

SENATE BILL 6

N1
SB 967/21 – SRU

(PRE-FILED)

2lr0477
CF HB 86

By: **Senator Waldstreicher**

Requested: September 14, 2021

Introduced and read first time: January 12, 2022

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Landlord and Tenant – Residential Leases – Tenant Rights and Protections**
3 **(Tenant Protection Act of 2022)**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring a landlord that uses a ratio utility billing system to provide
5 certain information to tenants and prospective tenants; authorizing a local
6 jurisdiction to adopt certain local laws relating to ratio utility billing; requiring that
7 a statement of costs provided to a tenant when a portion of the tenant's security
8 deposit is withheld include supporting documentation; providing that a tenant
9 organization has a certain right of free assembly in areas within an apartment
10 facility; prohibiting a landlord from charging a tenant organization for the use of
11 certain areas within an apartment facility for the first meeting of the tenant
12 organization each month; expanding certain provisions of law regarding the rights
13 of tenants and legal occupants who are victims of domestic violence or sexual assault
14 to include victims of stalking; altering requirements relating to the calculation of
15 remaining rent and acceptable documentation for a tenant or legal occupant who is
16 a victim of sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking; and generally relating to
17 rights and protections for residential tenants.

18 BY renumbering

19 Article – Real Property
20 Section 8–203(j) through (l), respectively
21 to be Section 8–203(k) through (m), respectively
22 Annotated Code of Maryland
23 (2015 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

24 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

25 Article – Real Property
26 Section 8–203(g), (h), and (i)(7) and 8–5A–01 through 8–5A–06
27 Annotated Code of Maryland
28 (2015 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



BY adding to
Article – Real Property
Section 8–203(j), 8–212.4, 8–219, 8–5A–05, and 8–5A–08
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2015 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That Section(s) 8–203(j) through (l), respectively, of Article – Real Property of the
Annotated Code of Maryland be renumbered to be Section(s) 8–203(k) through (m),
respectively.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read
as follows:

Article – Real Property

8–212.4.

(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
INDICATED.

(2) “DWELLING UNIT” MEANS THAT PORTION OF A BUILDING THAT IS
DESIGNATED, INTENDED, OR ARRANGED FOR USE OR OCCUPANCY AS A RESIDENCE
BY ONE OR MORE PERSONS, INCLUDING A RENTED ROOM IN A SINGLE–FAMILY
HOUSE.

(3) “LANDLORD” MEANS:

(I) AN OWNER OF RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY THAT
OFFERS TWO OR MORE DWELLING UNITS FOR RENT ON ONE PARCEL; OR

(II) A PERSON ACTING ON BEHALF OF A LANDLORD.

(4) “MASTER METER” MEANS A METER USED TO MEASURE, FOR
BILLING PURPOSES, ALL USAGE OF A PARTICULAR UTILITY FOR A LANDLORD’S
RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY, INCLUDING USAGE FOR COMMON ELEMENTS OF
THE RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY AND DWELLING UNITS.

(5) “RATIO UTILITY BILLING SYSTEM” MEANS ALLOCATION OF ONE
OR MORE OF A LANDLORD’S UTILITY CHARGES, COLLECTED VIA A MASTER METER,
AMONG THE TENANTS BY ANY METHOD THAT DOES NOT MEASURE ACTUAL
PER–TENANT USAGE FOR THE UTILITY.

(6) “UTILITY” MEANS:

1 (I) ELECTRICITY USAGE;

2 (II) GAS USAGE;

3 (III) WASTEWATER AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL SERVICE USAGE; OR

4 (IV) WATER CONSUMPTION OR USAGE.

5 (B) THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY IN:

6 (1) A CONDOMINIUM ORGANIZED UNDER TITLE 11 OF THIS ARTICLE;

7 OR

8 (2) A COOPERATIVE PROJECT ORGANIZED UNDER TITLE 5, SUBTITLE
9 6B OF THE CORPORATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS ARTICLE.

