

Massachusetts

Landlord-Tenant Compliance Guide

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■■ IMPORTANT LEGAL DISCLAIMER

This guide provides a summary of key compliance requirements for residential landlord-tenant relationships in Massachusetts. It is not legal advice and should not be relied upon as a substitute for consultation with a qualified attorney. Laws change frequently; always verify current requirements with official state sources or legal counsel. enCompliance.com provides this information as-is and makes no warranties regarding accuracy or completeness.

■ Severity Indicators:

- **Critical** - Must comply (legal requirement)
- **Important** - Should follow (best practice)
- **Standard** - Good to know (general info)

■ This guide covers 103 compliance requirements across 16 categories

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1. CORE LEASE REQUIREMENTS

- **1. Lease Formation & Disclosures** (MGL c.186, § 15B(1)(a), § 15B(2)(a), MGL c.175, § 99, 940 CMR 3.17(4)(b))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(1\)\(a\), § 15B\(2\)\(a\), MGL c.175, § 99, 940 CMR 3.17\(4\)\(b\)](#) (click to view statute)

- **2. Written Lease Requirements** (MGL c.186, § 12, 940 CMR 3.17(4)(a))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 12, 940 CMR 3.17\(4\)\(a\)](#) (click to view statute)

- **3. Lease Language Requirements** (MGL c.186, § 15B(1)(d), § 20, 940 CMR 3.17(4)(a))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(1\)\(d\), § 20, 940 CMR 3.17\(4\)\(a\)](#) (click to view statute)

- **4. Lease Addendums** (Various MGL c.186 sections, Federal law)

■ *Legal Reference:* [Various MGL c.186 sections, Federal law](#) (click to view statute)

- **5. Lease Renewal** (MGL c.186, § 12)

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 12](#) (click to view statute)

- **6. Lease Termination** (MGL c.186, § 12, § 13)

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 12, § 13](#) (click to view statute)

- **7. Early Termination** (MGL c.186, § 24-27 (Domestic Violence), SCRA (Military), MGL c.111, § 127L)

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 24-27 \(Domestic Violence\), SCRA \(Military\), MGL c.111, § 127L](#) (click to view statute)

2. DISCLOSURES

- **1. Lead Paint Disclosure** (MGL c.111, § 197, § 197A, 105 CMR 460, Federal law (42 USC 4852d))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.111, § 197, § 197A, 105 CMR 460, Federal law \(42 USC 4852d\)](#) (click to view statute)

- **2. Property Manager/Owner Information** (MGL c.186, § 15B(1)(a), 940 CMR 3.17(4)(b))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(1\)\(a\), 940 CMR 3.17\(4\)\(b\)](#) (click to view statute)

- **3. Insurance Disclosure** (MGL c.175, § 99)

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.175, § 99](#) (click to view statute)

● **4. Condominium/HOA Rules (No specific statute)**

■ *Legal Reference: [No specific statute](#)*

● **5. Utility Arrangements (105 CMR 410.354, § 410.254 (Cross-metering prohibited))**

■ *Legal Reference: [105 CMR 410.354, § 410.254 \(Cross-metering prohibited\)](#) (click to view statute)*

● **6. Radon Disclosure (No specific disclosure requirement)**

■ *Legal Reference: [No specific disclosure requirement](#) (click to view statute)*

● **7. Bedbug Disclosure (No Massachusetts statute requiring disclosure)**

■ *Legal Reference: [No Massachusetts statute requiring disclosure](#)*

● **8. Mold Disclosure (No specific disclosure requirement)**

■ *Legal Reference: [No specific disclosure requirement](#)*

● **9. Methamphetamine Contamination (No Massachusetts requirement)**

■ *Legal Reference: [No Massachusetts requirement](#)*

● **10. Death on Property (MGL c.93, § 114)**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.93, § 114](#) (click to view statute)*

3. ENTRY & ACCESS

● **1. Landlord Right of Entry (MGL c.186, § 15B(1)(a), no specific notice statute)**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 15B\(1\)\(a\), no specific notice statute](#) (click to view statute)*

