

You(th) Have Rights living on my own



What's the big deal with turning 18?

When you reach age 18, you get most of the legal rights and responsibilities of an adult in Minnesota. You get to make legal decisions about voting, where to live, school, marriage, making a will, getting a loan, and signing a contract. There are some exceptions:

- You can't buy or have alcohol until age 21.
- You can't rent a car until age 25.
- You can't buy tobacco products until age 21 in some counties.

Can I rent an apartment before I turn 18?

Even if your parent/guardian lets you live on your own before you turn 18, you can't legally enter into a contract like a lease or rental agreement. Youth have the same problem with getting services like electricity, water, phone, internet, or cable.

Youth under 18 would need to find an adult to co-sign any contract. That means the adult agrees to be responsible if the youth doesn't pay rent or service fees, damages the apartment, or doesn't return equipment.

Emancipated youth can sign contracts like an adult.

Contracts

Minors can't legally enter a contract. They can sign a contract, but can't be forced to follow the terms. That's why most companies won't make contracts with youth.

Get Help: 612.825.0000

www.tubman.org

Give Help: 612.825.3333

ABOUT TUBMAN: Safety. Hope. Healing. Each year, Tubman helps nearly 25,000 people of all ages, genders, and cultural backgrounds who are facing relationship violence, sexual assault, exploitation, homelessness, addiction, mental health challenges or other forms of trauma. We provide safe shelter, legal services, mental and chemical health counseling, youth programs and community education.

Emancipation

What is emancipation?

When a person has the legal rights and responsibilities of an adult and their parents don't have control or provide support.

Can I get emancipated before I turn 18?

Minnesota has no law that allows you to apply for emancipation. Judges have allowed some youth to be emancipated in special cases, such as:

- Legal marriage
- Youth age 16 or older who are subject to a "child in need of protection or services" (CHIPS) case in juvenile court may be allowed to live independently.

How do I get emancipated if I have a case with child protection?

For youth with a CHIPS case (child in need of protection or services) who have been placed in foster care, courts have to decide where the youth will live. Some options include living with a different parent or in a foster home. One option for youth ages 16-17 is to live independently, either alone or with others. The court must first decide if:

- The youth is mature enough to live on their own.
- The youth can make good decisions.
- It is in the best interest of the youth.

If the court allows a youth under 18 to live independently, the county board still has to approve the decisions. It is very rare for this to happen. The first step is to talk with your lawyer about wanting to live on your own. They can advocate for you with the court.



What rights do I have if I get emancipated?

- Sign contracts for an apartment or other services
- Own a car or truck
- Get General Assistance

Can I vote if I'm emancipated?

No. Under the law, you must be at least 18 years old to vote.

For more information, go to www.tubman.org.