

Free help for renters in Palm Beach County: legal aid, rental assistance, utility help, food, crisis lines, fair housing, and Florida tenant rights. If you need help, you don't have to figure it out alone — start with the numbers below.

911 Emergency	988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline	2-1-1 Help & Resources (24/7)	1-800-355-8547 AVDA Domestic Violence (24/7)
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01 LEGAL AID & TENANT RIGHTS

<p>Legal Aid Society of PBC (561) 655-8944</p> <p>Use for: Free eviction defense, fair housing, repair disputes, DV legal representation. Toll-free 1-800-403-9353.</p> <p>When: Receive a 3-day notice or eviction summons. Income limits apply (200% Federal Poverty for housing).</p>	<p>PBC Clerk - Self Service Center (561) 355-7048</p> <p>Use for: Procedural help responding to eviction summons, court forms, small claims for deposit disputes.</p> <p>When: After being served. You have 5 business days to file a written response.</p>
<p>PBC Bar Lawyer Referral (561) 687-3266</p> <p>Use for: Vetted PBC attorneys for tenant matters. Initial consultation typically discounted.</p> <p>When: When you don't qualify for Legal Aid but need legal advice.</p>	<p>Florida Bar Statewide Referral 1-800-342-8011</p> <p>Use for: Statewide attorney referrals across all practice areas.</p> <p>When: Local PBC referral can't match you, or you have multiple legal needs.</p>

02 RENTAL & HOUSING ASSISTANCE

<p>211 Palm Beach Treasure Coast Dial 2-1-1 (or 1-866-882-2991)</p> <p>Use for: 24/7 helpline. Matches you to current rental, utility, food programs that have funds available.</p> <p>When: Before you fall behind. After receiving a 3-day notice. Anytime you don't know where to start.</p>	<p>PBC Housing & Economic Sustainability (561) 233-3600</p> <p>Use for: County rental assistance, homebuyer programs, foreclosure prevention counseling.</p> <p>When: Longer-term housing solutions; transitioning toward homeownership.</p>
<p>PBC Housing Authority (Section 8) (561) 684-2160</p> <p>Use for: Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program, public housing, family self-sufficiency.</p> <p>When: Long-term subsidized housing. Voucher waitlist is often closed - check website for openings.</p>	<p>Catholic Charities Diocese of PB (561) 775-9560</p> <p>Use for: Emergency rental and utility assistance, food, refugee/immigration services. Open to all faiths.</p> <p>When: One-time crisis (job loss, medical) putting rent at risk. Call early in the month.</p>
<p>Salvation Army of PBC (561) 686-3530</p> <p>Use for: Emergency financial assistance, rent and utility help, shelter referrals.</p> <p>When: Eviction risk or utility shutoff notice. Often pairs with other agencies.</p>	<p>Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches (561) 253-1361</p> <p>Use for: Homelessness prevention for families with children, rapid re-housing, supportive housing.</p> <p>When: Minor children at home and facing imminent homelessness.</p>

03 UTILITY, ENERGY & FOOD ASSISTANCE

<p>PBC Community Action - LIHEAP (561) 355-4792</p> <p>Use for: Federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. One-time payment toward FPL bill.</p> <p>When: When summer A/C bill exceeds what you can pay. Crisis applications take priority.</p>	<p>FPL Care to Share 1-800-226-3545</p> <p>Use for: FPL-funded bill assistance through partner agencies. Different from LIHEAP - you can use both.</p> <p>When: One-time hardship causing high bill. Demonstrate ability to pay forward.</p>
<p>DCF ACCESS (SNAP/Food Stamps) (850) 300-4323</p> <p>Use for: SNAP food stamps, Medicaid, TANF cash assistance. Apply online at myflfamilies.com (faster).</p> <p>When: Need ongoing monthly food benefits. Online application is faster than phone.</p>	<p>Palm Beach County Food Bank (561) 670-2518</p> <p>Use for: Emergency food distribution through partner pantries. No appointment needed at most.</p> <p>When: Anytime food is tight. No income verification at most pantries.</p>
<p>Feeding South Florida (954) 518-1818</p> <p>Use for: Food distribution across South Florida. Mobile pantries, partner network, kids' summer meals.</p> <p>When: Use website's pantry finder by zip code.</p>	<p>WIC - PBC Department of Health (561) 840-4500</p> <p>Use for: Food benefits, breastfeeding support, nutrition counseling for moms and kids under 5.</p> <p>When: Pregnant, postpartum, or have a child under 5 and meet income limits.</p>