● **2. Tenant Privacy Rights (MGL c.186, § 14 (Quiet Enjoyment))**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 14 \(Quiet Enjoyment\)](#) (click to view statute)*

● **3. Locks & Keys (MGL c.186, § 15B(1)(b)(iv))**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 15B\(1\)\(b\)\(iv\)](#) (click to view statute)*

● **4. Lock Changes - Domestic Violence (MGL c.186, § 26, § 27)**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 26, § 27](#) (click to view statute)*

4. EVICTION PROCEDURES

● **1. Notice to Quit - Nonpayment of Rent (MGL c.186, § 11, § 11A, § 31)**

■ **Legal Reference:** [MGL c.186, § 11, § 11A, § 31](#) (click to view statute)

● **2. Notice to Quit - Lease Violation (MGL c.186, § 12, § 17)**

■ **Legal Reference:** [MGL c.186, § 12, § 17](#) (click to view statute)

● **3. Notice to Quit - No Cause (Tenancy at Will) (MGL c.186, § 12)**

■ **Legal Reference:** [MGL c.186, § 12](#) (click to view statute)

● **4. Notice to Quit - Illegal Activity (MGL c.139, § 19)**

■ **Legal Reference:** [MGL c.139, § 19](#) (click to view statute)

● **5. Summary Process (Eviction Lawsuit) (MGL c.239)**

■ **Legal Reference:** [MGL c.239](#) (click to view statute)

● **6. Service of Process (MGL c.239, § 2, Mass. Rules of Civil Procedure Rule 4(d))**

■ **Legal Reference:** [MGL c.239, § 2, Mass. Rules of Civil Procedure Rule 4\(d\)](#) (click to view statute)

● **7. Tenant Defenses (MGL c.239, § 8A, MGL c.186, § 14)**

■ **Legal Reference:** [MGL c.239, § 8A, MGL c.186, § 14](#) (click to view statute)

● **8. Execution & Physical Eviction (MGL c.239, § 3, § 4)**

■ **Legal Reference:** [MGL c.239, § 3, § 4](#) (click to view statute)

● **9. Self-Help Eviction Prohibition (MGL c.186, § 14, § 15F)**

■ **Legal Reference:** [MGL c.186, § 14, § 15F](#) (click to view statute)

● **10. Eviction Records - Sealing (MGL c.239, § 16 (Effective May 5, 2025))**

■ **Legal Reference:** [MGL c.239, § 16 \(Effective May 5, 2025\)](#) (click to view statute)

5. FAIR HOUSING & DISCRIMINATION

● **1. Federal Fair Housing Act (42 USC §§ 3601-3619, Title VIII)**

■ **Legal Reference:** [42 USC §§ 3601-3619, Title VIII](#) (click to view statute)

● **2. Massachusetts Fair Housing Law (MGL c.151B, § 4)**

■ **Legal Reference:** [MGL c.151B, § 4](#) (click to view statute)

● **3. Reasonable Accommodations (Fair Housing Act, MGL c.151B)**

■ **Legal Reference:** [Fair Housing Act, MGL c.151B](#) (click to view statute)

● **4. Familial Status Protection (Fair Housing Act, MGL c.151B)**

■ *Legal Reference: [Fair Housing Act, MGL c.151B](#) (click to view statute)*

● **5. Source of Income Protection (MGL c.151B, § 4)**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.151B, § 4](#) (click to view statute)*

● **6. Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity (MGL c.151B, § 4)**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.151B, § 4](#) (click to view statute)*

● **7. Advertising Compliance (Fair Housing Act, MGL c.151B, 940 CMR 3.17)**

■ *Legal Reference: [Fair Housing Act, MGL c.151B, 940 CMR 3.17](#) (click to view statute)*

6. FINANCIAL TERMS

● **1. Rent Amount & Payment (MGL c.186, § 12, § 15B(1)(b))**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 12, § 15B\(1\)\(b\)](#) (click to view statute)*