10 (C) (1) IF A LANDLORD USES A RATIO UTILITY BILLING SYSTEM TO BILL
11 TENANTS FOR ONE OR MORE UTILITIES, THE LANDLORD SHALL PROVIDE THE
12 FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO ALL PROSPECTIVE TENANTS IN WRITING:

13 (I) A STATEMENT THAT THE TENANT WILL BE BILLED BY THE
14 LANDLORD FOR ALLOCATED UTILITY SERVICES AND THAT IDENTIFIES ALL
15 UTILITIES AT ISSUE;

16 (II) A STATEMENT THAT IDENTIFIES THE ELEMENTS THAT
17 COMPOSE THE LANDLORD'S UTILITY CHARGES TO BE ALLOCATED TO THE TENANTS
18 UNDER THE RATIO UTILITY BILLING SYSTEM, BY UTILITY;

19 (III) A DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD THAT WILL BE USED TO
20 ALLOCATE THE COST OF THE UTILITY TO THE TENANT, BY UTILITY;

21 (IV) A STATEMENT THAT ANY DISPUTES RELATING TO THE
22 COMPUTATION OF THE TENANT'S BILL ARE BETWEEN THE TENANT AND THE
23 LANDLORD;

24 (V) THE AVERAGE MONTHLY BILL FOR ALL DWELLING UNITS IN
25 THE RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY IN THE PREVIOUS CALENDAR YEAR, BY
26 UTILITY;

27 (VI) INFORMATION REGARDING BILLING, WHERE PRACTICABLE,
28 INCLUDING METER READING DATES, BILLING DATES, AND DUE DATES, BY UTILITY;

29 (VII) A STATEMENT THAT THE TENANT HAS THE RIGHT TO

1 RECEIVE INFORMATION FROM THE LANDLORD TO VERIFY THE UTILITY BILL ON
2 WRITTEN REQUEST;

3 (VIII) INFORMATION REGARDING ANY ADDITIONAL SERVICE
4 CHARGES OR ADMINISTRATIVE FEES TO BE PAID BY THE TENANT FOR THE
5 OPERATION OF THE RATIO UTILITY BILLING SYSTEM; AND

6 (IX) A CITATION TO THIS SECTION.

7 (2) A LEASE PROVISION THAT REQUIRES A TENANT TO PAY THE
8 UTILITY CHARGES BILLED TO THE TENANT UNDER A RATIO UTILITY BILLING SYSTEM
9 SHALL BE UNENFORCEABLE IF THE LANDLORD FAILS TO PROVIDE THE
10 INFORMATION REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION TO THE
11 TENANT IN WRITING.

12 (D) A LANDLORD WHO USES A RATIO UTILITY BILLING SYSTEM SHALL, ON
13 WRITTEN REQUEST BY A TENANT, PROVIDE THE TENANT WITH INFORMATION TO
14 DOCUMENT A BILL FOR UTILITIES.

15 (E) (1) A COUNTY OR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION MAY ENACT LOCAL LAWS
16 CONSISTENT WITH THIS SECTION GOVERNING:

17 (I) THE INFORMATION A LANDLORD IS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE
18 TO A TENANT;

19 (II) DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS; AND

20 (III) DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICIES.

21 (2) ANY LOCAL LAW OR ORDINANCE THAT IS COMPARABLE IN
22 SUBJECT MATTER TO THIS SECTION SHALL SUPERSEDE THE PROVISIONS OF THIS
23 SECTION TO THE EXTENT THAT THE LOCAL LAW OR ORDINANCE IS MORE STRINGENT
24 OR PROVIDES STRONGER PROTECTION OR BROADER APPLICABILITY THAN THIS
25 SECTION.

26 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read
27 as follows:

28 **Article – Real Property**

29 8–203.

30 (g) (1) [If] SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (J) OF THIS SECTION, IF any portion
31 of the security deposit is withheld, the landlord shall present by first–class mail directed to
32 the last known address of the tenant, within 45 days after the termination of the tenancy,

1 a written list of the damages claimed under subsection (f)(1) of this section together with a
2 statement of the cost actually incurred.

3 (2) If the landlord fails to comply with this requirement, the landlord
4 forfeits the right to withhold any part of the security deposit for damages.

5 (h) (1) The provisions of subsections (e)(1) and (4) and (g)(1) and (2) of this
6 section are inapplicable to a tenant who has been evicted or ejected for breach of a condition
7 or covenant of a lease prior to the termination of the tenancy or who has abandoned the
8 premises prior to the termination of the tenancy.

9 (2) (i) A tenant specified in paragraph (1) of this subsection may
10 demand return of the security deposit by giving written notice by first-class mail to the
11 landlord within 45 days of being evicted or ejected or of abandoning the premises.

