



Tenant Hotline  
Phone: 612-728-5767  
Online: [homelinemn.org/email](mailto:homelinemn.org/email)

# 2025 Legislative Agenda

January 15, 2025 — 1:30-3:00pm

HOME Line Policy Director, Michael Dahl

HOME Line Policy Attorney, Larry McDonough

# What is HOME Line?

- HOME Line is a statewide nonprofit organization providing free legal, educational, and advocacy services to Minnesota renters. We have advised over 335,000 renters since 1992.
- Our primary program is a free and confidential legal hotline any Minnesota renter can contact us to receive legal advice specific to their situation, in 4 languages.
- HOME Line has a staff of 27, including attorneys, tenant advocates, and tenant organizers. We also rely on volunteers and interns.



# What is HOME Line?

HOME Line Tenant Hotline:

**612-728-5767**

Toll-free: 866-866-3546

- Para Español, llame al 612-255-8870
- Af- Soomaali wac 612-255-8860
- Hais lus Hmoob, Hu 612-255-7104
- Online: [homelinemn.org/email](http://homelinemn.org/email)



# Upcoming Webinars

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**February 12th**

Question and Answer Session

**March 19th**

Overview of Housing Subsidy Programs

**April 23rd**

Rental Housing Market Analysis

Learn more at [homelinemn.org](http://homelinemn.org)

# Housekeeping

- This session is being recorded and will be available on HOME Line's website in a few days
- Please ask questions through the Q&A function located at the bottom of the Zoom window





# 2025 Legislative Agenda

Michael Dahl & Larry McDonough

# Politics at the Legislature

- Democrats and Republicans had a power-sharing agreement. But after committees were set up, Ramsey County DFL Rep.-elect Curtis Johnson resigned amid to residency questions.
- A special election for that seat will take place on January 28th.



# Politics at the Legislature

- Yesterday, the House Republicans showed up;
- Democrats boycotted the proceedings, saying Republicans were not going to keep their part of the equal power-sharing deal.





# Politics at the Legislature

- Despite the Secretary of State's ruling, the Republicans claimed they had the votes to elect a Speaker and revise the committee structure.
- They elected Rep. Demuth the Speaker of the House.

“Do the right thing.”

Sen. Mohamed said Dzieczic told her not to worry about politics or noise, just,  
“Do the right thing.”



# HOME Line will lead

- ***Advance measures contained in [HOME Line's 2025 Minnesota Tenant Bill of Rights](#)***. Support measures included in the [2025 Minnesota Tenant Bill of Rights](#) that will help correct the power imbalance between landlords and renters. To achieve this, HOME Line outlines seven broad housing rights that tenants should be entitled to—a Fair Application and Rental Process, a Fair Lease, a Habitable Home, Reasonable Rent, Balanced Power in Court, Safeguards Against Eviction, and Clear Rules—each right includes several detailed proposals policymakers can pursue for more equitable rental situations.
- ***Mandate that renters insurance policies protect a tenant when they damage their apartment by any non-intentional means, not just by fire.***
- ***Secure funding for a statewide tenant hotline*** . Advocate that Minnesota Housing appropriate funds to support a statewide tenant hotline so that renters can seek legal help regarding any tenant-landlord issues regardless of income.



# HOME Line will partner on

- ***Guarantee statewide source of income protections.*** Clarify that the state's civil rights law ensures landlords cannot refuse to rent to or otherwise discriminate against someone because they receive and use rental assistance to pay their rent.
- ***Attain statewide just cause eviction protections.*** Safeguard tenants from extremely fragile leases by prescribing that landlords cannot issue notices terminating tenancies or refuse to renew leases unless they can provide just cause for doing so.



# HOME Line will partner on

- *Pass legislation putting the Minnesota constitutional amendment for housing on the ballot, dedicating predictable housing investments in homes we can afford for our families and Minnesota neighbors for years to come*

Pass legislation putting the Minnesota constitutional amendment for housing on the ballot to raise the state's sales tax by  $\frac{3}{8}$  of 1%, using the receipts to remove barriers to homeownership, make rental housing safe and affordable, and protect our vulnerable households and communities from displacement and homelessness.

