a legally supportable deduction exists.

Local rules may require specific receipts, separate accounts, interest payments, return deadlines, itemized statements, photos,

invoices, and statutory summaries. Chicago and suburban Cook County are especially documentation-heavy.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Take move-in photos before key delivery and move-out photos before cleaning or repairs erase evidence.
- Separate normal wear from tenant-caused damage using age, useful life, condition at move-in, and objective photos.
- Keep invoices, receipts, and contractor notes tied to each deduction.
- Return undisputed amounts on time; do not hold the entire deposit because of one unresolved item unless counsel confirms the rule.

Never deduct for routine turnover, old paint aging, normal carpet wear, standard cleaning after normal use, or pre-existing damage documented at

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 4 - Itemized Deduction Packet

Security deposits are one of the highest-risk areas for Illinois landlords because small paperwork mistakes can become larger

disputes. The safe approach is simple: treat the deposit as tenant money until a legally supportable deduction exists.

Local rules may require specific receipts, separate accounts, interest payments, return deadlines, itemized statements, photos,

invoices, and statutory summaries. Chicago and suburban Cook County are especially documentation-heavy.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Take move-in photos before key delivery and move-out photos before cleaning or repairs erase evidence.
- Separate normal wear from tenant-caused damage using age, useful life, condition at move-in, and objective photos.
- Keep invoices, receipts, and contractor notes tied to each deduction.
- Return undisputed amounts on time; do not hold the entire deposit because of one unresolved item unless counsel confirms the rule.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

Never deduct for routine turnover, old paint aging, normal carpet wear, standard cleaning after normal use, or pre-existing damage documented at

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 4 - Return Deadline Workflow

Security deposits are one of the highest-risk areas for Illinois landlords because small paperwork mistakes can become larger

disputes. The safe approach is simple: treat the deposit as tenant money until a legally supportable deduction exists.

Local rules may require specific receipts, separate accounts, interest payments, return deadlines, itemized statements, photos,

invoices, and statutory summaries. Chicago and suburban Cook County are especially documentation-heavy.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Take move-in photos before key delivery and move-out photos before cleaning or repairs erase evidence.
- Separate normal wear from tenant-caused damage using age, useful life, condition at move-in, and objective photos.
- Keep invoices, receipts, and contractor notes tied to each deduction.
- Return undisputed amounts on time; do not hold the entire deposit because of one unresolved item unless counsel confirms the rule.

Never deduct for routine turnover, old paint aging, normal carpet wear, standard cleaning after normal use, or pre-existing damage documented at

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 5 - Habitability Standard in Plain English

Habitability is the legal idea that a rental must be fit and safe enough to live in. It is not about perfect finishes or cosmetic

preference. It is about essential services, structural safety, sanitation, weather protection, water, heat, electrical safety, pest

control, and code compliance.

When a tenant reports a condition that may affect health or safety, slow communication creates risk. The best defense is a

dated record showing notice received, assessment scheduled, temporary protection if needed, repair completed, and follow-up

Field checklist and operating notes

- Separate emergency repair response from ordinary maintenance scheduling.
- Use written work orders even when the tenant calls or texts.
- Photograph before, during, and after the repair.
- Keep contractor license, invoice, permit, inspection, and completion notes when applicable.

Water intrusion ignored for weeks becomes a habitability, mold, pest, deposit, and insurance problem at the same time.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 5 - Code Violations Tenants Can Use

Habitability is the legal idea that a rental must be fit and safe enough to live in. It is not about perfect finishes or cosmetic

preference. It is about essential services, structural safety, sanitation, weather protection, water, heat, electrical safety, pest

control, and code compliance.

When a tenant reports a condition that may affect health or safety, slow communication creates risk. The best defense is a

dated record showing notice received, assessment scheduled, temporary protection if needed, repair completed, and follow-up

Field checklist and operating notes

- Separate emergency repair response from ordinary maintenance scheduling.
- Use written work orders even when the tenant calls or texts.
- Photograph before, during, and after the repair.
- Keep contractor license, invoice, permit, inspection, and completion notes when applicable.

Water intrusion ignored for weeks becomes a habitability, mold, pest, deposit, and insurance problem at the same time.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 5 - Heat, Water, Plumbing and Electrical

Habitability is the legal idea that a rental must be fit and safe enough to live in. It is not about perfect finishes or cosmetic

preference. It is about essential services, structural safety, sanitation, weather protection, water, heat, electrical safety, pest

control, and code compliance.

When a tenant reports a condition that may affect health or safety, slow communication creates risk. The best defense is a

dated record showing notice received, assessment scheduled, temporary protection if needed, repair completed, and follow-up

Field checklist and operating notes

- Separate emergency repair response from ordinary maintenance scheduling.
- Use written work orders even when the tenant calls or texts.
- Photograph before, during, and after the repair.
- Keep contractor license, invoice, permit, inspection, and completion notes when applicable.

Water intrusion ignored for weeks becomes a habitability, mold, pest, deposit, and insurance problem at the same time.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 5 - Mold, Moisture and Pest Complaints

Habitability is the legal idea that a rental must be fit and safe enough to live in. It is not about perfect finishes or cosmetic

preference. It is about essential services, structural safety, sanitation, weather protection, water, heat, electrical safety, pest

control, and code compliance.

When a tenant reports a condition that may affect health or safety, slow communication creates risk. The best defense is a

dated record showing notice received, assessment scheduled, temporary protection if needed, repair completed, and follow-up

Field checklist and operating notes

- Separate emergency repair response from ordinary maintenance scheduling.
- Use written work orders even when the tenant calls or texts.
- Photograph before, during, and after the repair.
- Keep contractor license, invoice, permit, inspection, and completion notes when applicable.

Water intrusion ignored for weeks becomes a habitability, mold, pest, deposit, and insurance problem at the same time.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 5 - Smoke, CO and Life Safety

Habitability is the legal idea that a rental must be fit and safe enough to live in. It is not about perfect finishes or cosmetic

preference. It is about essential services, structural safety, sanitation, weather protection, water, heat, electrical safety, pest

control, and code compliance.

When a tenant reports a condition that may affect health or safety, slow communication creates risk. The best defense is a

dated record showing notice received, assessment scheduled, temporary protection if needed, repair completed, and follow-up

Field checklist and operating notes

- Separate emergency repair response from ordinary maintenance scheduling.
- Use written work orders even when the tenant calls or texts.
- Photograph before, during, and after the repair.
- Keep contractor license, invoice, permit, inspection, and completion notes when applicable.

Water intrusion ignored for weeks becomes a habitability, mold, pest, deposit, and insurance problem at the same time.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 5 - Repairs That Should Be Emergency Priority

Habitability is the legal idea that a rental must be fit and safe enough to live in. It is not about perfect finishes or cosmetic

preference. It is about essential services, structural safety, sanitation, weather protection, water, heat, electrical safety, pest

control, and code compliance.

When a tenant reports a condition that may affect health or safety, slow communication creates risk. The best defense is a

dated record showing notice received, assessment scheduled, temporary protection if needed, repair completed, and follow-up

Field checklist and operating notes

- Separate emergency repair response from ordinary maintenance scheduling.
- Use written work orders even when the tenant calls or texts.
- Photograph before, during, and after the repair.
- Keep contractor license, invoice, permit, inspection, and completion notes when applicable.

Water intrusion ignored for weeks becomes a habitability, mold, pest, deposit, and insurance problem at the same time.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 5 - Work Order Documentation

Habitability is the legal idea that a rental must be fit and safe enough to live in. It is not about perfect finishes or cosmetic

preference. It is about essential services, structural safety, sanitation, weather protection, water, heat, electrical safety, pest

control, and code compliance.