04 CRISIS LINES & MENTAL HEALTH

<p>988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Call or Text 988</p> <p>Use for: 24/7 free confidential support for emotional distress. PBC calls answered locally by 211 staff.</p> <p>When: Anytime you're feeling overwhelmed, hopeless, or unsafe. Or worried about someone else.</p>	<p>PBC Department of Health (561) 840-4500</p> <p>Use for: Public health clinics, immunizations, sexual health, mental health referrals.</p> <p>When: Need medical or public health care without insurance. Mental health system referrals.</p>
<p>Veterans Crisis Line Dial 988, then 1 (or text 838255)</p> <p>Use for: 24/7 confidential crisis support for veterans, service members, and families.</p> <p>When: Veteran in crisis or housing instability. VA HUD-VASH voucher available.</p>	<p>National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233</p> <p>Use for: 24/7 confidential support, safety planning, local referrals. 200+ languages.</p> <p>When: Want a trained advocate to help you think through options.</p>

05 SAFETY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

<p>AVDA - Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse 1-800-355-8547</p> <p>Use for: 24/7 hotline, 64-bed emergency shelter, transitional housing up to 2 years, court support, economic empowerment.</p> <p>When: Anytime you feel unsafe. Free and confidential. English, Spanish, ASL.</p>	<p>YWCA Mary Rubloff Harmony House (561) 640-9844</p> <p>Use for: Certified DV emergency shelter and supportive services for women and children.</p> <p>When: Alternative to AVDA shelter, particularly central PBC.</p>
<p>Legal Aid DV Project (no income limit) (561) 655-8944, ext. 238</p> <p>Use for: Free representation in restraining order hearings. Help filing the injunction petition.</p> <p>When: Need a court-ordered injunction (restraining order). Family court matters.</p>	<p>Injunction Initiation Project (561) 655-8944 / (561) 597-0029</p> <p>Use for: Legal Aid project that helps you file the petition for an injunction by phone.</p> <p>When: Filing assistance done remotely - safer than in-person if you're hiding from an abuser.</p>

06 FAIR HOUSING & DISCRIMINATION

<p>HUD Fair Housing & Equal Opportunity 1-800-669-9777</p> <p>Use for: File federal Fair Housing Act complaint. Free; no attorney needed. Investigations are free.</p> <p>When: Denied housing or treated differently based on protected characteristic.</p>	<p>PBC Office of Equal Opportunity (561) 233-0680</p> <p>Use for: Local fair housing complaints, mediation. Often faster than federal HUD process.</p> <p>When: Want a local-level investigation alongside or instead of HUD.</p>
<p>Legal Aid Fair Housing Project (561) 655-8944</p> <p>Use for: Free legal representation in fair housing complaints, ADA accommodation advocacy.</p> <p>When: Need representation rather than just intake. Especially for accommodation requests.</p>	<p>FL AG Consumer Protection 1-866-966-7226</p> <p>Use for: Reporting rental scams, fake listings, deceptive deposit demands.</p> <p>When: Asked to pay before seeing a property; sent money via gift cards or wire.</p>

07 FLORIDA TENANT RIGHTS - QUICK REFERENCE

WHAT	FLORIDA LAW SUMMARY
Habitable home	Section 83.51: Landlord must maintain plumbing, hot water, heat, structure, working locks, and extermination.
Repair requests	Make requests in writing. Keep a copy. Section 83.56 has a 7-day notice process - get legal advice before withholding rent.
Rent increases	No state rent control. Rent cannot be raised during a fixed-term lease unless lease allows. At lease end, typically 15+ days notice for month-to-month.
Security deposit return	Section 83.49: 15 days to return full deposit; 30 days to send written notice of deductions. Provide forwarding address in writing.
Disputing deductions	You have 15 days from receiving the deduction notice to dispute in writing. Then landlord must file in court rather than just keep it.
Late rent / 3-day notice	Landlord must serve 3-day notice (excluding weekends and holidays) before filing eviction. Pay or vacate within 3 days.
Eviction summons	5 business days to file written response with the Clerk after being served. Missing this deadline often results in default judgment.
Retaliation prohibited	Section 83.64: Landlord cannot retaliate against you for asserting tenant rights, complaining to authorities, or organizing tenants.
DV lease termination	Section 83.683: Domestic violence survivors with documentation can terminate the lease early without penalty under specific conditions.

08 IF YOU RECEIVE A 3-DAY NOTICE - ACTION PLAN

STEP	WHAT TO DO
1	Don't panic. A 3-day notice is the start of a legal process - you still have time and rights.
2	Read the notice carefully. Confirm the dollar amount claimed and the dates excluding weekends and holidays.
3	Call 211 (or 1-866-882-2991) to ask about same-day rental assistance funds.
4	Call Legal Aid Society at (561) 655-8944 immediately if you cannot pay or believe the amount is wrong.
5	If you can pay: pay the full amount in a way you can prove (certified check, money order, online portal with receipt).
6	If you cannot pay the full amount: do not partial-pay without an attorney's guidance. It can affect your defense.
7	Keep all written communication. Save texts, emails, the 3-day notice itself, and any payment receipts.
8	If served with an eviction summons after the 3 days: you have 5 business days to file a written response with the Clerk.

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