

Chapter 152

(House Bill 1047)

AN ACT concerning

Rental Housing – Tenant Victim of Domestic Violence or Sexual Assault – Lease Payment Obligation

FOR the purpose of altering the liability under a residential lease if a tenant victim of domestic violence or sexual assault terminates the lease and vacates the premises; authorizing the tenant victim to terminate future liability under the lease except for a certain period of time after providing notice of an intent to vacate; establishing that this Act does not terminate or in any way impact the liability under the residential lease for the tenant who is the respondent in a certain cause of action resulting in a protective order or peace order for the victim tenant or victim legal occupant; making a clarifying change; and generally relating to the lease payment obligation of a tenant victim of domestic violence or sexual assault.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Real Property
Section 8–5A–02, 8–5A–03, and 8–5A–04
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2010 Replacement Volume and 2010 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Real Property

8–5A–02.

(a) Subject to the requirements of [subsection (b)] **SUBSECTIONS (B) AND (C)** of this section, a tenant may terminate **THE TENANT’S FUTURE LIABILITY UNDER** a residential lease if the tenant or legal occupant is:

- (1) A victim of domestic violence; or
- (2) A victim of sexual assault.

(b) If a tenant or legal occupant is a victim of domestic violence or a victim of sexual assault, the tenant may provide to the landlord the written notice required under § 8–5A–03 or § 8–5A–04 of this subtitle and, if the written notice is provided,

the tenant shall have 30 days to vacate the leased premises from the date of providing the written notice.

(c) A tenant who vacates leased premises under this section is responsible for rent **ONLY** for the 30 days following the tenant providing notice of an intent to vacate.

(d) If a tenant does not vacate the leased premises within 30 days of providing to the landlord the written notice required under § 8-5A-03 or § 8-5A-04 of this subtitle, the landlord is, at the landlord's option and with written notice to the tenant, entitled to:

(1) All legal remedies against a tenant holding over available under § 8-402 of this title; or

(2) Deem the tenant's notice of an intent to vacate to have been rescinded and the terms of the original lease to be in full force and effect.

(E) THE TERMINATION OF A TENANT'S FUTURE LIABILITY UNDER A RESIDENTIAL LEASE UNDER THIS SECTION DOES NOT TERMINATE OR IN ANY OTHER WAY IMPACT THE FUTURE LIABILITY OF A TENANT WHO IS THE RESPONDENT IN THE ACTION THAT RESULTS IN:

(1) A PROTECTIVE ORDER ISSUED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE VICTIM TENANT OR VICTIM LEGAL OCCUPANT UNDER § 4-506 OF THE FAMILY LAW ARTICLE; OR

(2) A PEACE ORDER ISSUED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE VICTIM TENANT OR VICTIM LEGAL OCCUPANT FOR WHICH THE UNDERLYING ACT WAS SEXUAL ASSAULT UNDER § 3-1505 OF THE COURTS ARTICLE.

8-5A-03.

(a) If a tenant or legal occupant is a victim of domestic violence, the tenant may terminate [a] **THE TENANT'S FUTURE LIABILITY UNDER A RESIDENTIAL** lease under § 8-5A-02 of this subtitle if the tenant provides the landlord with written notice by first-class mail or hand delivery of an intent to vacate the premises and notice of the tenant's or legal occupant's status as a victim of domestic violence.

(b) The notice provided under subsection (a) of this section shall include a copy of a protective order issued for the benefit of the tenant or legal occupant under § 4-506 of the Family Law Article.

8-5A-04.

(a) If a tenant or legal occupant is a victim of sexual assault, the tenant may terminate **THE TENANT'S FUTURE LIABILITY UNDER** a residential lease under § 8-5A-02 of this subtitle if the tenant provides the landlord with written notice by first-class mail or hand delivery of an intent to vacate the leased premises, including the tenant's or legal occupant's status as a victim of sexual assault.

(b) The notice provided under subsection (a) of this section shall include:

(1) A copy of a protective order issued for the benefit of the tenant or legal occupant under § 4-506 of the Family Law Article; or

(2) A copy of a peace order issued for the benefit of the tenant or legal occupant for which the underlying act was sexual assault under § 3-1505 of the Courts Article.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2011.

Approved by the Governor, April 12, 2011.