When a tenant reports a condition that may affect health or safety, slow communication creates risk. The best defense is a

dated record showing notice received, assessment scheduled, temporary protection if needed, repair completed, and follow-up

Field checklist and operating notes

- Separate emergency repair response from ordinary maintenance scheduling.
- Use written work orders even when the tenant calls or texts.
- Photograph before, during, and after the repair.
- Keep contractor license, invoice, permit, inspection, and completion notes when applicable.

Water intrusion ignored for weeks becomes a habitability, mold, pest, deposit, and insurance problem at the same time.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 5 - Inspector Complaint Response

Habitability is the legal idea that a rental must be fit and safe enough to live in. It is not about perfect finishes or cosmetic

preference. It is about essential services, structural safety, sanitation, weather protection, water, heat, electrical safety, pest

control, and code compliance.

When a tenant reports a condition that may affect health or safety, slow communication creates risk. The best defense is a

dated record showing notice received, assessment scheduled, temporary protection if needed, repair completed, and follow-up

Field checklist and operating notes

- Separate emergency repair response from ordinary maintenance scheduling.
- Use written work orders even when the tenant calls or texts.
- Photograph before, during, and after the repair.
- Keep contractor license, invoice, permit, inspection, and completion notes when applicable.

Water intrusion ignored for weeks becomes a habitability, mold, pest, deposit, and insurance problem at the same time.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 6 - Lawful Entry Mindset

Entry is a compliance issue because tenants have possession of the unit. Even when the landlord owns the building, the

tenant has privacy and notice rights. Emergency access is different from routine repairs, showings, inspections, or contractor

Use predictable entry habits: written notice, reasonable time, clear purpose, named vendor if known, and proof of delivery.

After entry, leave a short note or message describing what occurred.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Do not enter just because the tenant is behind on rent or difficult to reach.
- Emergency entry should be tied to an immediate risk such as active water, gas, fire, or safety threat.
- If access is denied, document the attempt and reschedule in writing instead of escalating verbally.
- Keep keys secure and log who has access.

Ownership of the building is not permission to enter at will. Possession belongs to the tenant during the tenancy.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 6 - Entry Notice Practical Rules

Entry is a compliance issue because tenants have possession of the unit. Even when the landlord owns the building, the

tenant has privacy and notice rights. Emergency access is different from routine repairs, showings, inspections, or contractor

Use predictable entry habits: written notice, reasonable time, clear purpose, named vendor if known, and proof of delivery.

After entry, leave a short note or message describing what occurred.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Do not enter just because the tenant is behind on rent or difficult to reach.
- Emergency entry should be tied to an immediate risk such as active water, gas, fire, or safety threat.
- If access is denied, document the attempt and reschedule in writing instead of escalating verbally.
- Keep keys secure and log who has access.

Ownership of the building is not permission to enter at will. Possession belongs to the tenant during the tenancy.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 6 - Emergency Entry Records

Entry is a compliance issue because tenants have possession of the unit. Even when the landlord owns the building, the

tenant has privacy and notice rights. Emergency access is different from routine repairs, showings, inspections, or contractor

Use predictable entry habits: written notice, reasonable time, clear purpose, named vendor if known, and proof of delivery.

After entry, leave a short note or message describing what occurred.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Do not enter just because the tenant is behind on rent or difficult to reach.
- Emergency entry should be tied to an immediate risk such as active water, gas, fire, or safety threat.
- If access is denied, document the attempt and reschedule in writing instead of escalating verbally.
- Keep keys secure and log who has access.

Ownership of the building is not permission to enter at will. Possession belongs to the tenant during the tenancy.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 6 - Contractor Access Protocol

Entry is a compliance issue because tenants have possession of the unit. Even when the landlord owns the building, the

tenant has privacy and notice rights. Emergency access is different from routine repairs, showings, inspections, or contractor

Use predictable entry habits: written notice, reasonable time, clear purpose, named vendor if known, and proof of delivery.

After entry, leave a short note or message describing what occurred.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Do not enter just because the tenant is behind on rent or difficult to reach.
- Emergency entry should be tied to an immediate risk such as active water, gas, fire, or safety threat.
- If access is denied, document the attempt and reschedule in writing instead of escalating verbally.
- Keep keys secure and log who has access.

Ownership of the building is not permission to enter at will. Possession belongs to the tenant during the tenancy.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 6 - Tenant Denied Access

Entry is a compliance issue because tenants have possession of the unit. Even when the landlord owns the building, the

tenant has privacy and notice rights. Emergency access is different from routine repairs, showings, inspections, or contractor

Use predictable entry habits: written notice, reasonable time, clear purpose, named vendor if known, and proof of delivery.

After entry, leave a short note or message describing what occurred.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Do not enter just because the tenant is behind on rent or difficult to reach.
- Emergency entry should be tied to an immediate risk such as active water, gas, fire, or safety threat.
- If access is denied, document the attempt and reschedule in writing instead of escalating verbally.
- Keep keys secure and log who has access.

Ownership of the building is not permission to enter at will. Possession belongs to the tenant during the tenancy.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 6 - Repair Completion Proof

Entry is a compliance issue because tenants have possession of the unit. Even when the landlord owns the building, the

tenant has privacy and notice rights. Emergency access is different from routine repairs, showings, inspections, or contractor

Use predictable entry habits: written notice, reasonable time, clear purpose, named vendor if known, and proof of delivery.

After entry, leave a short note or message describing what occurred.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Do not enter just because the tenant is behind on rent or difficult to reach.
- Emergency entry should be tied to an immediate risk such as active water, gas, fire, or safety threat.
- If access is denied, document the attempt and reschedule in writing instead of escalating verbally.
- Keep keys secure and log who has access.

Ownership of the building is not permission to enter at will. Possession belongs to the tenant during the tenancy.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 6 - After-Hours and Emergency Calls

Entry is a compliance issue because tenants have possession of the unit. Even when the landlord owns the building, the

tenant has privacy and notice rights. Emergency access is different from routine repairs, showings, inspections, or contractor

Use predictable entry habits: written notice, reasonable time, clear purpose, named vendor if known, and proof of delivery.

After entry, leave a short note or message describing what occurred.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Do not enter just because the tenant is behind on rent or difficult to reach.
- Emergency entry should be tied to an immediate risk such as active water, gas, fire, or safety threat.
- If access is denied, document the attempt and reschedule in writing instead of escalating verbally.
- Keep keys secure and log who has access.

Ownership of the building is not permission to enter at will. Possession belongs to the tenant during the tenancy.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 7 - Notice Strategy Before Service

A notice is not just a letter. It is the foundation for the next legal step. If the notice is wrong, served improperly, timed

incorrectly, or inconsistent with local rules, the entire action may fail.

Use notices to create clarity, not intimidation. State the facts, the lease provision or rule involved, the action required, the

deadline, and the method to contact the landlord. Avoid threats, insults, or overstatements.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm the notice type before drafting.
- Use the exact tenant names and property address from the lease.
- Calculate deadlines carefully and preserve proof of service.
- Do not change locks, remove doors, shut off utilities, or take self-help action.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

If the next step could be eviction court, have the notice reviewed before service. A cheap notice mistake can become an expensive delay.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 7 - Nonpayment Notices

A notice is not just a letter. It is the foundation for the next legal step. If the notice is wrong, served improperly, timed

incorrectly, or inconsistent with local rules, the entire action may fail.

Use notices to create clarity, not intimidation. State the facts, the lease provision or rule involved, the action required, the

deadline, and the method to contact the landlord. Avoid threats, insults, or overstatements.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm the notice type before drafting.
- Use the exact tenant names and property address from the lease.
- Calculate deadlines carefully and preserve proof of service.
- Do not change locks, remove doors, shut off utilities, or take self-help action.

