



FIRST UNITED

Your Rights as a Tenant:

BC Hydro Free Air Conditioner Program

What you need to know about your rights and access to cooling under BC Hydro's program providing free portable air conditioners to tenants.



Am I eligible for a free air conditioner from BC Hydro?

If you are a low-income renter, you may be able to get a free air conditioner from BC Hydro.



What are the income limits to qualify for the BC Hydro free air conditioner program?

Number of people in household (including children)	Maximum household income before tax
1 person	\$39,700
2 people	\$49,500
3 people	\$60,800
4 people	\$73,800
5 people	\$83,700
6 people	\$94,400
7 or more people	\$105,100

▶ **How do I apply for the BC Hydro air conditioner program?**

You can apply online at:

https://app.bchydro.com/powersmart/residential/ps_low_income/energy_saving_kits/esk/home

▶ **What information do I need to provide to apply?**

- Your BC Hydro account number
- Proof of income (your Notice of assessment from the CRA, confirmation of income assistance/welfare, SAFER or BC Housing documents, Child Benefits documents, or Guaranteed Income Supplement documents)
- Landlord consent form, filled out by your landlord

You can upload these documents through the online portal, or send them by mail.

▶ **How do I get consent from my landlord?**

You will need to ask your landlord to fill out a short consent form.

▶ **What if my landlord does not want to sign the consent form?**

A FIRST UNITED legal advocate can help ask your landlord to sign the form.

▶ **Can my landlord stop me from putting in an air conditioner?**

Heat waves pose a health risk and it is essential to have adequate cooling in your home.

- **If your rental agreement does not mention air conditioners** or if you do not have a written agreement, your landlord cannot stop you from installing one as long as it is done safely.
- **If your rental agreement says “no air conditioners” but there is no good reason for it**, you may still be allowed to have one air conditioner. Unfair or unreasonable rules may not be enforceable. If this is your situation, seek help from a legal advocate.
- **If your rental agreement has limits** such as: only one air conditioner allowed, air conditioners not allowed in certain windows for safety reasons, or limiting the BTU (cooling power) of allowed air conditioners due to energy use, these will likely be acceptable limits.

▶ **Where can I find a legal advocate?**

You can access FIRST UNITED’s legal advocacy program during our intake times:

FIRST UNITED Legal Advocacy Office
542 E Hastings St, Vancouver

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 9:30 - 11:30 AM

Tuesday, Thursday: 1:00 - 3:00 PM

▶ **What is FIRST UNITED doing for tenants' rights to cooling in their homes?**

We are advocating for tenants' rights to cooling in their homes with provincial stakeholders. To learn more about our policy work on this issue follow us on social media @FirstUnitedDTES and sign up for our email updates at firstunited.ca.

▶ **More information about your rights to adequate cooling and air conditioners:**

- **RTB Info Sheet on Air Conditioners:**

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/housing-and-tenancy/residential-tenancies/information-sheets/rtb-acunits.pdf>

- **RTB Guideline 8: Unconscionable, Unlawful, and Material Terms:**

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/housing-and-tenancy/residential-tenancies/policy-guidelines/gl08.pdf>