12 (ii) The notice shall specify the tenant's new address.

13 (iii) **[The] SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (J) OF THIS SECTION, THE**
14 landlord, within 45 days of receipt of such notice, shall present, by first-class mail to the
15 tenant, a written list of the damages claimed under subsection (f)(1) of this section together
16 with a statement of the costs actually incurred and shall return to the tenant the security
17 deposit together with simple interest which has accrued at the daily U.S. Treasury yield
18 curve rate for 1 year, as of the first business day of each year, or 1.5% a year, whichever is
19 greater, less any damages rightfully withheld.

20 (3) (i) If a landlord fails to send the list of damages required by
21 paragraph (2) of this subsection, the right to withhold any part of the security deposit for
22 damages is forfeited.

23 (ii) If a landlord fails to return the security deposit as required by
24 paragraph (2) of this subsection, the tenant has an action of up to threefold of the withheld
25 amount, plus reasonable attorney's fees.

26 (4) Except to the extent specified, this subsection may not be interpreted
27 to alter the landlord's duties under subsections (e) and (g) of this section.

28 (i) (7) **[At] SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (J) OF THIS SECTION, AT** least 10
29 days before a landlord makes a claim against a surety bond subject to this subsection, the
30 landlord shall send to the tenant by first-class mail directed to the last known address of
31 the tenant, a written list of the damages to be claimed and a statement of the costs actually
32 incurred by the landlord.

33 **(J) A STATEMENT OF COSTS PROVIDED UNDER SUBSECTION (G)(1),**
34 **(H)(2)(III), OR (I)(7) OF THIS SECTION SHALL, WHERE PRACTICABLE, INCLUDE**
35 **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION, INCLUDING BILLS, INVOICES, AND RECEIPTS, THAT**
36 **IDENTIFIES THE MATERIALS OR SERVICES PROVIDED.**

1 8-219.

2 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
3 INDICATED.

4 (2) (I) "APARTMENT FACILITY" MEANS AN APARTMENT BUILDING
5 OR COMPLEX THAT CONTAINS FOUR OR MORE INDIVIDUAL DWELLING UNITS THAT A
6 COMMON LANDLORD RENTS FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES, INCLUDING ALL
7 COMMON AREAS AVAILABLE FOR USE BY A TENANT.

8 (II) "APARTMENT FACILITY" DOES NOT INCLUDE:

9 1. A SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE, REGARDLESS OF THE
10 NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL DWELLING UNITS INTO WHICH THE HOUSE IS SUBDIVIDED;

11 2. A CONDOMINIUM ORGANIZED UNDER TITLE 11 OF
12 THIS ARTICLE; OR

13 3. A COOPERATIVE PROJECT ORGANIZED UNDER TITLE
14 5, SUBTITLE 6B OF THE CORPORATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS ARTICLE.

15 (3) "DWELLING UNIT" MEANS THAT PORTION OF A BUILDING THAT IS
16 DESIGNATED, INTENDED, OR ARRANGED FOR USE OR OCCUPANCY AS A RESIDENCE
17 BY ONE OR MORE PERSONS.

18 (4) "TENANT ORGANIZATION" MEANS AN INCORPORATED OR
19 UNINCORPORATED ORGANIZATION OF THREE OR MORE TENANTS WHO RESIDE IN AN
20 APARTMENT FACILITY FORMED FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPROVING THE LIVING
21 CONDITIONS, CONTRACTUAL POSITION, OR COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES OF THE
22 RESIDENTS OF THE APARTMENT FACILITY THAT:

23 (I) MEETS REGULARLY;

24 (II) OPERATES DEMOCRATICALLY; AND

25 (III) IS INDEPENDENT OF THE OWNERS OR MANAGEMENT OF THE
26 APARTMENT FACILITY AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES.

27 (B) (1) A TENANT ORGANIZATION SHALL HAVE THE RIGHT OF FREE
28 ASSEMBLY IN A MEETING ROOM WITHIN AN APARTMENT FACILITY DESIGNATED FOR
29 USE BY TENANTS FOR EVENTS AND COMMUNITY GATHERINGS DURING REASONABLE
30 HOURS AND ON REASONABLE NOTICE TO THE LANDLORD TO CONDUCT TENANT
31 ORGANIZATION MEETINGS.