If the next step could be eviction court, have the notice reviewed before service. A cheap notice mistake can become an expensive delay.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 7 - Lease Violation Cure Notices

A notice is not just a letter. It is the foundation for the next legal step. If the notice is wrong, served improperly, timed

incorrectly, or inconsistent with local rules, the entire action may fail.

Use notices to create clarity, not intimidation. State the facts, the lease provision or rule involved, the action required, the

deadline, and the method to contact the landlord. Avoid threats, insults, or overstatements.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm the notice type before drafting.
- Use the exact tenant names and property address from the lease.
- Calculate deadlines carefully and preserve proof of service.
- Do not change locks, remove doors, shut off utilities, or take self-help action.

If the next step could be eviction court, have the notice reviewed before service. A cheap notice mistake can become an expensive delay.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 7 - 30-Day Termination and Non-Renewal

A notice is not just a letter. It is the foundation for the next legal step. If the notice is wrong, served improperly, timed

incorrectly, or inconsistent with local rules, the entire action may fail.

Use notices to create clarity, not intimidation. State the facts, the lease provision or rule involved, the action required, the

deadline, and the method to contact the landlord. Avoid threats, insults, or overstatements.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm the notice type before drafting.
- Use the exact tenant names and property address from the lease.
- Calculate deadlines carefully and preserve proof of service.
- Do not change locks, remove doors, shut off utilities, or take self-help action.

If the next step could be eviction court, have the notice reviewed before service. A cheap notice mistake can become an expensive delay.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 7 - Entry Notice

A notice is not just a letter. It is the foundation for the next legal step. If the notice is wrong, served improperly, timed

incorrectly, or inconsistent with local rules, the entire action may fail.

Use notices to create clarity, not intimidation. State the facts, the lease provision or rule involved, the action required, the

deadline, and the method to contact the landlord. Avoid threats, insults, or overstatements.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm the notice type before drafting.
- Use the exact tenant names and property address from the lease.
- Calculate deadlines carefully and preserve proof of service.
- Do not change locks, remove doors, shut off utilities, or take self-help action.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

If the next step could be eviction court, have the notice reviewed before service. A cheap notice mistake can become an expensive delay.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 7 - Repair Access Notice

A notice is not just a letter. It is the foundation for the next legal step. If the notice is wrong, served improperly, timed

incorrectly, or inconsistent with local rules, the entire action may fail.

Use notices to create clarity, not intimidation. State the facts, the lease provision or rule involved, the action required, the

deadline, and the method to contact the landlord. Avoid threats, insults, or overstatements.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm the notice type before drafting.
- Use the exact tenant names and property address from the lease.
- Calculate deadlines carefully and preserve proof of service.
- Do not change locks, remove doors, shut off utilities, or take self-help action.

If the next step could be eviction court, have the notice reviewed before service. A cheap notice mistake can become an expensive delay.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 7 - Notice Delivery Proof

A notice is not just a letter. It is the foundation for the next legal step. If the notice is wrong, served improperly, timed

incorrectly, or inconsistent with local rules, the entire action may fail.

Use notices to create clarity, not intimidation. State the facts, the lease provision or rule involved, the action required, the

deadline, and the method to contact the landlord. Avoid threats, insults, or overstatements.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm the notice type before drafting.
- Use the exact tenant names and property address from the lease.
- Calculate deadlines carefully and preserve proof of service.
- Do not change locks, remove doors, shut off utilities, or take self-help action.

If the next step could be eviction court, have the notice reviewed before service. A cheap notice mistake can become an expensive delay.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 7 - Avoiding Retaliation Claims

A notice is not just a letter. It is the foundation for the next legal step. If the notice is wrong, served improperly, timed

incorrectly, or inconsistent with local rules, the entire action may fail.

Use notices to create clarity, not intimidation. State the facts, the lease provision or rule involved, the action required, the

deadline, and the method to contact the landlord. Avoid threats, insults, or overstatements.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Confirm the notice type before drafting.
- Use the exact tenant names and property address from the lease.
- Calculate deadlines carefully and preserve proof of service.
- Do not change locks, remove doors, shut off utilities, or take self-help action.

If the next step could be eviction court, have the notice reviewed before service. A cheap notice mistake can become an expensive delay.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 8 - Chicago RLTO Coverage Screen

Chicago and suburban Cook County have some of the most important local landlord-tenant overlays in Illinois. A landlord who

follows only a generic Illinois lease may still violate local rules if the property is covered.

Local overlays can affect deposit limits, receipts, interest, summaries, notice language, repair obligations, lease provisions,

lockout rules, and remedies. Treat these areas as high-risk and verify them at every new lease and renewal.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Save a copy of the current local summary or ordinance reference in the tenant file.
- Do not assume a small building is exempt without confirming the exact exception.
- Calendar annual interest and renewal-summary tasks if local law requires them.
- Use local forms when the city or county provides them.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

Local Overlay Warning

Chicago and Cook County rules can be more specific than statewide Illinois rules. Verify coverage before relying on a generic lease or notice.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 8 - Chicago RLTO Security Deposit High-Risk Rules

Chicago and suburban Cook County have some of the most important local landlord-tenant overlays in Illinois. A landlord who

follows only a generic Illinois lease may still violate local rules if the property is covered.

Local overlays can affect deposit limits, receipts, interest, summaries, notice language, repair obligations, lease provisions,

lockout rules, and remedies. Treat these areas as high-risk and verify them at every new lease and renewal.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Save a copy of the current local summary or ordinance reference in the tenant file.
- Do not assume a small building is exempt without confirming the exact exception.
- Calendar annual interest and renewal-summary tasks if local law requires them.
- Use local forms when the city or county provides them.

Local Overlay Warning

Chicago and Cook County rules can be more specific than statewide Illinois rules. Verify coverage before relying on a generic lease or notice.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 8 - Chicago RLTO Required Habits

Chicago and suburban Cook County have some of the most important local landlord-tenant overlays in Illinois. A landlord who

follows only a generic Illinois lease may still violate local rules if the property is covered.

Local overlays can affect deposit limits, receipts, interest, summaries, notice language, repair obligations, lease provisions,

lockout rules, and remedies. Treat these areas as high-risk and verify them at every new lease and renewal.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Save a copy of the current local summary or ordinance reference in the tenant file.
- Do not assume a small building is exempt without confirming the exact exception.
- Calendar annual interest and renewal-summary tasks if local law requires them.
- Use local forms when the city or county provides them.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

Local Overlay Warning

Chicago and Cook County rules can be more specific than statewide Illinois rules. Verify coverage before relying on a generic lease or notice.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 8 - Cook County RTLO Coverage Screen

Chicago and suburban Cook County have some of the most important local landlord-tenant overlays in Illinois. A landlord who

follows only a generic Illinois lease may still violate local rules if the property is covered.

Local overlays can affect deposit limits, receipts, interest, summaries, notice language, repair obligations, lease provisions,

lockout rules, and remedies. Treat these areas as high-risk and verify them at every new lease and renewal.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Save a copy of the current local summary or ordinance reference in the tenant file.
- Do not assume a small building is exempt without confirming the exact exception.
- Calendar annual interest and renewal-summary tasks if local law requires them.
- Use local forms when the city or county provides them.

Local Overlay Warning

Chicago and Cook County rules can be more specific than statewide Illinois rules. Verify coverage before relying on a generic lease or notice.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 8 - Cook RTLO Deposit and Fee Risk

Chicago and suburban Cook County have some of the most important local landlord-tenant overlays in Illinois. A landlord who

follows only a generic Illinois lease may still violate local rules if the property is covered.

