

# Legally Yours



*By Ahmad J. Tahboub*

## *What Happens When Your Lease Term Ends?*

In a country where most of its inhabitants are tenants, issues of landlord-tenant relationship are prevailing. As most of the people leasing residential areas in and out of Amman have this lingering question of: what happens post the year 2010 according to the law?

Most lease contracts include a commitment to inform the landlord of your intention for non-renewal for a new term (two to three months prior to the contract's end of term). Nevertheless, if your lease ends and the landlord fail to inform you to evacuate, you are entitled to remain for another "equal" lease term.

In all counts, we are dealing with two main groups of lease contracts: the first includes contracts signed before the year of 2000, which were extended by legal force towards 2010 giving tenants the right to remain in their leased premises until that date. And all such contracts become extinct and invalid following January 1<sup>st</sup>. of 2010.

On the other hand, contracts signed following the year 2000 are subject to their assigned lease term. If your contract says one year .... Then one year it is.

Following expiry dates in both cases, a tenant becomes an illegal occupier of real property, and although the Jordanian law did not give landlord the right to evict tenant by police force like other countries, it's being looked at as a civil conflict and civil courts are responsible of resolving it.

And ... the answer is YES, you may remain in the pre-leased property but your landlord would be entitled to file a claim to evict you by court order along with financial damages equal to present-day lease amount and any incurred expenses.

Sometimes, while delivering or evacuating, landlord and tenant disagree about the leased property condition such as painting and plumbing ... etc. and solving such disagreements are referred to contractual terms. You have to be prudent while signing the lease contract to start with ... and very cautious while delivering the property. Make sure that you get a clearance document from your landlord, so he or she won't come back and sue for damages or any other contractual commitment.

Finally, the issue of landlord-tenants and leasing is witnessing the highest level of attention. His Majesty King Abdullah stressed on the importance of reviewing the pertinent laws, and modifies them if needed. I think that if you agree that this person can be a tenant for one year, he or she should be able to stay for another term, willfully. As for the financial aspect of inflation and price increase, one may expect assigning a committee responsible for quantifying such issues. A relevant entity would be the municipality of each city in Jordan. A point to be considered while reviewing the law.

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