







# Reporting a Landlord in New Hampshire

If you need to report a landlord for discrimination, harassment, illegal retaliation, or other housing-related issues, use the appropriate agency below.

## Where to Report Landlord Issues



### Discrimination & Harassment (Fair Housing Violations)

- **New Hampshire Commission for Human Rights (HRC)**
  -  603-271-2767
  -  File within **180 days** of the incident
- **New Hampshire Legal Assistance (NHLA) – Fair Housing Project**
  -  1-800-921-1115
  -  Provides legal assistance to victims of discrimination
- **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**
  -  1-800-669-9777
  -  File online through the HUD Fair Housing (FHEO) website


### Safety & Code Violations

- Contact your **local municipality's Code Enforcement Office**

### General Tenant Disputes (Rent, Eviction, Repairs)

- **603 Legal Aid**
  -  [603legalaid.org](http://603legalaid.org)
- **New Hampshire Legal Assistance (NHLA)**
  -  1-800-921-1115

### HUD-Assisted Housing (Negligence or Fraud)

- **Multifamily Housing Complaint Line**
  -  1-800-685-8470

## Information Needed for Complaints

When filing a report, be prepared to provide:

- Your contact information and address
- Landlord or property management company name and address
- A detailed summary of the issue, including:
  - Dates
  - Specific actions
  - Any witnesses

# Protected Classes in New Hampshire

New Hampshire law prohibits housing discrimination based on:

- Age
- Marital status
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- Race
- Color
- Religion
- National origin
- Disability
- Familial status

## Choosing a Security Deposit Lawyer

When selecting an attorney, prioritize:

- Experience with **New Hampshire RSA 540-A** (NH tenant law governing deposits)
- Proven **tenant-side litigation**
- Experience with **wrongful withholding and potential multiple damages claims**
- Willingness to handle **smaller claims efficiently** (many cases are under \$10,000)

## Important New Hampshire Law Insight

In New Hampshire, landlords are generally required to:

- Return security deposits within **30 days**
- Provide an **itemized list of deductions**

Failure to comply can result in **penalties and legal claims**.

## Pattern of Wrongful Security Deposit Withholding

If a landlord repeatedly keeps security deposits unlawfully, this may trigger **serious legal consequences**.

## What Should Happen Legally

### 1. Tenants Can Sue (and Often Recover More Than the Deposit)

Under **New Hampshire RSA 540-A**, tenants may bring a claim for unlawful conduct.

If a landlord:

- Keeps a deposit without justification
- Fails to return it within 30 days
- Does not provide a proper itemized list

A court may order:

- Return of the **full deposit**
- **Additional damages** (often equal to or greater than the deposit)
- **Court costs and attorney's fees**

Repeated violations strengthen the tenant's case.

## 2. Courts May Recognize a Pattern of Unlawful Conduct

If multiple tenants report similar behavior, courts may find:

- **Bad faith retention**
- A **pattern or practice of violations**

This can result in:

- Higher damages
- Reduced credibility for the landlord
- Stronger likelihood of tenant success

## 3. Complaints to State or Federal Agencies

A pattern of abuse can be reported to:

- **New Hampshire Commission for Human Rights** (if discrimination is involved)
- **New Hampshire Legal Assistance** (tenant advocacy and support)
- **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development** (especially for federally assisted housing)

If discrimination is involved, the issue may rise to a **fair housing violation**, with additional penalties.

## 4. Potential Attorney General or Consumer Protection Action

Widespread misconduct may be treated as:

- **Unfair or deceptive business practices**
- Subject to investigation by consumer protection authorities

Possible outcomes include:

- Civil penalties
- Orders to stop unlawful conduct
- Broader enforcement beyond individual cases

## 5. Civil Liability Across Multiple Tenants

Multiple tenants may:

- File **individual claims**, or
- Coordinate complaints (informally or through legal counsel)

A documented pattern can:

- Strengthen each case
- Help demonstrate intent or negligence

## What Tenants Should Do

- Document everything (lease, photos, communications)
- Send a **written demand letter**
- File in **small claims or district court**
- Report patterns if multiple tenants are affected
- Seek **legal aid or an attorney** when appropriate

## Important

A landlord is not automatically penalized based on reputation alone. **Action occurs when tenants file claims or complaints.** However, once a pattern is documented, enforcement and court outcomes tend to become significantly stronger and more consistent.