Local overlays can affect deposit limits, receipts, interest, summaries, notice language, repair obligations, lease provisions,

lockout rules, and remedies. Treat these areas as high-risk and verify them at every new lease and renewal.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Save a copy of the current local summary or ordinance reference in the tenant file.
- Do not assume a small building is exempt without confirming the exact exception.
- Calendar annual interest and renewal-summary tasks if local law requires them.
- Use local forms when the city or county provides them.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

Local Overlay Warning

Chicago and Cook County rules can be more specific than statewide Illinois rules. Verify coverage before relying on a generic lease or notice.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 8 - Cook RTLO Summary Requirement

Chicago and suburban Cook County have some of the most important local landlord-tenant overlays in Illinois. A landlord who

follows only a generic Illinois lease may still violate local rules if the property is covered.

Local overlays can affect deposit limits, receipts, interest, summaries, notice language, repair obligations, lease provisions,

lockout rules, and remedies. Treat these areas as high-risk and verify them at every new lease and renewal.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Save a copy of the current local summary or ordinance reference in the tenant file.
- Do not assume a small building is exempt without confirming the exact exception.
- Calendar annual interest and renewal-summary tasks if local law requires them.
- Use local forms when the city or county provides them.

Local Overlay Warning

Chicago and Cook County rules can be more specific than statewide Illinois rules. Verify coverage before relying on a generic lease or notice.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 8 - Suburban Municipality Add-Ons

Chicago and suburban Cook County have some of the most important local landlord-tenant overlays in Illinois. A landlord who

follows only a generic Illinois lease may still violate local rules if the property is covered.

Local overlays can affect deposit limits, receipts, interest, summaries, notice language, repair obligations, lease provisions,

lockout rules, and remedies. Treat these areas as high-risk and verify them at every new lease and renewal.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Save a copy of the current local summary or ordinance reference in the tenant file.
- Do not assume a small building is exempt without confirming the exact exception.
- Calendar annual interest and renewal-summary tasks if local law requires them.
- Use local forms when the city or county provides them.

Use correct form and service method

Copy plus proof of delivery

Receipt, ledger, separate record where required

Respond in writing and close work orders

Organize timeline before responding

Timeline and document packet

Local Overlay Warning

Chicago and Cook County rules can be more specific than statewide Illinois rules. Verify coverage before relying on a generic lease or notice.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 8 - Comparing Chicago, Cook and State Baseline

Chicago and suburban Cook County have some of the most important local landlord-tenant overlays in Illinois. A landlord who

follows only a generic Illinois lease may still violate local rules if the property is covered.

Local overlays can affect deposit limits, receipts, interest, summaries, notice language, repair obligations, lease provisions,

lockout rules, and remedies. Treat these areas as high-risk and verify them at every new lease and renewal.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Save a copy of the current local summary or ordinance reference in the tenant file.
- Do not assume a small building is exempt without confirming the exact exception.
- Calendar annual interest and renewal-summary tasks if local law requires them.
- Use local forms when the city or county provides them.

Local Overlay Warning

Chicago and Cook County rules can be more specific than statewide Illinois rules. Verify coverage before relying on a generic lease or notice.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 9 - Lead-Based Paint Disclosure

Disclosures protect both sides because they prove what information was given before or during the tenancy. Missing

disclosures can turn an ordinary dispute into a statutory violation or insurance problem.

Use a disclosure packet for every new tenant and renewal. Include the property-specific disclosures, local ordinance

summaries, emergency contacts, safety device acknowledgments, and move-in condition forms.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Pre-1978 housing generally requires federal lead-based paint disclosure before lease signing.
- Illinois radon disclosure requirements apply to many rental situations, especially lower-level units under current state guidance.
- Smoke and CO alarms should be tested, documented, and acknowledged at move-in.
- Do not shift statutory safety obligations to the tenant without legal review.

A disclosure is not complete because it exists on your computer. It is complete when the tenant receives it and the file proves delivery.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 9 - Radon Disclosure for Rentals

Disclosures protect both sides because they prove what information was given before or during the tenancy. Missing

disclosures can turn an ordinary dispute into a statutory violation or insurance problem.

Use a disclosure packet for every new tenant and renewal. Include the property-specific disclosures, local ordinance

summaries, emergency contacts, safety device acknowledgments, and move-in condition forms.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Pre-1978 housing generally requires federal lead-based paint disclosure before lease signing.
- Illinois radon disclosure requirements apply to many rental situations, especially lower-level units under current state guidance.
- Smoke and CO alarms should be tested, documented, and acknowledged at move-in.
- Do not shift statutory safety obligations to the tenant without legal review.

A disclosure is not complete because it exists on your computer. It is complete when the tenant receives it and the file proves delivery.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 9 - Smoke Alarm Responsibilities

Disclosures protect both sides because they prove what information was given before or during the tenancy. Missing

disclosures can turn an ordinary dispute into a statutory violation or insurance problem.

Use a disclosure packet for every new tenant and renewal. Include the property-specific disclosures, local ordinance

summaries, emergency contacts, safety device acknowledgments, and move-in condition forms.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Pre-1978 housing generally requires federal lead-based paint disclosure before lease signing.
- Illinois radon disclosure requirements apply to many rental situations, especially lower-level units under current state guidance.
- Smoke and CO alarms should be tested, documented, and acknowledged at move-in.
- Do not shift statutory safety obligations to the tenant without legal review.

A disclosure is not complete because it exists on your computer. It is complete when the tenant receives it and the file proves delivery.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 9 - Carbon Monoxide Alarm Rules

Disclosures protect both sides because they prove what information was given before or during the tenancy. Missing

disclosures can turn an ordinary dispute into a statutory violation or insurance problem.

Use a disclosure packet for every new tenant and renewal. Include the property-specific disclosures, local ordinance

summaries, emergency contacts, safety device acknowledgments, and move-in condition forms.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Pre-1978 housing generally requires federal lead-based paint disclosure before lease signing.
- Illinois radon disclosure requirements apply to many rental situations, especially lower-level units under current state guidance.
- Smoke and CO alarms should be tested, documented, and acknowledged at move-in.
- Do not shift statutory safety obligations to the tenant without legal review.

A disclosure is not complete because it exists on your computer. It is complete when the tenant receives it and the file proves delivery.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 9 - Utility and Service Disclosures

Disclosures protect both sides because they prove what information was given before or during the tenancy. Missing

disclosures can turn an ordinary dispute into a statutory violation or insurance problem.

Use a disclosure packet for every new tenant and renewal. Include the property-specific disclosures, local ordinance

summaries, emergency contacts, safety device acknowledgments, and move-in condition forms.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Pre-1978 housing generally requires federal lead-based paint disclosure before lease signing.
- Illinois radon disclosure requirements apply to many rental situations, especially lower-level units under current state guidance.
- Smoke and CO alarms should be tested, documented, and acknowledged at move-in.
- Do not shift statutory safety obligations to the tenant without legal review.

A disclosure is not complete because it exists on your computer. It is complete when the tenant receives it and the file proves delivery.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 9 - Flood, Water and Basement Risk Notes

Disclosures protect both sides because they prove what information was given before or during the tenancy. Missing

disclosures can turn an ordinary dispute into a statutory violation or insurance problem.

Use a disclosure packet for every new tenant and renewal. Include the property-specific disclosures, local ordinance

summaries, emergency contacts, safety device acknowledgments, and move-in condition forms.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Pre-1978 housing generally requires federal lead-based paint disclosure before lease signing.
- Illinois radon disclosure requirements apply to many rental situations, especially lower-level units under current state guidance.
- Smoke and CO alarms should be tested, documented, and acknowledged at move-in.
- Do not shift statutory safety obligations to the tenant without legal review.

