

**Chicago Housing  
Justice League**



**WHY ARE 10,000 CHICAGO RENTAL HOUSEHOLDS FORCED TO MOVE EACH YEAR THROUGH NO FAULT OF THEIR OWN?**

**WHY DO RENTERS LACK THE SAME BASIC SECURITY OF SHELTER AFFORDED TO HOMEOWNERS?**

**WHY ARE LANDLORDS GIVEN THE POWER TO EVICT EVEN WHEN A TENANT IS CURRENT ON RENT?**

**BECAUSE WE DON'T HAVE JUST CAUSE FOR EVICTION.**

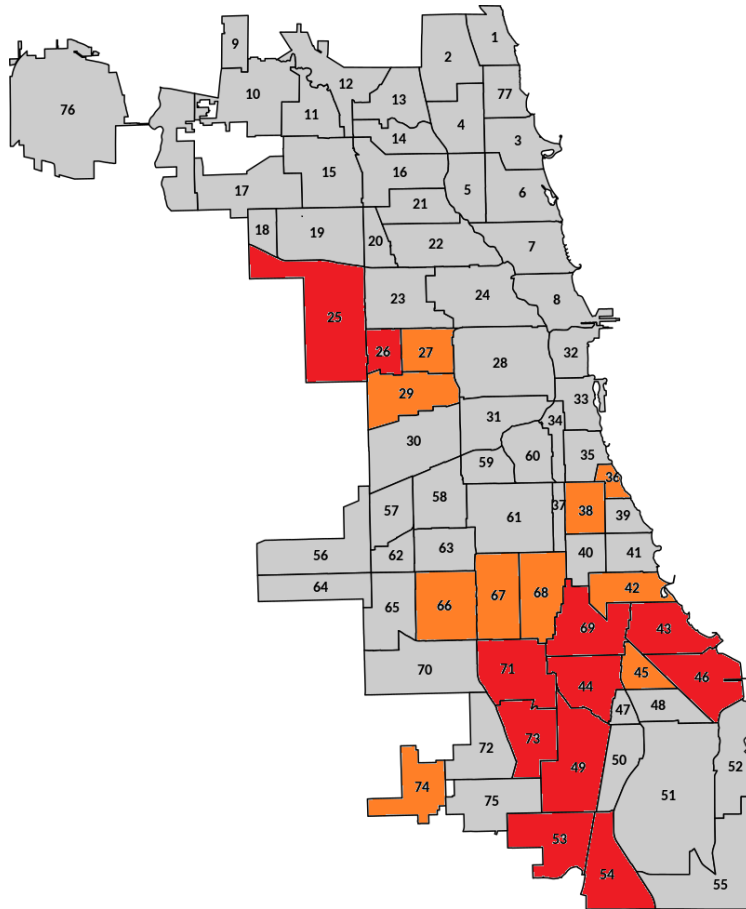
**What is Just Cause for Eviction?**

Just Cause for Eviction is simple. It says: if a landlord wants to remove a tenant from their home, they must provide an honest reason for doing so. Traditional, tenant-fault reasons remain available to landlords: if a tenant has not paid rent, is disruptive to their neighbors or destroying the property, or is refusing to renew their lease under similar terms, an eviction, termination, or non-renewal can still be pursued. If the reason given is not the tenant's fault, including a landlord wanting to substantially rehab a unit, move in a qualified family member, or remove the unit from the market, a landlord will be expected to pay relocation assistance to ensure the tenant can land on their feet elsewhere. It's a small change, but Just Cause would keep tens of thousands of Chicagoans, primarily in Black and Latinx neighborhoods, from dealing with unfair disruptions each year, not to mention having to fear displacement from the home and neighborhood they've lived in for years or decades.

**What is the current law?**

Illinois and Chicago law allows people to lose their home, if they rent, for ANY reason or NO reason at all, if proper notice is given. Because **only 11 percent of tenants** have legal representation in eviction court in Cook County, challenging these no-fault evictions is nearly impossible because current law allows it. Not only that, but landlords can also wait until a tenant's lease is expiring before refusing to offer a new lease. Combined, these two outcomes (no-fault eviction/termination and nonrenewal) result in the displacement of more than **10,000 rental households each year**.<sup>1</sup> No-cause terminations and evictions are most commonly used by gentrifiers, flippers, and by landlords hiding unlawful retaliation and unlawful discrimination.