1 **(2) (I) THE LANDLORD MAY IMPOSE REASONABLE TERMS AND**
2 **CONDITIONS ON THE USE OF A MEETING ROOM, PROVIDED THAT THE TERMS AND**
3 **CONDITIONS DO NOT UNDERMINE THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION.**

4 **(II) THE LANDLORD MAY REQUIRE AN INDIVIDUAL**
5 **PARTICIPATING IN A TENANT ORGANIZATION MEETING WHO IS NOT A RESIDENT OF**
6 **THE APARTMENT FACILITY TO SIGN A WAIVER OF LIABILITY FOR INJURIES**
7 **SUSTAINED WHILE ON THE PROPERTY.**

8 **(3) A TENANT ORGANIZATION SHALL:**

9 **(I) DESIGNATE AT LEAST TWO BUT NOT MORE THAN FIVE**
10 **MEMBERS WHO ARE AUTHORIZED TO SCHEDULE USE OF A MEETING ROOM ON**
11 **BEHALF OF THE TENANT ORGANIZATION; AND**

12 **(II) PROVIDE WRITTEN NOTIFICATION TO THE LANDLORD OF**
13 **THE DESIGNEES AT LEAST ONCE PER YEAR.**

14 **(C) (1) A LANDLORD MAY NOT CHARGE A TENANT ORGANIZATION A FEE**
15 **FOR THE USE OF A MEETING ROOM FOR THE FIRST MEETING OF THE TENANT**
16 **ORGANIZATION EACH MONTH.**

17 **(2) A LANDLORD MAY CHARGE A REASONABLE FEE FOR ALL OTHER**
18 **USES OF A MEETING ROOM BY THE TENANT ORGANIZATION WITHIN THE SAME**
19 **MONTH PROVIDED THAT THE FEE DOES NOT EXCEED THE REGULAR SCHEDULE OF**
20 **FEES CHARGED TO OTHER GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS FOR USE OF THE MEETING**
21 **ROOM.**

22 8-5A-01.

23 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

24 (b) “Legal occupant” means an occupant who resides on the premises with the
25 actual knowledge and permission of the landlord.

26 (c) “Offender” means a person who commits an act of domestic violence or
27 commits a sexual assault offense.

28 (d) “Peace order” means an enforceable final peace order.

29 (e) “Protective order” means an enforceable final protective order.

30 **(F) “QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY” MEANS:**

1 **(1) A PHYSICIAN WHO IS AUTHORIZED TO PRACTICE MEDICINE**
2 **UNDER THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE;**

3 **(2) A PSYCHOLOGIST WHO IS AUTHORIZED TO PRACTICE**
4 **PSYCHOLOGY UNDER THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE; OR**

5 **(3) A SOCIAL WORKER OR CASEWORKER OF ANY PUBLIC OR PRIVATE**
6 **HEALTH OR SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY OR PROVIDER.**

7 **(G) “REPORT BY A QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY” MEANS A REPORT BASED ON**
8 **INFORMATION RECEIVED BY A QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY WHILE ACTING IN A**
9 **PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY THAT:**

10 **(1) INDICATES THAT THE TENANT OR A LEGAL OCCUPANT IS SEEKING**
11 **ASSISTANCE FOR PHYSICAL OR MENTAL INJURIES RESULTING FROM AN ACT OF**
12 **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING;**

13 **(2) INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:**

14 **(I) THE NAME OF THE TENANT OR LEGAL OCCUPANT;**

15 **(II) A STATEMENT THAT THE TENANT OR LEGAL OCCUPANT IS A**
16 **VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, A VICTIM OF SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR A VICTIM OF**
17 **STALKING;**

18 **(III) THE DATE, TIME, LOCATION, AND A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF**
19 **THE INCIDENT;**

20 **(IV) THE NAME AND PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE ALLEGED**
21 **PERPETRATOR, IF KNOWN;**

22 **(V) THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE EMPLOYER OF THE**
23 **QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY;**

24 **(VI) THE LICENSING ENTITY AND LICENSE NUMBER OF THE**
25 **QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY, IF THE QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY IS REQUIRED TO BE**
26 **LICENSED; AND**

27 **(VII) THE SIGNATURE OF THE QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY, UNDER**
28 **SEAL OF A NOTARY PUBLIC; AND**

29 **(3) IS SIGNED AND ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE TENANT OR LEGAL**
30 **OCCUPANT UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY.**

1 **[(f)] (H)** “Victim of domestic violence” means a person who is:

2 (1) A victim of domestic abuse, as defined in § 4–501 of the Family Law
3 Article; and

4 (2) A person eligible for relief, as defined in § 4–501 of the Family Law
5 Article.