A disclosure is not complete because it exists on your computer. It is complete when the tenant receives it and the file proves delivery.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 9 - Bedbug, Pest and Sanitation Documentation

Disclosures protect both sides because they prove what information was given before or during the tenancy. Missing

disclosures can turn an ordinary dispute into a statutory violation or insurance problem.

Use a disclosure packet for every new tenant and renewal. Include the property-specific disclosures, local ordinance

summaries, emergency contacts, safety device acknowledgments, and move-in condition forms.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Pre-1978 housing generally requires federal lead-based paint disclosure before lease signing.
- Illinois radon disclosure requirements apply to many rental situations, especially lower-level units under current state guidance.
- Smoke and CO alarms should be tested, documented, and acknowledged at move-in.
- Do not shift statutory safety obligations to the tenant without legal review.

A disclosure is not complete because it exists on your computer. It is complete when the tenant receives it and the file proves delivery.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 10 - Move-In Inspection System

Move-in and move-out documentation is the landlord file that decides many future disputes. If the starting condition is unclear,

the ending condition becomes hard to prove.

Use repeatable categories: cleanliness, walls, floors, doors, windows, appliances, plumbing, electrical fixtures, smoke/CO

devices, exterior, keys, remotes, utility readings, and tenant notes.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Photograph wide shots first, then close-ups of defects.
- Use date-stamped photos or save original metadata when possible.
- Let the tenant list claimed defects at move-in and respond in writing.
- Do not perform repairs before documenting the move-out condition.

If you cannot prove the condition at move-in, your move-out deduction may be hard to defend.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 10 - Photo Standard That Holds Up

Move-in and move-out documentation is the landlord file that decides many future disputes. If the starting condition is unclear,

the ending condition becomes hard to prove.

Use repeatable categories: cleanliness, walls, floors, doors, windows, appliances, plumbing, electrical fixtures, smoke/CO

devices, exterior, keys, remotes, utility readings, and tenant notes.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Photograph wide shots first, then close-ups of defects.
- Use date-stamped photos or save original metadata when possible.
- Let the tenant list claimed defects at move-in and respond in writing.
- Do not perform repairs before documenting the move-out condition.

If you cannot prove the condition at move-in, your move-out deduction may be hard to defend.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 10 - Meter, Key and Access Records

Move-in and move-out documentation is the landlord file that decides many future disputes. If the starting condition is unclear,

the ending condition becomes hard to prove.

Use repeatable categories: cleanliness, walls, floors, doors, windows, appliances, plumbing, electrical fixtures, smoke/CO

devices, exterior, keys, remotes, utility readings, and tenant notes.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Photograph wide shots first, then close-ups of defects.
- Use date-stamped photos or save original metadata when possible.
- Let the tenant list claimed defects at move-in and respond in writing.
- Do not perform repairs before documenting the move-out condition.

If you cannot prove the condition at move-in, your move-out deduction may be hard to defend.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 10 - Tenant Repair Requests at Move-In

Move-in and move-out documentation is the landlord file that decides many future disputes. If the starting condition is unclear,

the ending condition becomes hard to prove.

Use repeatable categories: cleanliness, walls, floors, doors, windows, appliances, plumbing, electrical fixtures, smoke/CO

devices, exterior, keys, remotes, utility readings, and tenant notes.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Photograph wide shots first, then close-ups of defects.
- Use date-stamped photos or save original metadata when possible.
- Let the tenant list claimed defects at move-in and respond in writing.
- Do not perform repairs before documenting the move-out condition.

If you cannot prove the condition at move-in, your move-out deduction may be hard to defend.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 10 - Mid-Tenancy Condition Checks

Move-in and move-out documentation is the landlord file that decides many future disputes. If the starting condition is unclear,

the ending condition becomes hard to prove.

Use repeatable categories: cleanliness, walls, floors, doors, windows, appliances, plumbing, electrical fixtures, smoke/CO

devices, exterior, keys, remotes, utility readings, and tenant notes.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Photograph wide shots first, then close-ups of defects.
- Use date-stamped photos or save original metadata when possible.
- Let the tenant list claimed defects at move-in and respond in writing.
- Do not perform repairs before documenting the move-out condition.

If you cannot prove the condition at move-in, your move-out deduction may be hard to defend.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 10 - Move-Out Instructions

Move-in and move-out documentation is the landlord file that decides many future disputes. If the starting condition is unclear,

the ending condition becomes hard to prove.

Use repeatable categories: cleanliness, walls, floors, doors, windows, appliances, plumbing, electrical fixtures, smoke/CO

devices, exterior, keys, remotes, utility readings, and tenant notes.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Photograph wide shots first, then close-ups of defects.
- Use date-stamped photos or save original metadata when possible.
- Let the tenant list claimed defects at move-in and respond in writing.
- Do not perform repairs before documenting the move-out condition.

If you cannot prove the condition at move-in, your move-out deduction may be hard to defend.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 10 - Final Inspection Process

Move-in and move-out documentation is the landlord file that decides many future disputes. If the starting condition is unclear,

the ending condition becomes hard to prove.

Use repeatable categories: cleanliness, walls, floors, doors, windows, appliances, plumbing, electrical fixtures, smoke/CO

devices, exterior, keys, remotes, utility readings, and tenant notes.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Photograph wide shots first, then close-ups of defects.
- Use date-stamped photos or save original metadata when possible.
- Let the tenant list claimed defects at move-in and respond in writing.
- Do not perform repairs before documenting the move-out condition.

If you cannot prove the condition at move-in, your move-out deduction may be hard to defend.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 11 - When a Tenant Threatens Legal Action

A dispute is won or lost by the record. Angry messages, missing receipts, unclear photos, and inconsistent explanations make

the landlord look careless even when the underlying repair or charge was legitimate.

When a dispute starts, stop arguing and start organizing. Build a timeline, collect documents, preserve messages, identify

witnesses, and separate facts from opinions.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Do not retaliate with rent increases, service reductions, threats, or unnecessary entries.
- Do not delete texts, photos, emails, voicemails, or portal records.
- Respond professionally and state what you can verify.
- Escalate to counsel before serving further notices in a hot dispute.

Professional File Standard

A third party should be able to read your file and understand what happened without hearing your side of the story.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 11 - Code Complaint Response

A dispute is won or lost by the record. Angry messages, missing receipts, unclear photos, and inconsistent explanations make

the landlord look careless even when the underlying repair or charge was legitimate.

When a dispute starts, stop arguing and start organizing. Build a timeline, collect documents, preserve messages, identify

witnesses, and separate facts from opinions.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Do not retaliate with rent increases, service reductions, threats, or unnecessary entries.
- Do not delete texts, photos, emails, voicemails, or portal records.
- Respond professionally and state what you can verify.
- Escalate to counsel before serving further notices in a hot dispute.

Professional File Standard

A third party should be able to read your file and understand what happened without hearing your side of the story.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 11 - Security Deposit Demand Letter Response

A dispute is won or lost by the record. Angry messages, missing receipts, unclear photos, and inconsistent explanations make

the landlord look careless even when the underlying repair or charge was legitimate.

When a dispute starts, stop arguing and start organizing. Build a timeline, collect documents, preserve messages, identify

witnesses, and separate facts from opinions.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Do not retaliate with rent increases, service reductions, threats, or unnecessary entries.
- Do not delete texts, photos, emails, voicemails, or portal records.
- Respond professionally and state what you can verify.
- Escalate to counsel before serving further notices in a hot dispute.