Health Impacts of Eviction	Community Impacts/Racial Disparities of Eviction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People going through eviction faced issues with “binge drinking, current smoking, lack of leisure time and physical activity, obesity, and sleeping fewer than seven hours,” according to research done in Chicago.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Eleven percent of mothers dealing with eviction said their children were in poor health, compared to just four percent of those who had not experienced an eviction.<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All 19 community areas with an eviction filing rate greater than 5 percent in 2019 were majority-Black.<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• Nearly 15 percent of children have experienced an eviction by the age of 15. However, 19.2 percent of Black children and 16.7 percent of Latinx children had faced eviction, compared to 11.3 percent of White children.<sup>5</sup></li> <li>• Chicago is expected to lose 500,000 Black residents from 1980 to 2030, with many pushed out by legal no-fault eviction, nonrenewal, and termination that encourages them to leave the city entirely.<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• In historically Latinx neighborhoods like Logan Square and Pilsen, gentrification often means “invisible evictions,” or the removal of tenants without going to eviction court. Landlords use lack of English fluency, month-to-month leases, and the threat of deportation to push people out.<sup>7</sup></li> </ul>



### Chicago Eviction Filing Rate by Community Area, 2010-2019 Average

*Communities with 7+ percent filing rate (red):*

- Riverdale (54): 9.4 percent
- South Shore (43): 8.7 percent
- Washington Park (40): 8.5 percent
- Chatham (44): 7.4 percent
- Greater Grand Crossing (69): 7.2 percent
- Auburn Gresham (71): 7.1 percent
- Austin (25): 7.1 percent
- West Garfield Park (26): 7 percent
- West Pullman (53): 7 percent
- Roseland (49): 7 percent
- South Chicago (46): 7 percent

*Communities with 6+ percent filing rate (orange):*

- Englewood (68): 6.7 percent
- West Englewood (67): 6.5 percent
- Oakland (36): 6.5 percent
- East Garfield Park (27): 6.4 percent
- Washington Heights (73): 6.3 percent
- North Lawndale (29): 6.3 percent
- Grand Boulevard: 6.2 percent
- Mount Greenwood (74): 6.1 percent
- Avalon Park (45): 6 percent
- Chicago Lawn (66): 6 percent

## Key features of Chicago’s Just Cause Ordinance

**Relocation assistance:** Renters faced with displacement on short notice often can’t afford a move, ending up homeless or living doubled up with relatives. Just Cause ensures that any non-tenant-fault removal includes money to stop this. The amount varies by unit size and landlord type, with owner-occupied buildings of six units or fewer receiving funds to help defray these costs.

**Rental registry:** The creation of a rental registry fulfills a longstanding desire to better track Chicago’s rental housing stock. It also serves as a tool to help reimburse small landlords who pay rental relocation to tenants.

**Longstanding track record of success:** Just Cause is already in use in four states and over 20 cities, and in all federally subsidized units. There is no proof that it has caused harm to rental markets, nor does it deter housing investment.

**Going beyond COVID-19 emergency measures:** COVID-19 relief money is valuable, but the affordable rental housing crisis goes much deeper. Just Cause prepares us for the future by ensuring that renters are treated fairly, deters outside investors from furthering gentrification, and builds greater mutual interest amongst renters and landlords in ensuring community stability, rather than relying on temporary band aids from the federal government.

### References

1. Lawyers’ Committee for Better Housing, “Chicago’s Ongoing Crisis.” May 2019
2. Hazekamp, C., et al. “Do Evictions Affect Health-Related Behaviors?” March 31, 2021, Housing Matters.
3. Vaquez-Vera, H., et al. “The Threat Of Home Eviction And Its Effects On Health Through The Equity Lens: A Systematic Review.” January 9, 2017. Social Science & Medicine.
4. Lawyers’ Committee for Better Housing, “Chicago’s Ongoing Crisis.”
5. Lundberg, I., & Donnelly, L. “How Many Children Experience Eviction During Childhood?” April 17, 2019, Housing Matters.
6. Loury, A. “How the Great Migration to Chicago became the Great Black Exodus.” July 25, 2019, *Chicago Sun-Times*.
7. Bloom, M., & Pena, M. “Invisible Evictions: As Developers Flock To Logan Square And Pilsen, Renters Quietly Forced Out.” February 5, 2020, Block Club Chicago.

**Sign the petition and follow action updates at [tinyurl.com/JustCauseChicago](https://tinyurl.com/JustCauseChicago)**