● **2. Rent Increases (MGL c.186, § 12, c.40P (Rent Control Prohibition))**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 12, c.40P \(Rent Control Prohibition\)](#) (click to view statute)*

● **3. Late Fees (MGL c.186, § 15B(1)(c))**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 15B\(1\)\(c\)](#) (click to view statute)*

● **4. NSF/Bounced Check Fees (No specific Massachusetts statute)**

■ *Legal Reference: No specific Massachusetts statute*

● **5. Application Fees (MGL c.186, § 15B(1)(b))**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 15B\(1\)\(b\)](#) (click to view statute)*

● **6. Move-In Fees (MGL c.186, § 15B(1)(b), Perry v. Equity Residential Mgmt. (D. Mass. 2014))**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 15B\(1\)\(b\), Perry v. Equity Residential Mgmt. \(D. Mass. 2014\)](#) (click to view statute)*

● **7. Pet Fees & Deposits (MGL c.186, § 15B(1)(b), Fair Housing Act)**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 15B\(1\)\(b\), Fair Housing Act](#) (click to view statute)*

● **8. Utilities (MGL c.186, § 14, § 15F, 940 CMR 3.17(4)(g))**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 14, § 15F, 940 CMR 3.17\(4\)\(g\)](#) (click to view statute)*

7. HABITABILITY & REPAIRS

- **1. Implied Warranty of Habitability** (Boston Housing Authority v. Hemingway, 363 Mass. 184 (1973), 105 CMR 410)

■ *Legal Reference:* [Boston Housing Authority v. Hemingway, 363 Mass. 184 \(1973\), 105 CMR 410](#) (click to view statute)

- **2. State Sanitary Code Compliance** (105 CMR 410 (State Sanitary Code Chapter II))

■ *Legal Reference:* [105 CMR 410 \(State Sanitary Code Chapter II\)](#) (click to view statute)

- **3. Repair Obligations & Timeline** (MGL c.111, § 127L, 105 CMR 410)

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.111, § 127L, 105 CMR 410](#) (click to view statute)

- **4. Repair and Deduct** (MGL c.111, § 127L)

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.111, § 127L](#) (click to view statute)

- **5. Rent Withholding** (MGL c.239, § 8A)

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.239, § 8A](#) (click to view statute)

- **6. Occupancy Standards** (105 CMR 410.400, § 410.420)

■ *Legal Reference:* [105 CMR 410.400, § 410.420](#) (click to view statute)

- **7. Heat Requirements** (105 CMR 410.201)

■ *Legal Reference:* [105 CMR 410.201](#) (click to view statute)

- **8. Hot Water Requirements** (105 CMR 410.190)

■ *Legal Reference:* [105 CMR 410.190](#) (click to view statute)

- **9. Pest Control** (105 CMR 410.550)

■ *Legal Reference:* [105 CMR 410.550](#) (click to view statute)

- **10. Smoke Detectors & Carbon Monoxide Detectors** (MGL c.148, § 26F, 105 CMR 410.450)

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.148, § 26F, 105 CMR 410.450](#) (click to view statute)

- **11. Mold & Moisture** (105 CMR 410.310)

■ *Legal Reference:* [105 CMR 410.310](#) (click to view statute)

- **12. Windows & Screens** (105 CMR 410.480, § 410.500)

■ *Legal Reference:* [105 CMR 410.480, § 410.500](#) (click to view statute)

8. LEAD PAINT (ADDITIONAL DETAIL)

- 1. Lead Paint Law - Deleading Requirements (MGL c.111, § 197, 105 CMR 460)

■ Legal Reference: [MGL c.111, § 197, 105 CMR 460](#) (click to view statute)

- 2. Lead Paint Penalties (MGL c.111, § 199)

■ Legal Reference: [MGL c.111, § 199](#) (click to view statute)

9. LOCAL ORDINANCES

- 1. Boston-Specific Requirements (Boston City Ordinances)

■ Legal Reference: [Boston City Ordinances](#) (click to view statute)