Professional File Standard

A third party should be able to read your file and understand what happened without hearing your side of the story.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 11 - Repair Delay Disputes

A dispute is won or lost by the record. Angry messages, missing receipts, unclear photos, and inconsistent explanations make

the landlord look careless even when the underlying repair or charge was legitimate.

When a dispute starts, stop arguing and start organizing. Build a timeline, collect documents, preserve messages, identify

witnesses, and separate facts from opinions.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Do not retaliate with rent increases, service reductions, threats, or unnecessary entries.
- Do not delete texts, photos, emails, voicemails, or portal records.
- Respond professionally and state what you can verify.
- Escalate to counsel before serving further notices in a hot dispute.

Professional File Standard

A third party should be able to read your file and understand what happened without hearing your side of the story.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 11 - Retaliation and Discrimination Risk

A dispute is won or lost by the record. Angry messages, missing receipts, unclear photos, and inconsistent explanations make

the landlord look careless even when the underlying repair or charge was legitimate.

When a dispute starts, stop arguing and start organizing. Build a timeline, collect documents, preserve messages, identify

witnesses, and separate facts from opinions.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Do not retaliate with rent increases, service reductions, threats, or unnecessary entries.
- Do not delete texts, photos, emails, voicemails, or portal records.
- Respond professionally and state what you can verify.
- Escalate to counsel before serving further notices in a hot dispute.

Professional File Standard

A third party should be able to read your file and understand what happened without hearing your side of the story.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 12 - Sample 14-Day Cure Notice - Educational Template

The following sample is for educational drafting support only. Do not serve it without confirming the correct notice type, service

method, deadline, ordinance coverage, lease language, and court practice for the property.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use plain facts, not threats.
- Keep a signed copy and proof of service.
- Confirm the deadline calculation before delivery.

Tenant name: _____

Property/unit: _____

Date served: _____

Lease section or rule involved: _____

Condition or violation observed: _____

Required cure: _____

Deadline: _____

How to contact landlord/manager: _____

Review local law before service.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 12 - Sample 30-Day Termination or Non-Renewal Notice -

The following sample is for educational drafting support only. Do not serve it without confirming the correct notice type, service

method, deadline, ordinance coverage, lease language, and court practice for the property.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use plain facts, not threats.
- Keep a signed copy and proof of service.
- Confirm the deadline calculation before delivery.

Tenant name: _____

Property/unit: _____

Lease status: month-to-month / expiring term / other

Termination/non-renewal date: _____

Possession requested by: _____

Rent due through: _____

Confirm local rules and service requirements before use.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 12 - Sample Entry Notice - Educational Template

The following sample is for educational drafting support only. Do not serve it without confirming the correct notice type, service

method, deadline, ordinance coverage, lease language, and court practice for the property.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use plain facts, not threats.
- Keep a signed copy and proof of service.
- Confirm the deadline calculation before delivery.

Date notice given: _____

Entry date/time window: _____

Purpose: repair / inspection / showing / estimate / other

Persons expected to enter: _____

Contact for reschedule: _____

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 12 - Sample Repair Access Notice

The following sample is for educational drafting support only. Do not serve it without confirming the correct notice type, service

method, deadline, ordinance coverage, lease language, and court practice for the property.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use plain facts, not threats.
- Keep a signed copy and proof of service.
- Confirm the deadline calculation before delivery.

Reported issue: _____

Proposed access date/time: _____

Vendor/technician: _____

Tenant preparation needed: _____

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 12 - Sample Move-Out Instructions

The following sample is for educational drafting support only. Do not serve it without confirming the correct notice type, service

method, deadline, ordinance coverage, lease language, and court practice for the property.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use plain facts, not threats.
- Keep a signed copy and proof of service.
- Confirm the deadline calculation before delivery.

Move-out date: _____

Keys/remotes due: _____

Utilities remain active until: _____

Forwarding address required: _____

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 12 - Sample Deposit Itemization Letter

The following sample is for educational drafting support only. Do not serve it without confirming the correct notice type, service

method, deadline, ordinance coverage, lease language, and court practice for the property.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use plain facts, not threats.
- Keep a signed copy and proof of service.
- Confirm the deadline calculation before delivery.

Original deposit: \$_____

Less unpaid rent: \$_____

Less damage beyond ordinary wear: \$_____

Attached: photos, itemized deductions, receipts/invoices.

Balance returned: \$_____

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 12 - Sample Smoke/CO Alarm Acknowledgment

The following sample is for educational drafting support only. Do not serve it without confirming the correct notice type, service

method, deadline, ordinance coverage, lease language, and court practice for the property.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use plain facts, not threats.
- Keep a signed copy and proof of service.
- Confirm the deadline calculation before delivery.

Alarms present/tested at move-in: yes / no

Locations: _____

Tenant agrees to report damaged or nonworking alarms immediately.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 12 - Sample Radon Disclosure Acknowledgment

The following sample is for educational drafting support only. Do not serve it without confirming the correct notice type, service

method, deadline, ordinance coverage, lease language, and court practice for the property.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use plain facts, not threats.
- Keep a signed copy and proof of service.
- Confirm the deadline calculation before delivery.

Property level/unit: _____

Disclosure form delivered: yes / no

Known test results provided: yes / no / none known

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 12 - Notice Delivery Certificate

The following sample is for educational drafting support only. Do not serve it without confirming the correct notice type, service

method, deadline, ordinance coverage, lease language, and court practice for the property.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use plain facts, not threats.
- Keep a signed copy and proof of service.
- Confirm the deadline calculation before delivery.

Notice title: _____

Served by: _____

Method: _____

Date/time: _____

Witness or tracking: _____

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 12 - Lease Violation Evidence Log

The following sample is for educational drafting support only. Do not serve it without confirming the correct notice type, service

method, deadline, ordinance coverage, lease language, and court practice for the property.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use plain facts, not threats.
- Keep a signed copy and proof of service.
- Confirm the deadline calculation before delivery.

Incident date: _____

Lease clause: _____

Evidence attached: photos / texts / invoice / witness

Follow-up: _____

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 12 - Emergency Access Record

The following sample is for educational drafting support only. Do not serve it without confirming the correct notice type, service

method, deadline, ordinance coverage, lease language, and court practice for the property.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use plain facts, not threats.
- Keep a signed copy and proof of service.
- Confirm the deadline calculation before delivery.

Emergency condition: _____

Entry time: _____

Who entered: _____

Work performed: _____

Tenant notified after entry: yes / no

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 12 - Notice Library Control Sheet

The following sample is for educational drafting support only. Do not serve it without confirming the correct notice type, service

method, deadline, ordinance coverage, lease language, and court practice for the property.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use plain facts, not threats.
- Keep a signed copy and proof of service.
- Confirm the deadline calculation before delivery.

Template reviewed date: _____

Reviewed by: _____

Ordinance checked: state / Chicago / Cook / local

Version number: _____

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 13 - Master Tenant File Index

A landlord file system is not busywork. It is the protection layer between a routine tenancy and an expensive dispute. If you

cannot find the document quickly, it may not help you when the dispute starts.

Use one folder per tenancy and keep the structure identical across properties. Consistency matters when managing multiple

units or handing the file to an attorney, accountant, buyer, inspector, or property manager.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Name files with date first: YYYY-MM-DD - Unit - Description.
- Keep original signed leases and disclosures in a non-editable PDF format.
- Store photos in dated folders with short captions.
- Back up tenant files to a secure location and limit access to private information.

The landlord with the better organized file usually has the stronger negotiating position.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 13 - Lease and Disclosure Folder

A landlord file system is not busywork. It is the protection layer between a routine tenancy and an expensive dispute. If you

cannot find the document quickly, it may not help you when the dispute starts.

