



In November 2025, an initiative of the people was passed by the voters of Bellingham: *Protecting The Freedoms Of Speech, Assembly, And Association For Tenants Free From Retaliation*. The initiative was codified as Bellingham Municipal Code (BMC) 6.20, and requires property managers provide to tenants a summary of tenant rights included within it.

Summary of tenant rights on speech and assembly under BMC 6.20

- Landlords are prohibited from interfering with tenants engaged in protected activities including those exercising their rights to speech, assembly, and association.
- Landlords are prohibited from requiring tenants to enter into non-disclosure agreements, or waive their right to participate in a class action lawsuit or other cause of action against the landlord.
- Landlords are prohibited from any form of retaliation against tenants for exercising their rights under this initiative. If a landlord responds to a tenant's or prospective tenant's attempt to exercise these rights within 210 days of the date of the tenant's actions, it will be presumed that the landlord's actions were taken in retaliation.
- This poster must be displayed or posted on every rental property, an easily accessible online location, or sent directly to each tenant.

Enforcement of this code

A private right of action is established for tenants and tenant organizations. If you believe a violation of BMC 6.20 has occurred, you can pursue the complaint with a private attorney. While the City doesn't currently have resources to investigate claims, there are resources in the righthand column you may find helpful.



See the full BMC 6.20
bellingham.municipal.codes/BMC/6.20

Additional laws and resources

Tenant support

Find resources for resolving disputes, legal services, and more.

cob.org/tenant-and-landlord-support-and-education



More housing laws and rental protections

Laws protecting renters in Bellingham.

cob.org/housing-laws-rental-protections-and-requirements



Life and safety tenant support

A renter can get assistance from the City when their landlord fails to adequately address basic life and safety issues in their rental unit.

cob.org/code-enforcement-assistance

