

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY NUISANCE ORDINANCES

WHAT ARE CRIMINAL ACTIVITY NUISANCE ORDINANCES?

▶ **Criminal Activity Nuisance Ordinances**, or CANOs, are laws that penalize property owners for crimes and other unwanted behaviors that take place on or near their property. CANO enforcement is triggered by a response of emergency services to a property. Landlords are fined for CANO violations and often pressured to evict tenants causing the perceived nuisance.

▶ Common Scenarios:

- *"I operate a group home for adults with disabilities. Sometimes our residents experience a mental health crisis and the staff have to call the police for help. Now we are being told that we have to evict the residents who have had a mental health crisis or pay fines we cannot afford."*
- *"The neighbors called the police because of screams coming from my apartment. My abuser ran off before the police got there. A week later, I was served with an eviction notice for violating the City's nuisance ordinance."*

WHO DO CANOS HARM?

- ▶ Research has found that **municipalities use CANOs to penalize and remove renters experiencing mental health crises, drug addiction, and domestic violence** when they called emergency services.
- ▶ Studies have also shown that some cities in Northeast Ohio have adopted CANOs as a response to increasing racial integration, and the ordinances are **disproportionately enforced against people of color**.

HOW DO CANOS IMPACT HOUSING STABILITY?

- ▶ Eviction is the most common landlord response to a nuisance notification. This increases housing instability and can exacerbate behavior that triggered the nuisance citation.
- ▶ Once a person has an eviction record, it is much more difficult to obtain housing. Those evicted due to a nuisance citation may not have the immediate financial means available to secure alternate housing, and may face homelessness upon eviction.
- ▶ Threats of eviction or a nuisance citation may also cause a person in crisis to avoid calling the police for assistance, fearing a phone call for help could jeopardize their current and future housing options.

UPDATE: The 2022 VAWA reauthorization, effective October 1, 2022, prohibits governments that receive Community Development Block Grant funding from penalizing tenants, landlords, homeowners, and others based on requests for emergency assistance or based on criminal activity of which one is a victim or otherwise not at fault. *Tenants and housing providers are encouraged to contact The Fair Housing Center to learn more about their rights and responsibilities regarding Criminal Activity Nuisance Ordinances.*



MORE ON CANOS:

- ▶ [HUD Guidance on Nuisance Ordinances](#)
- ▶ [Who is a Nuisance? Criminal Activity Nuisance Ordinances in Ohio \(CSU\)](#)
- ▶ [Nuisance and Crime-Free Ordinances Initiative \(NHLP\)](#)
- ▶ [How Nuisance Ordinances And Crime-Free Leases Undermine Safety And Housing Of Crime Victims \(ACLU\)](#)
- ▶ [2021 State of Fair Housing in Northeast Ohio \(FHCR\)](#)
- ▶ [ACLU, ACLU Of Ohio, The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, Fair Housing Center for Rights & Research, and City Of Bedford Reach Settlement Repealing the City's Nuisance Ordinance](#)