Use one folder per tenancy and keep the structure identical across properties. Consistency matters when managing multiple

units or handing the file to an attorney, accountant, buyer, inspector, or property manager.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Name files with date first: YYYY-MM-DD - Unit - Description.
- Keep original signed leases and disclosures in a non-editable PDF format.
- Store photos in dated folders with short captions.
- Back up tenant files to a secure location and limit access to private information.

The landlord with the better organized file usually has the stronger negotiating position.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 13 - Rent Ledger and Fee Ledger

A landlord file system is not busywork. It is the protection layer between a routine tenancy and an expensive dispute. If you

cannot find the document quickly, it may not help you when the dispute starts.

Use one folder per tenancy and keep the structure identical across properties. Consistency matters when managing multiple

units or handing the file to an attorney, accountant, buyer, inspector, or property manager.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Name files with date first: YYYY-MM-DD - Unit - Description.
- Keep original signed leases and disclosures in a non-editable PDF format.
- Store photos in dated folders with short captions.
- Back up tenant files to a secure location and limit access to private information.

The landlord with the better organized file usually has the stronger negotiating position.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 13 - Repair and Work Order Folder

A landlord file system is not busywork. It is the protection layer between a routine tenancy and an expensive dispute. If you

cannot find the document quickly, it may not help you when the dispute starts.

Use one folder per tenancy and keep the structure identical across properties. Consistency matters when managing multiple

units or handing the file to an attorney, accountant, buyer, inspector, or property manager.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Name files with date first: YYYY-MM-DD - Unit - Description.
- Keep original signed leases and disclosures in a non-editable PDF format.
- Store photos in dated folders with short captions.
- Back up tenant files to a secure location and limit access to private information.

The landlord with the better organized file usually has the stronger negotiating position.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 13 - Inspection and Photo Folder

A landlord file system is not busywork. It is the protection layer between a routine tenancy and an expensive dispute. If you

cannot find the document quickly, it may not help you when the dispute starts.

Use one folder per tenancy and keep the structure identical across properties. Consistency matters when managing multiple

units or handing the file to an attorney, accountant, buyer, inspector, or property manager.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Name files with date first: YYYY-MM-DD - Unit - Description.
- Keep original signed leases and disclosures in a non-editable PDF format.
- Store photos in dated folders with short captions.
- Back up tenant files to a secure location and limit access to private information.

The landlord with the better organized file usually has the stronger negotiating position.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 13 - Deposit Folder

A landlord file system is not busywork. It is the protection layer between a routine tenancy and an expensive dispute. If you

cannot find the document quickly, it may not help you when the dispute starts.

Use one folder per tenancy and keep the structure identical across properties. Consistency matters when managing multiple

units or handing the file to an attorney, accountant, buyer, inspector, or property manager.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Name files with date first: YYYY-MM-DD - Unit - Description.
- Keep original signed leases and disclosures in a non-editable PDF format.
- Store photos in dated folders with short captions.
- Back up tenant files to a secure location and limit access to private information.

The landlord with the better organized file usually has the stronger negotiating position.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 13 - Notice Folder

A landlord file system is not busywork. It is the protection layer between a routine tenancy and an expensive dispute. If you

cannot find the document quickly, it may not help you when the dispute starts.

Use one folder per tenancy and keep the structure identical across properties. Consistency matters when managing multiple

units or handing the file to an attorney, accountant, buyer, inspector, or property manager.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Name files with date first: YYYY-MM-DD - Unit - Description.
- Keep original signed leases and disclosures in a non-editable PDF format.
- Store photos in dated folders with short captions.
- Back up tenant files to a secure location and limit access to private information.

The landlord with the better organized file usually has the stronger negotiating position.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 13 - Vendor and Permit Folder

A landlord file system is not busywork. It is the protection layer between a routine tenancy and an expensive dispute. If you

cannot find the document quickly, it may not help you when the dispute starts.

Use one folder per tenancy and keep the structure identical across properties. Consistency matters when managing multiple

units or handing the file to an attorney, accountant, buyer, inspector, or property manager.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Name files with date first: YYYY-MM-DD - Unit - Description.
- Keep original signed leases and disclosures in a non-editable PDF format.
- Store photos in dated folders with short captions.
- Back up tenant files to a secure location and limit access to private information.

The landlord with the better organized file usually has the stronger negotiating position.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 13 - Annual Compliance Audit

A landlord file system is not busywork. It is the protection layer between a routine tenancy and an expensive dispute. If you

cannot find the document quickly, it may not help you when the dispute starts.

Use one folder per tenancy and keep the structure identical across properties. Consistency matters when managing multiple

units or handing the file to an attorney, accountant, buyer, inspector, or property manager.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Name files with date first: YYYY-MM-DD - Unit - Description.
- Keep original signed leases and disclosures in a non-editable PDF format.
- Store photos in dated folders with short captions.
- Back up tenant files to a secure location and limit access to private information.

The landlord with the better organized file usually has the stronger negotiating position.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 13 - Retention and Backup Plan

A landlord file system is not busywork. It is the protection layer between a routine tenancy and an expensive dispute. If you

cannot find the document quickly, it may not help you when the dispute starts.

Use one folder per tenancy and keep the structure identical across properties. Consistency matters when managing multiple

units or handing the file to an attorney, accountant, buyer, inspector, or property manager.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Name files with date first: YYYY-MM-DD - Unit - Description.
- Keep original signed leases and disclosures in a non-editable PDF format.
- Store photos in dated folders with short captions.
- Back up tenant files to a secure location and limit access to private information.

The landlord with the better organized file usually has the stronger negotiating position.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 13 - Multiple-Property Portfolio System

A landlord file system is not busywork. It is the protection layer between a routine tenancy and an expensive dispute. If you

cannot find the document quickly, it may not help you when the dispute starts.

Use one folder per tenancy and keep the structure identical across properties. Consistency matters when managing multiple

units or handing the file to an attorney, accountant, buyer, inspector, or property manager.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Name files with date first: YYYY-MM-DD - Unit - Description.
- Keep original signed leases and disclosures in a non-editable PDF format.
- Store photos in dated folders with short captions.
- Back up tenant files to a secure location and limit access to private information.

The landlord with the better organized file usually has the stronger negotiating position.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 13 - Capital Repair and Tenant Risk Log

A landlord file system is not busywork. It is the protection layer between a routine tenancy and an expensive dispute. If you

cannot find the document quickly, it may not help you when the dispute starts.

Use one folder per tenancy and keep the structure identical across properties. Consistency matters when managing multiple

units or handing the file to an attorney, accountant, buyer, inspector, or property manager.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Name files with date first: YYYY-MM-DD - Unit - Description.
- Keep original signed leases and disclosures in a non-editable PDF format.
- Store photos in dated folders with short captions.
- Back up tenant files to a secure location and limit access to private information.

The landlord with the better organized file usually has the stronger negotiating position.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 14 - Official Source Map

This handbook points you toward safer habits, not a final legal answer. Laws and local rules change, and local practice can

matter as much as the text of the rule.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use official government sources first.
- Save a dated PDF or screenshot of the rule you relied on.
- Ask counsel before taking action that could remove a tenant or withhold money.

Illinois General Assembly: Landlord and Tenant Act, security deposit statutes, and court process statutes where applicable.

Illinois Attorney General: landlord and tenant rights overview.

Chicago Department of Housing and Municipal Code: RLTO and security deposit interest resources.

Cook County Commission on Human Rights: RTLO summary and landlord/tenant guidance.

Illinois Emergency Management Agency/Office of Homeland Security: radon lessor-tenant disclosure.

