



It is the end of the year, and a start of another year and new budgets. If you are a land lord then a smile lights up your face but if you are a tenant, your head has started to spin. Most of the people in Tanzania live in rental houses. As tenants do we all know our rights, and what to do in case we face problems with our landlords?

In our living we may have face a lot of challenges and problems, whether with our landlords or our fellow tenants. Sometimes we get frustrated and we do not know what to do, we try to do everything just to please our landlords. Some of the landlords can be our worst nightmare, although some landlords are very understandable to a tenant who explains him or herself. Most problems facing a tenant and a landlord is the payment of the rent and creating disturbances to the other neighbors. If you are a good tenant that fulfills all your duties as a tenant, but still your landlord makes your life a living hell then you need to know the law that governs you, or the law that govern the right of a tenant.

To be a tenant you have an obligation of paying the rent according to the formality you have agreed on the lease contract, making sure that you are taking care of the house without causing any unnecessary damages to the property. The following are the rights of which the tenant must know, whereby they are the main source of problems that has seem to arise between a land lord and a tenant by just looking at most of the cases that have been raised.

- As long as the tenant pays the rent and observes and performs the duties as the tenant according to the contract entered and be able to fulfill the conditions or implied in the lease. The tenant has the right to enjoy the property leased during the whole period of lease without any unlawful interruption from the lessor or any other person.
- Every tenant has the right to privacy; a landlord cannot access your premises every time without a genuine reason. A land lord can only have access to you premises with a special notice or when a legitimate emergency happens such as fire or theft and etc, otherwise it will be interference to the privacy of the tenant.
- If you are an annual tenant you a right to be given a month notice in advance to vacate the premises with genuine reasons. This is a part were some of the landlords do not keep in mind, you cannot just vacate a tenant when you feel like it is time to vacate him or her unless you have a good reason of doing so such as, the tenant has breached the contract, cause chaos to other tenants etc.
- As a tenant you have a right to be provided with utility service such as electricity, water and anything that comes out of a pipe outlet and trash collection, this will depend on what you have agreed in the contract. A lease agreement should state how such service will be performed and if it will be covered in, by rent or if the tenant will be liable to pay for such services direct. The land lord will not have any right to cut off this service if you have paid and incase it happens you can write a complaining letter



to him and if you do not get any response you have a right to ask for a legal assistance. These are the basic standard of habitability; hence it is the right of a tenant to be provided with such services.

- The tenant or lessee has the right to live in a space that complies with local building. Hence incase of any undesirable problem such as leakages, damaged sewages or anything that may cause harm to the tenant, then the tenant has the right to complain and get the attention of the landlord. The land lord has an obligation to make sure that his premises are fit for human habitation.
- In case of any on event of force majeure, such as earthquake, floods, volcanic eruptions and etc, the tenant has the right to vacate the premise to save him from any harm.

These are the few rights which are the source of major problems between the landlords and their tenants. Our land law Act under Section 88 and 89 has provided for the rights and duties of both the land lord and tenant. It is good to know your right so that you can defend yourself and if the problem continues or you do not get any response whether you a landlord or tenant you can always ask for the help of a legal officer or an advocate who is expert in land matters and you will be able to get legal advice.

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