Summary Checklist

 This checklist may be used to plan and track a tenant’s next steps if a landlord has failed to make needed repairs on rental property. You may wish to check the box and/or write the date of completion next to each step you take. You may also wish to make other notes on this checklist to track your efforts.

* + **Determine if there are violations of a local ordinance code.**

If the property is in Jacksonville – Duval County, call 630-CITY (630-2489) and request code enforcement. Ask them to inspect your home for code violations.

After an inspector comes to your property, request a copy of the City’s report listing any/all code violations. You will need to keep the City’s report (see below).

* **If something is not a code violation, determine if it is a violation of your lease.**

Sometimes a condition in the home does not violate the local code, but it violates a landlord’s obligations in the lease. For example, the local code might not require the landlord to provide air-conditioning, but the lease might require the landlord to maintain any air-conditioning equipment that is in the home.

* **If there are code violations and/or lease violations, prepare a written notice to your landlord to specify the violations and request repairs.**

Use Form 3 to terminate your lease if the repairs are not made within seven (7) days.

Use Form 4 to withhold rent and/or terminate your lease if repairs are not made within seven (7) days. Form 4 might be better because it allows you to exercise one or both of these legal options.

If there are code violations, you should attach (staple) a copy of the City’s report listing the code violations. In the space provided in the middle of Form 3 or Form 4, you should write “see the attached list of code violations” or something to that effect.

* **Make several photocopies of your written notice to the landlord, along with any report you are attaching.**

You should make at least two photocopies before delivering the original to your landlord, and keep the photocopies for your records.

* **Deliver the written notice to your landlord.**

Deliver the original, not one of the photocopies.

It is best to hand-deliver it to your landlord or an employee of the landlord, if possible. If hand-delivery is not possible, it should be sent by certified mail, and you should request a return receipt. Keep the proof of mailing with your photocopies of the notice.

* **Give your landlord a chance to make the repairs.**

Wait 7 days if your notice was hand-delivered.

Wait 12 days if your notice was delivered by mail.

You must allow access to the home for the repairs to be made. If you request repairs and then deny access for the repairs to be made, you may lose your rights.

* **If no repairs are made within that time, take action.**

Either withhold future rent payments until the repairs are made, and/or move out of the property (depending on which notice you gave to your landlord).