

Tenant Organizing

Minn. Stat. 504B.212

April 30, 2025

Sonja Woodward

Housing Program Manager and Resource Attorney

Sonja.Woodward@vlmn.org

Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 1(a)

Residential tenants of a residential building have the right to establish and operate a tenant association for the purpose of addressing issues related to their living environment . . .



Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 1(a)

Conditions of
Tenancy

Activities Related
to Housing and
Community
Development

Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 1(a)



Activities Landlords Explicitly Must Allow

- Distribution of information or leaflets in the common areas including bulletin or community boards
- Distribution of leaflets to individual units
- Contact with tenants through mail, telephone, or electronically

Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 1(a)



Activities the Landlord Explicitly Must Allow:

- Offering information to tenants on tenant organizations
- Surveying tenants on interest in tenant organizations
- Assisting tenants in participating in tenant organization activities
- Convening tenant association meetings in a space in the building

Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 1(b)



No Information Required to be Provided

- Nothing in this section requires a landlord to provide a tenant association or organizer with information about a tenant, including the tenant's mailing address, telephone number, or electronic contact information.

**Tenants' Right
to Organize,
504B.212,
Subd. 1(c)**

A tenant association must adopt bylaws or an operating agreement related to their internal governance to use the rights provided.

Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 1(d)

- A tenant organization must be completely independent of owners, management, and their representatives.
- Representatives may not attend meetings unless invited to discuss a specific issue.



Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 1(e)

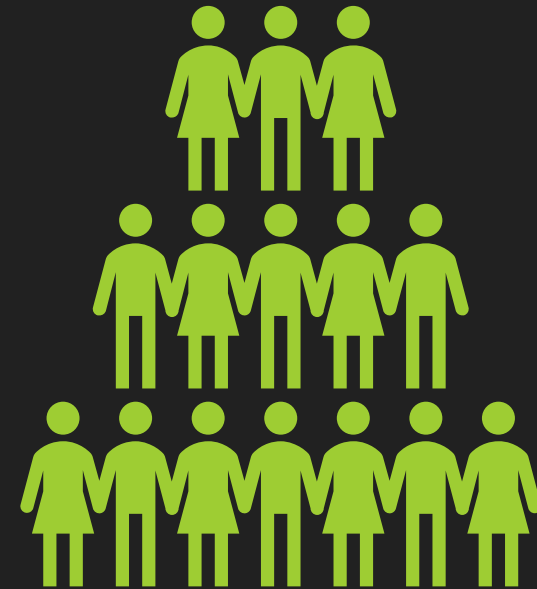
- A tenant organizer who is not a tenant of that building must be accompanied by a tenant.



Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 1(f)

Landlords May Not:

- Prohibit or adopt rules prohibiting:
 - Peaceful organizing
 - Assembly
 - Canvassing
 - Leafletting
 - Otherwise exercising free expression for organizing purposes



Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 1(f)

Landlords May Not:

- Require tenant organizers to obtain prior permission
- Set unreasonable time, place, and manner restrictions



Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 2(a)

Retaliation - A Landlord May Not:

- Increase rent
- Decrease services
- Alter an existing rental agreement
- File a legal action against a tenant
- Contact immigration officials
- Seek to recover possession
- Make threats to do any of the above

Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 2(a)

Because a Tenant:

- Reports a code violation to government agency or official
- Reports a code violation to a community organization or news media
- Seeks assistance from a community organization or news organization for assistance with a code violation or a violation of 504B

Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 2(a)

Because a Tenant:

- Makes a request for
 - Repairs
 - Remedy of a building or health code violation or other regulation
 - Upholding the rental agreement
- Joins or attempts to join a tenant association or similar organization
- Testifies concerning the condition the premises
- Exercises any right or remedy provided by law

Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 2(b)

Retaliation Burden of Proof

- If retaliation within 90 Days – landlord has the burden of proof
- If retaliation after 90 Days – tenant has the burden of proof



Tenants' Right to Organize, 504B.212, Subd. 3

If the landlord, or its agent, unlawfully and in bad faith violates 504B.212, the tenant may recover up to \$1,000 per occurrence and reasonable attorneys' fees.

