



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

*Department of Criminal Justice Information Services*

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Acting Commissioner

## SUMMARY OF VICTIMS RIGHTS HOUSING LAW:

On January 3, 2013 the Governor signed S2402 “An Act Relative to Housing Rights for Domestic Violence, Rape, Sexual Assault and Stalking” into law. The law provides housing rights and protections to victims of domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, and stalking. Specifically, a victim may vacate his or her lease or rental agreement without a financial penalty by providing “proof of status” documentation to his/her landlord for one or both of the following:

- \* he/she was subject to a domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, or stalking crime within the past three (3) months; and/or
- \* he/she is under imminent threat of a domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, or stalking crime.

The law provides that a victim may submit any of the following information as proof of his or her status:

- (1) a copy of a valid protection order under chapter 209A or 258E obtained by the tenant, co-tenant, or member of the household;
- (2) a record from a federal, state, or local court or law enforcement agency of an act of domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, or stalking and the name of the perpetrator, if known; or
- (3) a written verification from any other qualified third party to whom the tenant, co-tenant, or member of the tenant’s or co-tenant’s household reported the domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, or stalking; provided, however, that the verification shall include the name of the organization, agency, clinic, or professional service provider and include the date of the domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, or stalking, and the name of the perpetrator, if known; and provided further that any adult victim who has the capacity to do so shall provide a statement, under the penalty of perjury, that the incident described in such verification is true and correct.

## GUIDANCE FOR VICTIMS CURRENTLY REGISTERED TO RECEIVE CORI FROM THE DCJIS

If you are currently registered in the DCJIS Victim Notification Registry (VNR) to receive Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) pursuant to M.G.L. c. 6, § 178A, you may use the letter issued by the DCJIS to obtain a copy of the police report from the police department



involved in your case. The letter issued by the DCJIS alone is not sufficient for proof of status to comply with this law and you will need to take additional steps to obtain the appropriate documentation. The victim-witness advocate at the District Attorney's office, or the Victim Services Unit representative at the Massachusetts Parole Board or the custodial agency may be able to assist you with obtaining the necessary information.

#### GUIDANCE FOR VICTIMS NOT REGISTERED TO RECEIVE CORI

If you are not registered to receive CORI information from the DCJIS, please contact the victim-witness advocate assigned to your case to register with the VNR. You may also apply to receive CORI access on your own by submitting the application available at this link: <http://www.mass.gov/eopss/crime-prev-personal-sfty/personal-sfty/dcjis-victim-services/>. Please note: you may not be able to obtain the documentation you need from law enforcement agencies until you are registered in the VNR.

For additional information about the specifics of this law please see the Governor's press release at the following link: <http://www.mass.gov/governor/pressoffice/pressreleases/2013/0103-sexual-assault-housing-legislation.html>