6 **[(g)] (I)** “Victim of sexual assault” means a person who is a victim of:

7 (1) A sexual crime under Title 3, Subtitle 3 of the Criminal Law Article;

8 (2) Child sexual abuse under § 3–602 of the Criminal Law Article; or

9 (3) Sexual abuse of a vulnerable adult under § 3–604 of the Criminal Law
10 Article.

11 **(J) “VICTIM OF STALKING” MEANS A PERSON WHO IS A VICTIM OF STALKING**
12 **UNDER § 3–802 OF THE CRIMINAL LAW ARTICLE.**

13 8–5A–02.

14 (a) Subject to the requirements of subsections (b) and (c) of this section, a tenant
15 may terminate the tenant’s future liability under a residential lease if the tenant or legal
16 occupant is:

17 (1) A victim of domestic violence; [or]

18 (2) A victim of sexual assault; **OR**

19 **(3) A VICTIM OF STALKING.**

20 (b) If a tenant or legal occupant is a victim of domestic violence [or], a victim of
21 sexual assault, **OR A VICTIM OF STALKING**, the tenant may provide to the landlord the
22 written notice required under § 8–5A–03 [or], § 8–5A–04, **OR § 8–5A–05** of this subtitle
23 and, if the written notice is provided, the tenant shall have 30 days to vacate the leased
24 premises from the date of providing the written notice.

25 (c) **(1)** A tenant who vacates leased premises under this section is responsible
26 for rent only [for the 30 days following the tenant providing notice of an intent to vacate]
27 **FOR THE TIME FOLLOWING THE TENANT PROVIDING NOTICE OF AN INTENT TO**
28 **VACATE UNTIL THE TENANT VACATES THE LEASED PREMISES, UP TO A MAXIMUM OF**
29 **30 DAYS.**

30 **(2) (I) IF A TENANT VACATES THE LEASED PREMISES EARLIER**
31 **THAN 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE THE TENANT PROVIDES WRITTEN NOTICE OF AN**

1 INTENT TO VACATE, THE TENANT SHALL PROVIDE THE LANDLORD WITH WRITTEN
2 NOTICE, SIGNED BY THE TENANT AND NOTARIZED, BY FIRST-CLASS MAIL OR HAND
3 DELIVERY STATING THAT THE TENANT HAS VACATED THE LEASED PREMISES.

4 (II) ON RECEIVING A NOTICE IDENTIFIED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (I)
5 OF THIS PARAGRAPH, A LANDLORD SHALL INSPECT THE LEASED PREMISES AND, IF
6 THE TENANT HAS VACATED THE LEASED PREMISES, PROVIDE THE TENANT WITH A
7 WRITTEN STATEMENT THAT:

8 1. CONFIRMS THE TENANT HAS VACATED THE LEASED
9 PREMISES;

10 2. STATES THE RENT THAT THE TENANT IS
11 RESPONSIBLE FOR UNDER THIS SUBSECTION; AND

12 3. STATES THE AMOUNT OF RENT STILL OWED BY THE
13 TENANT OR THE AMOUNT OF ANY OVERPAYMENT OF RENT TO BE REFUNDED.

14 (III) FOR THE PURPOSE OF CALCULATING THE RENT THAT A
15 TENANT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR UNDER THIS SUBSECTION, THE TENANT SHALL BE
16 DEEMED TO HAVE VACATED THE LEASED PREMISES:

17 1. IF NOTICE IS DELIVERED BY FIRST-CLASS MAIL, ON
18 THE DATE THE NOTICE WAS POSTMARKED; OR

19 2. IF NOTICE IS HAND DELIVERED, ON THE DATE THE
20 NOTICE WAS HAND DELIVERED TO THE LANDLORD.

