



— BALTIMORE CITY —
**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**Homeownership and Housing Preservation
Office of the Ombudsman**

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BALTIMORE, MD 21202
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How Ombudsman Handle Complaints

The Office of the Ombudsman operates 24/7 to provide services and resources to city residents who experience emergency situations that will classify them as homeless. We work closely with partner agencies to ensure residents have access to emergency resources and support to be rehoused. We respond to service requests from 311, the Mayor's Office, other agencies, and phone inquiries. We primarily cover rehousing support in three areas:

1 FIRE EMERGENCIES & NATURAL DISASTERS

The Ombudsman team works to locate emergency shelter services for residents displaced by fire, storm, structural emergencies, and natural disasters. We also work to get them resources to be rehoused.

2 MEDIATION

Our office investigates and mediates housing-related situations. The Ombudsman works with constituents to resolve housing issues and landlord disputes.

3 VACATES

Vacates will occur after two different actions occur. It happens when someone is living in an inhabitable situation in an owner-occupied property, a rental property or when the property is deemed a vacant building and someone has taken up residence.

- ↳ The DHCD Property Maintenance Inspectors will first conduct an inspection of the home to check for code violations, living conditions and/or structural issues within the home. After the inspection is completed, the inspectors will review their findings and determine if the property is inhabitable.

- ↳ If a vacant building notice is issued. This notice means the structure is unsafe or unfit for human habitation or other authorized use. Once a notice is issued it is illegal for anyone to occupy the property until a Use & Occupancy permit is obtained by the homeowner.

- ↳ If residents have a plan, the Ombudsman will offer resources to assist their plan. If there is no plan, residents will be referred to an emergency shelter.



UNSAFE STRUCTURES

116.1 General. Any structure or part of a structure found to be unsafe or unfit for human habitation or other authorized use must be rehabilitated or, as permitted or required by the Building Official, demolished.

116.1.1 Scope. A structure may be unsafe or unfit for human habitation or other authorized use because of:

1. conditions constituting a fire hazard or conditions of damage, decay, dilapidation, obsolescence, abandonment, vacancy (as described in § 116.4), insanitation, or vermin or rodent infestation that constitute a hazard to the health, welfare, or safety of occupants or the public,
2. lack of sanitation, illumination, ventilation, heating, plumbing, exit-ways, fire protection, utilities, or other facilities adequate to protect the health, welfare, or safety of occupants or the public, or
3. conditions that are so unsafe, unsanitary, overcrowded, improper in use or occupancy, or otherwise dangerous to life, health, welfare, or safety as to create a hazard to occupants or the public.

For more information on the Baltimore City Department of Housing & Community Development programs and initiatives, visit [DHCD.Baltimorecity.gov](https://dhcd.baltimorecity.gov).

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