



Mold can grow anywhere there is moisture. If there is mold in your home, you must clean up the mold and fix the water problem. If you don't fix the water problem, mold will come back.

Note: Arlington County is unable to inspect, test, or remove mold, or to provide legal advice.

What are my rights and responsibilities?

The Code of Virginia requires that:

Landlords

- Maintain the property to prevent moisture and mold
- Promptly respond to any notices from the tenant
- Promptly clean visible mold and take action to keep it from coming back
- Reinspect the property for visible mold

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title55.1/chapter12/section55.1-1220>

Tenants

- Maintain the living space to prevent moisture and mold
- Promptly notify the landlord of a moisture or mold problem

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title55.1/chapter12/section55.1-1227>

In most cases, you are responsible for mold on your belongings unless you can prove that your landlord is at fault. You may want to consider getting renter's insurance that covers mold damage.

Should I test for mold?

In most cases, you do not need to test for mold. If you can see or smell mold, you have mold. Proper testing is expensive, and there are no standards for what types or levels of mold are unhealthy.

Testing after mold clean-up is also unnecessary. It is impossible to get rid of all mold, so testing will likely find some.

What can I do about mold?

Immediately notify your landlord, in writing, if you find a water or mold problem. Keep copies of all letters.

If there is mold, there is a problem with water or moisture. You can address minor moisture problems:

- Use air conditioners (A/C) or dehumidifiers, especially in humid Virginia summers! If you do not have A/C, use fans.
- Use bathroom fans during and after baths or showers.
- Clean up spills and leaks quickly, especially on carpets.
- Use kitchen fans when cooking or running the dishwasher.
- Do not use humidifiers unless there is a medical reason to use one.

You can clean small areas of mold (less than 10 square feet):

- Protect yourself with rubber gloves, goggles or eye protection, a N-95 respirator, and long sleeves and pants.
- Scrub mold off hard surfaces with dish soap and water. Allow items to dry completely.
- Throw away moldy materials with tiny holes or openings (e.g., dry wall, carpet, upholstery, insulation). These materials are hard to clean.
- Do not paint or caulk over mold. Clean the mold and dry the surface first.
- Note: No matter how well you clean mold, you need to fix the water problem or mold will return!
- For more information on mold cleanup visit: www.epa.gov/mold/mold-cleanup-your-home.

For large areas of mold (more than 10 square feet), it is best to get help from a professional.

How do I know if the mold is gone?

The best ways to tell if mold is gone are:

- ✓ You found and fixed the water/moisture problem
- ✓ You cleaned or threw away anything with mold on it
- ✓ You do not see or smell mold

What if I am concerned about mold and my health?

Mold can cause health problems for some people, especially children and people with allergies or asthma. Common symptoms are cough, runny nose, wheezing, and sore throat. If you are worried about mold and your health, talk to a healthcare provider.

What if my landlord is not addressing a moisture or mold problem?

If your landlord does not fix a **moisture** problem, such as a leak, peeling paint, or holes in walls or ceilings, you can file a complaint with Code Enforcement. **Code Enforcement does not address mold complaints.**

- Phone: 703-228-3232
- Email: codeenforcement@arlingtonva.us
- Online: <https://aca-prod.accela.com/ARLINGTONCO/Default.aspx> (Click "Create," then "Enforcement Application," then "Code Enforcement Complaint")

For information and advice on resolving tenant-landlord issues, contact:

- Arlington County Housing Division at 703-228-3765 or housingdivision@arlingtonva.us.
- Virginia Consumer Protection at 804-786-2042 or 1-800-552-9963. You can also file a complaint online at <https://www.oag.state.va.us/consumer-protection>.