**GUIDE ME: I’m having problems with my neighbors**

Here are some steps you can take.

## Talk to your neighbor

If you feel safe, talk to your neighbor about the problem. Simply speaking to your neighbor may help. Maybe it’s about how loud they play their music or TV. Maybe it’s about how they park their car, or how they clean-up after themselves in the laundry room or other common areas. Maybe it’s the way their kids play in the hallways. Sometimes neighbors do not have any idea they are bothering you.

## Ask your landlord for help - in writing

If you and your neighbor have the same landlord, you can ask your landlord for help. Under the law, your landlord has a duty to protect you from unreasonable disturbances. The law calls this the right to “Quiet Enjoyment”. In some instances, this law could require a landlord to evict a tenant whose conduct is really bad.

When you complain to the landlord,

1. Explain the problem in writing.
2. Include the dates and times your neighbor made it impossible for you to feel at home.
3. Describe your neighbor’s actions.
4. Tell your landlord you need them to do something about the problem.
5. Remind your landlord that if they do not take care of the problem, they could be “in breach of your right to quite enjoyment” and this is breaking the law.
6. Keep copies of everything you send your landlord.

## Call the police if your neighbor commits a crime

Sometimes your neighbor is obviously committing a crime. If you see your neighbor dealing drugs, call the police. If your neighbor has robbed you or attacked you, report the crime to the police.

Some conduct is less obviously a crime. For example, making too much noise can also be a crime. Some cities and towns have local laws, called ordinances, that outlaw certain levels or types of noise at different times of the day. The police can enforce these local laws too.

Keep in mind that calling the police won’t always result in a full solution to the problem you are having with neighbors. However, it is still very important to do so for another reason: Calling the police creates a record which can later be very useful to you or your landlord if this disturbance somehow becomes part of a court case like an eviction or restraining order.

Get To Court

If your landlord refuses to take action to stop the disturbances after you have complained, you might be able to get an order from a court telling your landlord to do something to stop the disturbance. If your neighbor’s conduct is really bad, you might be able to get a restraining order against them. You can get a restraining order from your local Housing Court. Most courts have forms that you can fill out.

*The suggestions provided above are not legal advice and are provided as information only.*

*Whenever you have a legal problem, it is always best to talk to a lawyer who can give you advice that is uniquely tailored to your situation. The Massachusetts Legal Resource Finder can help you find lawyers and other legal help resources in your area.*