- 2. Cambridge-Specific Requirements (Cambridge City Ordinances)

■ Legal Reference: [Cambridge City Ordinances](#) (click to view statute)

- 3. Local Health Boards (105 CMR 410, MGL c.111)

■ Legal Reference: [105 CMR 410, MGL c.111](#) (click to view statute)

- 4. HOA Rules (No specific statute)

■ Legal Reference: *No specific statute*

- 5. Condominium Association Rules (MGL c.183A (Condominium Act))

■ Legal Reference: [MGL c.183A \(Condominium Act\)](#) (click to view statute)

- 6. Zoning Compliance (Local zoning ordinances, MGL c.40A)

■ Legal Reference: [Local zoning ordinances, MGL c.40A](#) (click to view statute)

10. PET POLICIES

- 1. Pet Deposits & Fees (MGL c.186, § 15B(1)(b))

■ Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 15B\(1\)\(b\)](#) (click to view statute)

- 2. Service Animals & Emotional Support Animals (Fair Housing Act, ADA, MGL c.151B)

■ Legal Reference: [Fair Housing Act, ADA, MGL c.151B](#) (click to view statute)

- 3. Breed Restrictions (No specific Massachusetts statute)

■ Legal Reference: *No specific Massachusetts statute*

● 4. Pet Damage (MGL c.186, § 15B(4))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(4\)](#) (click to view statute)

● 5. Pet Agreements (No specific statute)

■ *Legal Reference:* No specific statute

11. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

● 1. Property Manager Licensing (No specific Massachusetts requirement for property managers)

■ *Legal Reference:* [No specific Massachusetts requirement for property managers](#) (click to view statute)

● 2. Trust Accounts (No specific Massachusetts requirement for security deposit trust accounts beyond § 15B)

■ *Legal Reference:* [No specific Massachusetts requirement for security deposit trust accounts beyond § 15B](#) (click to view statute)

● 3. Record Retention (MGL c.186, § 15B(2)(d))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(2\)\(d\)](#) (click to view statute)

● 4. Ownership Changes (MGL c.186, § 15B(5))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(5\)](#) (click to view statute)

● 5. Property Management Agreements (No specific statute, general contract law)

■ *Legal Reference:* No specific statute, general contract law

12. RENT CONTROL & STABILIZATION

● 1. Rent Control Prohibition (MGL c.40P)

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.40P](#) (click to view statute)

● 2. Rent Increase Notices (MGL c.186, § 12)

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 12](#) (click to view statute)

● 3. Rent Receipt Requirements (No specific statute)

■ *Legal Reference:* No specific statute

13. RETALIATION

● 1. Prohibited Retaliatory Actions (MGL c.186, § 18)

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 18](#) (click to view statute)

● 2. Presumption of Retaliation (MGL c.186, § 18)

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 18](#) (click to view statute)

● 3. Remedies for Retaliation (MGL c.186, § 18)

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 18](#) (click to view statute)

14. SECURITY DEPOSITS

● 1. Security Deposit Limits (MGL c.186, § 15B(1)(b))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(1\)\(b\)](#) (click to view statute)

● 2. Security Deposit Storage (MGL c.186, § 15B(3)(a))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(3\)\(a\)](#) (click to view statute)

● 3. Security Deposit Return (MGL c.186, § 15B(4), § 15B(6))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(4\), § 15B\(6\)](#) (click to view statute)

● 4. Allowable Deductions (MGL c.186, § 15B(4), Peebles v. JRK Property Holdings (2025))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(4\), Peebles v. JRK Property Holdings \(2025\)](#) (click to view statute)

● 5. Itemization Requirements (MGL c.186, § 15B(4), 940 CMR 3.17(4)(f))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(4\), 940 CMR 3.17\(4\)\(f\)](#) (click to view statute)

● 6. Interest on Security Deposits (MGL c.186, § 15B(3)(b))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(3\)\(b\)](#) (click to view statute)

● 7. Penalties for Wrongful Withholding (MGL c.186, § 15B(6)(a), § 15B(7))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(6\)\(a\), § 15B\(7\)](#) (click to view statute)