- *Secure additional funding for emergency rental assistance and pursue policies that will prevent evictions and create support for long-term policy changes to end housing instability and homelessness.*



# HOME Line will support

- ***Creation of a Statewide Landlord Database:***
  - a. The rental market is often opaque and lacks transparency. To be more transparent, this statewide database would require public disclosure of investor ownership information for rental properties. This includes ownership and financial interests, affordability information such as rent, and shareholder information on each LLC member.
  - b. These measures would strengthen enforcement efforts by providing transparency and accountability and allowing uniform applicability of local ordinances and renter rights. Cities could be more proactive and straightforward, allowing staff to act with certainty and better hold owners and managers accountable in cases of housing code and renter rights violations. Without this data, enforcement efforts around investor-owned properties and portfolios are limited, slower, and require a higher level of resources for background research.



# HOME Line will support

- ***The Minnesota Fair Chance Access to Housing Act:*** Ensures that landlords assess rental applicants on more than just their conviction histories. In summary, the act will:
  - a. prohibit landlords from asking rental applicants about their conviction histories during the initial screening process;
  - b. postpone any background check until the applicant receives a conditional offer;
  - c. limit the use of system-involvement history screening to specific types of convictions within established timeframes; and
  - d. allow applicants to undergo an individualized review of their conviction histories and offer evidence of rehabilitation before a potential denial by a landlord.



# Tenant Bill of Rights

## The Right to a Fair Application and Rental Process





# Tenant Bill of Rights

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## The Right to a Fair Lease



# Tenant Bill of Rights

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## The Right to a Habitable Home



# Tenant Bill of Rights

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## The Right to Reasonable Rent



# Tenant Bill of Rights

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## The Right to Balanced Power in Court



# Tenant Bill of Rights

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The Right to Safeguards

Against Eviction



# Tenant Bill of Rights

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## The Right to Clear Rules



# A Commonsense Proposal

- 1) A residential lease shall not list a minor child of a residential tenant as a tenant. If a minor is the only person renting from the landlord, the lease may list the minor as a tenant.
- 2) A tenant has the right to see the unit they will rent before signing the lease (not just seeing a model unit).
- 3) No unilateral mid-year lease changes are allowed.
- 4) A landlord must provide contact info (address (within 50 miles), phone number, and email).
- 5) A tenant may break the lease if their landlord hasn't followed the Koskinen Act.



# Technical Amendments

## **Effective Dates**

Several laws enacted in 2023 had an effective date of January 1, 2024, but applying only to leases signed on or after that date, leaving leases that had not expired and oral leases potentially not covered. The amendment would apply them to leases signed, entered into, renewed or extended on or after that date. For the purposes of this section, estates at will shall be deemed to be renewed or extended at the commencement of each rental period.

The laws include pet declawing, disclosure of mandatory fees, move-in and move-out inspections, privacy, right to counsel in public housing breach of lease eviction actions, early lease renewal, and attorney's fees.



# Technical Amendments

## Enforcement of Housing Law Violations

The list of violations in Minn. Stat. § 504B.001, subdivision 14, was expanded by the 2023 Legislature effective for 2024 to now include:

- “(1) a violation of any state, county or city health, safety, housing, building, fire prevention, or housing maintenance code applicable to the building;
- (2) a violation of this chapter;
- (3) a violation of any federal, state, county, or city laws protecting tenants from discrimination;
- (4) a violation of any applicable tenant rights and landlord obligations for public and subsidized tenancies under local, state, or federal law; or
- (5) a violation of an oral or written agreement, lease, or contract for the rental of a dwelling in a building.”

However, because proposals to added cross references in other statutes to the expanded list, ##3-5 have no enforcement statutes. The amendment would make all five enforceable in rent escrow actions, tenant remedies actions, and eviction action defense.

# Technical Amendments

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## **Attorney General Enforcement of Housing Law**

The 2023 Legislature created Minn. Stat. §504B.501 to authorize the Attorney General to enforce Chapter 504B but did not list Chapter 504B in Minn. Stat. § 8.31 covering laws enforced by the Attorney General. The amendment would add Chapter 504B to the list in § 8.31.



Questions?



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- HOME Line ofrece servicios en español. Para Español, llame al 612-255-8870.
- HOME Line waxay bixisaa adeeg ku baxa Afka-Soomaaliga. Af- Soomaali wac 612-255-8860.
- Peb lub koom haum HOME Line muaj neeg txhais lus Hmoob. Hais lus Hmoob, Hu 612-255-7104.



Thank You