21 (IV) A TENANT WHO VACATES THE LEASED PREMISES EARLIER
22 THAN 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE THE TENANT PROVIDED WRITTEN NOTICE OF AN
23 INTENT TO VACATE AND WHO FAILS TO PROVIDE THE WRITTEN NOTICE REQUIRED
24 UNDER THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MAXIMUM RENT
25 REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

26 (d) If a tenant does not vacate the leased premises within 30 days of providing to
27 the landlord the written notice required under § 8-5A-03 [or], § 8-5A-04, OR § 8-5A-05
28 of this subtitle, the landlord is, at the landlord's option and with written notice to the
29 tenant, entitled to:

30 (1) All legal remedies against a tenant holding over available under §
31 8-402 of this title; or

32 (2) Deem the tenant's notice of an intent to vacate to have been rescinded
33 and the terms of the original lease to be in full force and effect.

(e) The termination of a tenant's future liability under a residential lease under this section does not terminate or in any other way impact the future liability of a tenant who is the respondent in the action that results in:

(1) A protective order issued for the benefit of the victim tenant or victim legal occupant under § 4–506 of the Family Law Article; or

(2) A peace order issued for the benefit of the victim tenant or victim legal occupant for which the underlying act was sexual assault **OR STALKING** under § 3–1505 of the Courts Article.

8–5A–03.

(a) If a tenant or legal occupant is a victim of domestic violence, the tenant may terminate the tenant's future liability under a residential lease under § 8–5A–02 of this subtitle if the tenant provides the landlord with written notice by first-class mail or hand delivery of an intent to vacate the premises and notice of the tenant's or legal occupant's status as a victim of domestic violence.

(b) The notice provided under subsection (a) of this section shall include [a]:

(1) A copy of a protective order issued for the benefit of the tenant or legal occupant under § 4–506 of the Family Law Article; OR

(2) A COPY OF A REPORT BY A QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY, PROVIDED THAT:

(I) THE NAME AND PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE ALLEGED PERPETRATOR ARE REDACTED; AND

(II) THE REPORT WAS SIGNED BY THE QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY WITHIN THE PRECEDING 60 DAYS.

8–5A–04.

(a) If a tenant or legal occupant is a victim of sexual assault, the tenant may terminate the tenant's future liability under a residential lease under § 8–5A–02 of this subtitle if the tenant provides the landlord with written notice by first-class mail or hand delivery of an intent to vacate the leased premises, including the tenant's or legal occupant's status as a victim of sexual assault.

(b) The notice provided under subsection (a) of this section shall include:

(1) A copy of a protective order issued for the benefit of the tenant or legal occupant under § 4–506 of the Family Law Article; [or]

(2) A copy of a peace order issued for the benefit of the tenant or legal occupant for which the underlying act was sexual assault under § 3–1505 of the Courts Article; OR

(3) A COPY OF A REPORT BY A QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY, PROVIDED THAT:

(I) THE NAME AND PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE ALLEGED PERPETRATOR ARE REDACTED; AND

(II) THE REPORT WAS SIGNED BY THE QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY WITHIN THE PRECEDING 60 DAYS.

8–5A–05.

(A) IF A TENANT OR LEGAL OCCUPANT IS A VICTIM OF STALKING, THE TENANT MAY TERMINATE THE TENANT’S FUTURE LIABILITY UNDER A RESIDENTIAL LEASE UNDER § 8–5A–02 OF THIS SUBTITLE IF THE TENANT PROVIDES THE LANDLORD WITH WRITTEN NOTICE BY FIRST–CLASS MAIL OR HAND DELIVERY OF AN INTENT TO VACATE THE LEASED PREMISES, INCLUDING THE TENANT’S OR LEGAL OCCUPANT’S STATUS AS A VICTIM OF STALKING.

(B) THE NOTICE PROVIDED UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION SHALL INCLUDE:

(1) A COPY OF A PROTECTIVE ORDER ISSUED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE TENANT OR LEGAL OCCUPANT UNDER § 4–506 OF THE FAMILY LAW ARTICLE;

(2) A COPY OF A PEACE ORDER ISSUED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE TENANT OR LEGAL OCCUPANT FOR WHICH THE UNDERLYING ACT WAS STALKING UNDER § 3–1505 OF THE COURTS ARTICLE; OR

(3) A COPY OF A REPORT BY A QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY, PROVIDED THAT:

(I) THE NAME AND PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE ALLEGED PERPETRATOR ARE REDACTED; AND

(II) THE REPORT WAS SIGNED BY THE QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY WITHIN THE PRECEDING 60 DAYS.

