STATE LANDLORD-TENANT LAWS
Prepared by the Policy Surveillance Program Staff

SUMMARY
This map identifies variation in laws across all 50 states and the District of Columbia that govern the basic rights and responsibilities for both landlords and tenants when renting residential property.

ABOUT STATE LANDLORD-TENANT LAWS & THE DATA
State landlord-tenant laws govern the relationship between parties to a residential lease agreement, including maximum security deposit amounts, property maintenance requirements, and steps landlords and tenants may take if lease agreements are broken, among other elements.

This map, and the data used to create it, presents state-level statutes and regulations that address the rights and responsibilities of parties to a residential lease agreement (i.e., the landlord and the tenant or tenants). The map includes key characteristics of these laws, such as exempt dwellings, tenant’s duties regarding maintenance of the dwelling, landlord’s duties regarding maintenance of the dwelling, landlord and tenant remedies when the lease agreement is broken, maximum security deposit amounts, anti-retaliation provisions, and provisions which allow for victims of domestic abuse to alter their lease.

All 51 jurisdictions in the United States have state-level landlord-tenant laws in various forms. This is a longitudinal dataset and captures variations in those laws in effect from August 1, 2017 through August 1, 2019.

NAVIGATING THE DATA
There are two ways to navigate the data by clicking the Filter tab or the Explore tab — for each option, the data can be visualized in a map and table format or in jurisdiction profiles.

Filter
The dataset homepage will default to the Filter tab. Here, users may answer a series of questions to learn more about the characteristics of the laws. Answering more than one question will show all the jurisdictions that meet the combined criteria. Criteria selected will be listed above the questions, and can be removed by clicking the white X or by clicking “Reset” above the questions.

Explore
Users can access Explore by clicking the Explore tab in the bar above the questions. Using Explore, users will see the answers to one question across all jurisdictions.

The primary questions in this dataset are:
1. Is there a landlord-tenant law?
2. What dwellings, if any, are exempt from state landlord-tenant law?
3. What are the landlord’s duties regarding maintenance of the dwelling?
4. What are the tenant’s duties regarding maintenance of the dwelling?
5. What remedies are available to the landlord?
6. What remedies are available to the tenant?
7. What is the maximum amount a landlord could charge for a security deposit?
8. Are landlords prevented from taking retaliatory actions against a tenant who asserts his or her rights under the law?
9. Does the law allow tenants who are victims of domestic violence to alter their lease?

DISPLAYING THE RESULTS

There are two display modes once criteria have been selected by using either the Filter or Explore tab — Map display mode and Profiles display mode.

Map Display
LawAtlas.org dataset homepages default to the map display mode. When querying the data using the Filter tab, all jurisdictions that meet the criteria selected will display in one tone of yellow. Those jurisdictions that do not meet the criteria selected will be colored gray. When querying the data using the Explore tab, the map will illuminate with colors from yellow to red that are associated with the various answer choices (the color-coding is defined by the key to the left of the map).

Below the map, a table will appear. Using the Filter or Explore tab to navigate the questions will change the display:

- Using the Filter tab, you can select an unlimited number of criteria and the applicable jurisdictions that meet the combined criteria will be displayed in the table below.
- Using the Explore tab, you can isolate a single criterion and the applicable jurisdictions will appear in the table below.

Profiles Display
The Profiles display presents the results of the criteria selected in a text-based format for each applicable jurisdiction. Using the Filter tab, jurisdictions that meet the criteria selected will display. Using the Explore tab, jurisdictions that meet the criterion selected will display. If no criteria are selected, the full profiles for each state will appear under both Filter and Explore.

Profile Legend
Within each Profile box, above the questions and answers, there are additional options and information useful in exploring the law:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>§§</th>
<th>Toggle Legal Text – Selecting this option will show all the legal text used to answer questions for this jurisdiction.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toggle Full Place Profile – Selecting this option will show all questions and answers for this jurisdiction, regardless of what was selected using the Filter or Explore tabs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Toggle Size – Selecting this option will make the profile larger, but will not change the information displayed.

Legal Text History – This interactive timeline displays when changes in the law have occurred within a jurisdiction. Using the arrows to the left or right, users may explore how the law has changed over time as new amendments to the law have been enacted. The timeline will change from gray to a shade of yellow when the jurisdiction passed its first relevant law. Each change in the law after that is marked by a break in the timeline.

Map and Profile Legend
There are a few symbols to be aware of in both Map and Profiles display modes:

- **Section Symbol** – Clicking this symbol will open a window that displays excerpts from the law that correspond to the question and answer.

- **Caution Note** – Clicking on this symbol will open a small window that displays text that describes important caveats about the question and answer.

DATASET RESOURCES
Each dataset homepage includes the following resources available for download:

- **Data**: The Data file exports in CSV format and may contain two tabs. The “Statistical Data” tab contains the legal variables coded in the dataset, displayed as values defined in the accompanying Codebook. The “Summary Data” tab contains the legal variables coded in the dataset in text form, as well as the accompanying citations and any caution notes that may be included. Note: if there is only one tab available for download it will be the “Statistical Data” as described above.

- **Codebook**: The Codebook defines all of the coded variables in the dataset. The Codebook lists the question, question type, variable name, variable value and variable label. The Codebook should be used in conjunction with the Statistical Data extract.

- **Research Protocol**: The Research Protocol is a comprehensive document that outlines the entire methodology of the project, including the scope, inclusion and exclusion criteria, data collection methods, definitions, coding scheme decisions, as well as the quality control process.

- **Summary Report**: The Summary Report provides a snapshot of important findings from the dataset.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
• This dataset does not cover every aspect of state landlord-tenant laws. For additional information, you can visit Nolo.com’s state landlord-tenant law database at https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/state-landlord-tenant-laws.

• Tim Iglesias, Professor of Law at University of San Francisco School of Law, served as a subject matter expert for this project.

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