

# Housing Issues for Patients with Cognitive Decline

**Clinicians can assist patients with cognitive decline by identifying potential housing issues, such as the risk of eviction or need for reasonable accommodations or modifications.**

RED FLAGS FOR POTENTIAL HOUSING ISSUES:	QUESTIONS TO ASK A PATIENT:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paperwork received from the landlord</li> <li>• Statement that they are being evicted</li> <li>• Evidence of hoarding or collecting</li> <li>• Complaints about habitability of their home</li> <li>• Complaints about the landlord</li> <li>• Stated concern about becoming homeless</li> <li>• Inability to access or use the apartment due to medical conditions</li> <li>• Expressions of fear with respect to patient's living situation</li> <li>• States that they do not feel safe and at ease in the apartment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you ever have trouble paying your rent?</li> <li>• Do you ever have problems with [no heat, no water, your landlord, your neighbors, bugs, rodents]?</li> <li>• Does your landlord ever talk to you about moving out?</li> <li>• If the patient received paperwork from the landlord: What did you understand the paperwork to mean? Was there any deadline included?</li> <li>• Do you have any issues accessing or using your apartment due to a disability or medical condition?</li> </ul>

**If a patient is served with an eviction, they should be referred to legal assistance immediately. Evictions in California can happen very quickly.**

**Reasonable Accommodation:**

A housing provider is required to make a reasonable accommodation to a policy, rule, practice, or service to enable a tenant an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the housing

Examples: requesting to move to a first-floor unit, requesting to change the rental due date, waiving a no animal policy for a service dog, etc.

**Reasonable Modification:**

A physical change to the building, unit, or grounds so a person with a disability has an equal opportunity to use and enjoy their housing

Examples: Installation of a ramp into the building, installation of grab bars in a bathroom, handrails on stairs, etc.

**SUPPORT LETTERS FROM HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS**

- Health care providers can write support letters to assist a tenant in requesting a reasonable accommodation or modification
- Support letters should identify the relationship between the requested accommodation or change and the person's disability, but need not identify the person's specific diagnosis