EPA/HUD: lead-based paint disclosure requirements for pre-1978 housing.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 14 - Verification Before Use

This handbook points you toward safer habits, not a final legal answer. Laws and local rules change, and local practice can

matter as much as the text of the rule.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use official government sources first.
- Save a dated PDF or screenshot of the rule you relied on.
- Ask counsel before taking action that could remove a tenant or withhold money.

Verification Before Use

Check the current statute or ordinance online.

Check whether a new amendment applies to leases signed after a specific date.

Check whether a local municipality has a stricter rule.

Check whether subsidized housing rules or voucher program rules control.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Chapter 14 - Attorney Review Triggers

This handbook points you toward safer habits, not a final legal answer. Laws and local rules change, and local practice can

matter as much as the text of the rule.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use official government sources first.
- Save a dated PDF or screenshot of the rule you relied on.
- Ask counsel before taking action that could remove a tenant or withhold money.

Attorney Review Triggers

Eviction filing or termination after tenant complaints.

Any lockout, utility shutoff, abandoned-property action, or refusal of entry issue.

Security deposit dispute involving local ordinance penalties.

Discrimination, disability accommodation, domestic violence, subsidized housing, or retaliation allegations.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 14 - Plain-English Glossary

This handbook points you toward safer habits, not a final legal answer. Laws and local rules change, and local practice can

matter as much as the text of the rule.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use official government sources first.
- Save a dated PDF or screenshot of the rule you relied on.
- Ask counsel before taking action that could remove a tenant or withhold money.

Plain-English Glossary

AHJ: Authority having jurisdiction, usually the local official or department enforcing code.

Habitability: legal fitness of the rental unit for safe occupancy.

Ordinary wear: expected aging from normal use, not tenant-caused damage.

Cure: action required to fix a lease violation.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 14 - Final Compliance Promise

This handbook points you toward safer habits, not a final legal answer. Laws and local rules change, and local practice can

matter as much as the text of the rule.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use official government sources first.
- Save a dated PDF or screenshot of the rule you relied on.
- Ask counsel before taking action that could remove a tenant or withhold money.

Final Compliance Promise

I will identify the correct law before acting.

I will document condition before charging a tenant.

I will respond to health and safety issues quickly.

I will use written notices instead of verbal threats.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 14 - Resources to Save in Every Landlord Folder

This handbook points you toward safer habits, not a final legal answer. Laws and local rules change, and local practice can

matter as much as the text of the rule.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use official government sources first.
- Save a dated PDF or screenshot of the rule you relied on.
- Ask counsel before taking action that could remove a tenant or withhold money.

Resources to Save in Every Landlord Folder

Current lease form and addenda.

Current local ordinance summary.

Move-in and move-out inspection forms.

Emergency contact sheet.

Deposit account and receipt records.

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Chapter 14 - Final Page - Before Your Next Tenant

This handbook points you toward safer habits, not a final legal answer. Laws and local rules change, and local practice can

matter as much as the text of the rule.

Field checklist and operating notes

- Use official government sources first.
- Save a dated PDF or screenshot of the rule you relied on.
- Ask counsel before taking action that could remove a tenant or withhold money.

Final Page - Before Your Next Tenant

Walk the unit first. Fix known safety defects. Assemble the disclosure packet. Verify local law. Photograph condition. Use a written lease. Calendar

Location/ordinance coverage reviewed

Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Photos or records saved

Notes: _____

Calendar deadline entered

Notes: _____

Attorney review considered if high risk

Notes: _____

Landlord Legal Compliance Handbook: Illinois Edition

Professional Addendum

Enhanced Reference Material — 2026 Edition

Fair Housing Act Compliance — Non-Negotiable

The Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. § 3601) prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability. Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5) adds sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, military status, and ancestry. Chicago adds source of income (housing vouchers). Violations: civil complaints, HUD investigations, private lawsuits, and civil penalties up to \$21,663 for first violation (2024 HUD rates). Practical compliance: Use consistent screening criteria applied identically to all applicants (document in writing), never ask about protected class status, make reasonable accommodations for disability (documented request, documented response), and ensure advertising contains no discriminatory language or preference statements.

The Security Deposit Compliance System

Illinois security deposit rules are strict and penalty-laden. Core requirements: 765 ILCS 710 — return within 30 days of lease end (no deductions) or 30 days with itemized written statement of deductions (45 days with receipts/estimates). Allowable deductions: unpaid rent, damage beyond normal wear and tear. Never deduct for normal wear and tear (defined as deterioration from ordinary use — carpet wear, paint fading, minor scuffs). Photo documentation at move-in and move-out with timestamps is essential. Municipalities with 25,000+ population (Chicago, Aurora, Joliet, Naperville, Rockford, etc.): landlords with 5+ units must pay annual interest on deposits held more than 6 months (Chicago rate set annually by City Comptroller). Failure to comply: tenant may recover 2x deposit plus attorney's fees. Use a separate, dedicated deposit account — commingling deposits with operating funds is a violation in many jurisdictions.

References & Standards

Key Reference Standards: International Residential Code (IRC) 2021 • National Electrical Code (NEC) NFPA 70-2023 • International Plumbing Code (IPC) 2021 • International Mechanical Code (IMC) 2021 • International Building Code (IBC) 2021 • OSHA 29 CFR Part 1926 (Construction) • OSHA 29 CFR Part 1910 (General Industry) • Illinois Plumbing Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code 890) • Illinois Accessibility Code (71 Ill. Adm. Code 400) • Illinois Energy Conservation Code (2021 IECC) • ASTM International Standards • ANSI Standards • NFPA 101 Life Safety Code • EPA Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule (40 CFR Part 745) • HUD Housing Quality Standards. Note: Code editions adopted vary by jurisdiction. Verify the edition enforced by your local AHJ.

How to use citations in this guide: When a code section is referenced (e.g., IRC R302.1), the reader should obtain the current adopted edition for their jurisdiction. Code sections referenced are from the 2021 editions unless otherwise noted. Always confirm with your local AHJ which edition is locally adopted and whether local amendments apply.

Legal Disclaimer & Safe Use Notice

LEGAL DISCLAIMER & TERMS OF USE: This document is published by Goal Investment, Inc. DBA Handyman for educational and informational purposes only. Nothing contained herein constitutes legal advice, engineering advice, licensed contractor specifications, or a substitute for professional consultation. All trade work, code compliance determinations, permit requirements, and safety-critical decisions should be reviewed by a licensed professional in your jurisdiction. Building codes, ordinances, and regulations vary by state, county, municipality, and Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). Always verify current local requirements with your AHJ before beginning any work. The author and publisher disclaim all liability for damages, injuries, code violations, or losses arising from the use or misuse of information in this document. Illinois residents: consult a licensed Illinois attorney for legal questions and a licensed Illinois contractor for trade work. Copyright © 2026 Goal Investment, Inc. All rights reserved. No portion of this document may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form without written permission from the publisher. Published in Crystal Lake, Illinois.

INSURANCE NOTICE: This guide does not constitute advice on insurance coverage, claims, or policy interpretation. Consult your property, liability, or builder's risk insurer before beginning any significant repair or renovation project.

ILLINOIS-SPECIFIC NOTE: Illinois statutes referenced in this guide include the Illinois Residential Landlord and Tenant Act (765 ILCS 720), Illinois Property Maintenance Code, and various municipal codes. Laws change — verify current statutes at ilga.gov before relying on any legal reference.

Published by: Goal Investment, Inc. DBA Handyman | 132 W Woodstock St Unit A, Crystal Lake, IL 60014 | goalinvestment.biz | Copyright © 2026 All rights reserved.