

## Appearing in Court

While most rent escrow disputes are usually resolved (mediation), you may have to appear in court. Rent escrow hearings are scheduled on Mondays at 10:00 a.m. in Courtroom 11B. The hearing date is determined by the date of filing.

### What to Expect:

At the hearing, both the landlord and tenant are given an opportunity to give an explanation of their problems or concerns.

### What to Bring to Court:

1. A copy of any notices you sent to your landlord. If you mailed the notice through the US Postal Service, also bring any mail receipts.
2. Any witnesses that went with you when you delivered your complaint to the landlord and have seen the defects or problems that need repaired.
3. A copy of the receipts showing that you deposited rent with the court.
4. Any photographs or documentation that show the defects or problems that need repaired.
5. Any reports from a building or health department inspector.



## DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS?

The FCMC Self Help Resource Center is a free walk-in service to help you represent yourself in court without a lawyer. We cannot offer legal advice, but can point you to helpful resources. The Center is open on a walk-in basis – no appointment necessary.

### About the Franklin County Municipal Court Self Help Resource Center

The FCMC Self Help Resource Center is a free walk-in service to help you represent yourself in court without a lawyer. We cannot offer legal advice, but can point you to helpful resources. The Center is open on a walk-in basis – no appointment necessary.

## WALK IN

375 S. High St., 6th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Monday – Friday, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM  
(last visitors accepted at 2:30 PM)

## VISIT OUR WEBSITE

[www.fcmcselfhelpcenter.org](http://www.fcmcselfhelpcenter.org)

Includes helpful legal and research resources and materials on various legal issues.

This guide is for informational purposes only and should not be relied on for legal advice. If you need legal advice, contact an attorney.

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Franklin County Municipal Court (FCMC)  
Self Help Resource Center



Rent Escrow permits a tenant with complaints regarding housing conditions to deposit rent due into an escrow account until the dispute between the landlord and tenant is resolved.

## What Is Rent Escrow?

If you are a tenant with complaints about housing conditions, rent escrow allows you to deposit rent due into an escrow account until the dispute between you and the landlord is resolved.

If you have questions or need assistance, come to the Franklin County Municipal Court Self Help Resource Center, a free walk-in service to help you represent yourself in court without a lawyer. We cannot offer legal advice, but can point you to helpful resources.

The Franklin County Municipal Court Self Help Resource Center is located at:  
369 S. High St.  
10th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

## How to File

### Give your landlord written notice

Include in the written notice:

- List of specific problems you would like repaired
- Tell your landlord that the problem should be fixed in 30 days or 5 days for emergencies (like no heat in winter).
- Tell your landlord you will deposit your rent with the court AND either:
  - ~ Ask the court to order your landlord to make repairs and/or lower the rent you owe because you are living with the inconvenience of this problem.

OR

~ Ask the court to return part of the rent money deposited to you, so that you may make the repairs yourself.

Sign and date the letter. Keep a copy for yourself and deliver the notice to your landlord.

### Wait for the landlord to make repairs

For most problems, the appropriate waiting time is 30 days after you deliver the notice. For emergencies, the waiting time is 5 days. If your rent is due after you give notice to your landlord, you must pay your rent to the landlord.

### Pay your rent to the Rent Escrow Department

After the waiting period ends, on or before the day your next rent payment is due, bring the full amount of next month's rent to the money Franklin County Municipal Court Rent Escrow Department:

Rent Escrow Department  
375 S. High St., 3rd Floor

#### Remember:

- You can only pay with cash or money order
- Rent may not include utilities or pet fees
- Bring a copy of the written notice you gave your landlord

### Fill out the application to deposit rent

#### Receive notice of mediation

After you file, you will receive notice of mediation. If you do not receive notice within 10 business days, call (614) 645-7420.

### Optional: File a Motion for Rent Abatement and Order to Repair

When repairs are needed, you may also file a Motion for Rent Abatement and Order to Repair at the time you file your application to deposit rent with the Court. The motion should be dated, signed, and contain your case number. You can ask the Court to order:

- The landlord make the repairs
- You pay less rent until repairs are made
- You use the rent deposit to make repairs yourself

## ■ IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

### You must pay your rent

Every time your rent is due, you must pay it to the Franklin County Municipal Court Rent Escrow Department and get a receipt. Save your receipts. If you do not pay your rent to the Court on or before the date it is due, it will be very unlikely that you will win your case.

### If your landlord makes the repairs...

Come to the Franklin County Municipal Court Rent Escrow Department with your ID to sign a release form that authorizes the escrowed funds to be released to your landlord. Pay your rent directly to your landlord from this point forward.