[8–5A–05.] 8–5A–06.

(a) This section applies to an action for possession of property under § 8–402.1 of this title against a tenant or legal occupant who is a victim of domestic violence [or], a

1 victim of sexual assault, **OR A VICTIM OF STALKING** in which the basis for the alleged
2 breach is an act or acts of domestic violence [or], sexual assault, **OR STALKING**.

3 (b) (1) A tenant is deemed to have raised a rebuttable presumption that the
4 alleged breach of the lease does not warrant an eviction if the tenant provides to the court:

5 (i) A copy of a protective order issued for the benefit of the tenant or
6 legal occupant under § 4–506 of the Family Law Article; [or]

7 (ii) A copy of a peace order issued for the benefit of the tenant or legal
8 occupant for which the underlying act was sexual assault **OR STALKING** under § 3–1505 of
9 the Courts Article; **OR**

10 **(III) A REPORT BY A QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY, PROVIDED THAT:**

11 **1. THE NAME AND PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE**
12 **ALLEGED PERPETRATOR ARE REDACTED; AND**

13 **2. THE ALLEGED BREACH OF THE LEASE OCCURRED**
14 **WITHIN 60 DAYS OF THE DATE THE REPORT WAS SIGNED BY THE QUALIFIED THIRD**
15 **PARTY.**

16 (2) If domestic violence [or], sexual assault, **OR STALKING** is raised as a
17 defense in an action for possession of property under § 8–402.1 of this title, the court, in its
18 discretion, may enter a judgment in favor of a tenant who does not provide the evidence
19 described in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

20 **[8–5A–06.] 8–5A–07.**

21 (a) A person who is a victim of domestic violence [or], a victim of sexual assault,
22 **OR A VICTIM OF STALKING** and who is a tenant under a residential lease may provide to
23 the landlord a written request to change the locks of the leased premises if the protective
24 order or peace order issued for the benefit of the tenant or legal occupant requires the
25 respondent to refrain from entering or to vacate the residence of the tenant or legal
26 occupant.

27 (b) The written request provided under subsection (a) of this section shall include:

28 (1) A copy of a protective order issued for the benefit of the tenant or legal
29 occupant under § 4–506 of the Family Law Article; or

30 (2) A copy of a peace order issued for the benefit of the tenant or legal
31 occupant for which the underlying act was sexual assault **OR STALKING** under § 3–1505 of
32 the Courts Article.

33 (c) (1) The landlord shall change the locks on the leased premises by the close

of the next business day after receiving a written request under subsection (a) of this section.

(2) If the landlord fails to change the locks as required under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the tenant:

(i) May have the locks changed by a certified locksmith on the leased premises without permission from the landlord; and

(ii) Shall give a duplicate key to the landlord or the landlord's agent by the close of the next business day after the lock change.

(d) If a landlord changes the locks on a tenant's leased premises under subsection (c) of this section, the landlord:

(1) Shall provide a copy of the new key to the tenant who made the request for the change of locks at a mutually agreed time not to exceed 48 hours following the lock change; and

(2) May charge a fee to the tenant not exceeding the reasonable cost of changing the locks.

(e) (1) If a landlord charges a fee to the tenant for changing the locks on a tenant's leased premises under subsection (d) of this section, the tenant shall pay the fee within 45 days of the date the locks are changed.

(2) If a tenant does not pay a fee as required under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the landlord may:

(i) Charge the fee as additional rent; or

(ii) Withhold the amount of the fee from the tenant's security deposit.

8-5A-08.

A LANDLORD MAY NOT DISCLOSE ANY INFORMATION PROVIDED BY A TENANT UNDER THIS SUBTITLE TO A THIRD PARTY UNLESS:

(1) THE TENANT CONSENTS IN WRITING TO THE DISCLOSURE; OR

(2) THE DISCLOSURE IS REQUIRED BY LAW OR A COURT ORDER.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 2 of this Act shall be construed to apply only prospectively and may not be applied or interpreted to have any effect on or application to any lease entered into before the effective date of this Act.

1 SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
2 1, 2022.