● 8. Statement of Condition (MGL c.186, § 15B(2)(a), 940 CMR 3.17(4)(e))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(2\)\(a\), 940 CMR 3.17\(4\)\(e\)](#) (click to view statute)

● 9. Record Keeping (MGL c.186, § 15B(2)(b), § 15B(2)(d))

■ *Legal Reference:* [MGL c.186, § 15B\(2\)\(b\), § 15B\(2\)\(d\)](#) (click to view statute)

15. SPECIAL TENANT PROTECTIONS

- 1. Domestic Violence Protections (MGL c.186, § 24-27)

■ Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 24-27 \(click to view statute\)](#)

- 2. Military Service Members (Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) - 50 USC §§ 3901-4043)

■ Legal Reference: [Servicemembers Civil Relief Act \(SCRA\) - 50 USC §§ 3901-4043 \(click to view statute\)](#)

- 3. Senior Citizen Protections (No specific Massachusetts statute beyond standard protections)

■ Legal Reference: [No specific Massachusetts statute beyond standard protections \(click to view statute\)](#)

- 4. Disabled Tenant Protections (Fair Housing Act, MGL c.151B, Americans with Disabilities Act)

■ Legal Reference: [Fair Housing Act, MGL c.151B, Americans with Disabilities Act \(click to view statute\)](#)

- 5. Foreclosure Protections (MGL c.186, § 13A, MGL c.186A)

■ Legal Reference: [MGL c.186, § 13A, MGL c.186A \(click to view statute\)](#)

16. SPECIALIZED HOUSING

- 1. Subsidized Housing (Section 8) (Federal HUD regulations, MGL c.151B, § 4)

■ Legal Reference: [Federal HUD regulations, MGL c.151B, § 4 \(click to view statute\)](#)

- 2. Public Housing (MGL c.121B)

■ Legal Reference: [MGL c.121B \(click to view statute\)](#)

- 3. Student Housing (No specific statute)

■ Legal Reference: [No specific statute](#)

- 4. Senior Housing (Fair Housing Act (55+ housing exemption))

■ Legal Reference: [Fair Housing Act \(55+ housing exemption\) \(click to view statute\)](#)

- 5. Short-Term Rentals (MGL c.64G (Short-Term Rental Tax), Local ordinances vary)

■ Legal Reference: [MGL c.64G \(Short-Term Rental Tax\), Local ordinances vary \(click to view statute\)](#)

- 6. Commercial Property (Massachusetts landlord-tenant laws generally apply to residential only)

■ *Legal Reference: Massachusetts landlord-tenant laws generally apply to residential only*

● **7. Mobile Homes (MGL c.140, § 32L-32S)**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.140, § 32L-32S](#) (click to view statute)*

Severity Indicators:

- Critical requirement (must comply)
- Important guideline (should follow)
- Standard information (good to know)

■■ LOCAL ORDINANCES & MUNICIPAL REQUIREMENTS

Note: The following requirements are specific to certain municipalities or counties within the state and may differ from or supplement statewide regulations. Always verify local requirements with your city or county government.

● **1. Boston-Specific Requirements (Boston City Ordinances)**

■ *Legal Reference: [Boston City Ordinances](#)*

● **2. Cambridge-Specific Requirements (Cambridge City Ordinances)**

■ *Legal Reference: [Cambridge City Ordinances](#)*

● **3. Local Health Boards (105 CMR 410, MGL c.111)**

■ *Legal Reference: [105 CMR 410, MGL c.111](#)*

● **4. HOA Rules (No specific statute)**

■ *Legal Reference: [No specific statute](#)*

● **5. Condominium Association Rules (MGL c.183A (Condominium Act))**

■ *Legal Reference: [MGL c.183A \(Condominium Act\)](#)*

● **6. Zoning Compliance (Local zoning ordinances, MGL c.40A)**

■ *Legal Reference: [Local zoning ordinances, MGL c.40A](#)*

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