

Tenants' Rights in Massachusetts
MCLE Basic Benefits Training Series

Evictions

September 16, 2025

Today's Focus

- How the eviction process works
- What tools are available to help tenants
- How to identify where a tenant is in the process
- What you can do to help tenants

Agenda

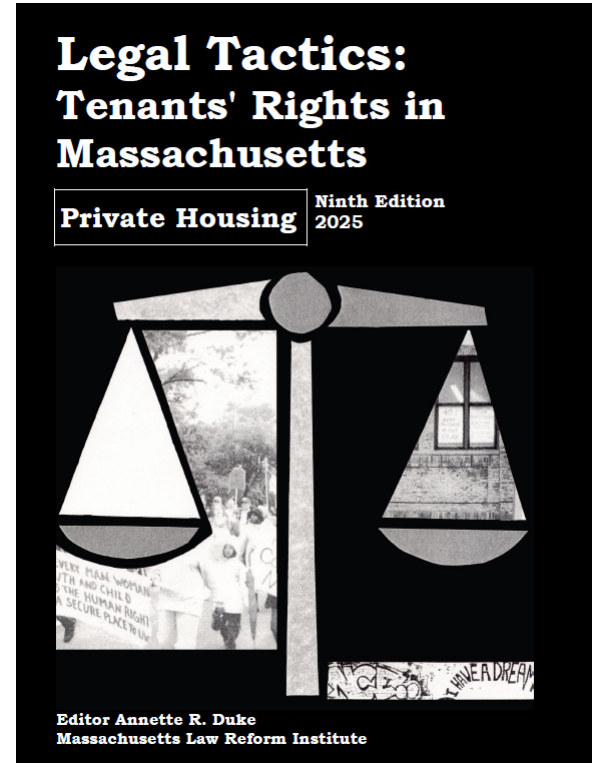
12:00 pm (10 min)	Introduction
12:10-1:30 pm (1.20 hr min)	Evictions - Part 1
1:30-1:45 pm (15 min)	Break
1:45-2:30 pm (45 min)	Evictions - Part 2
2:30- 2:45 pm (15 min)	Break
2:45-3:15 pm (30 min)	Evictions - Part 2 Continued
3:30- 4:00 pm (30 min)	Questions

Questions

- Time built-in time for questions throughout
- If you are online - put questions in **Faculty Questions** tab on the right of the screen
- Questions should be framed in a general way, not about individual cases

Updated 2025 Legal Tactics

- 18 Chapters
- 18 Handouts in plain language
- 12 Eviction booklets
- 25 Sample letters and forms
- Directory
- Glossary



2025 Legal Tactics: What's New?

- **Chart on Common Defenses and Counterclaims**
Chapter 12, page 394
- **Information about how to file a complaint with the court system if you feel you have been treated unfairly**
Chapter 14, page 462
- **Updated Housing Code Checklist**
Booklet 2, page 605
- **Sample Motion to Dismiss**
Booklet 7, page 693

New Eviction Record Sealing Law

- As of May 5, 2025, a new law gives certain tenants the ability to “seal” an eviction record
- “Seal” means that an eviction record will no longer be publicly available
- Sealing clinics are happening across the state
- For more information about how to seal go to **SealMyEviction.org**

Statewide Access to Counsel

- For eight years, MLRI worked with our partners and over 240 supporters to pass a statewide Access to Counsel Program.
- In FY25, Massachusetts legislature passed a dedicated line item for an Access to Counsel pilot program with seed funding of \$2.5 million.
- In FY26, the legislature again passed \$2.5 million, but signaled support by removing the word “pilot.”
- Through Mass. Legal Assistance Corporation (MLAC), which funds civil legal aid organizations, 6 programs are representing low-income tenants and 1 is representing low income owner occupants.
- Funding modest, but work to provide tenants with full representation is beginning.

Who's In the Room?

- ☐ Tenant
- ☐ Landlord
- ☐ Community Advocate
- ☐ Court Staff
- ☐ Municipal Staff
- ☐ Attorney
- ☐ Law Student
- ☐ None of the above



Faculty

- **Laura Camara, Greater Boston Legal Services**

Laura Camara is a Senior Attorney with Greater Boston Legal Services Housing Unit. She focuses on eviction defense, housing subsidy access and retention, and tenants rights issues. Prior to working with GBLS, she was the Director of Housing Advocacy at the Justice Center of Southeast Massachusetts, LLC. Laura is a graduate of the State University of New York at Buffalo Law School and Providence College.

- **Patricia Whiting, Harvard Legal Aid Bureau**

Patricia Whiting is a Lecturer on Law and Supervising Attorney at the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau who has focused on eviction defense and landlord/tenant issues for more than 20 years. She is a graduate of Boston College Law School and the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

- **Annette Duke, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute**

*Annette Duke is a staff attorney at Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, a statewide advocacy and policy center and editor of **Legal Tactics: Tenants' Rights in Massachusetts**. She has coordinated successful campaigns for statewide housing court, eviction record sealing protections, protections for public housing tenants facing redevelopment, and funding for access to counsel in eviction cases. She is currently working on a legislative campaign to provide a framework for a statewide access to counsel program.*