

# HOSTING YOUR OWN IMAGINATION SESSION

**A TOOLKIT FOR  
ENVISIONING A  
NATIONAL  
TENANTS'  
BILL OF  
RIGHTS**



by the Homes Guarantee team at People's Action

# DEAR READER:

Tenants\* across the country are uniting to **write our own rights into law!** Since the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic thousands of us have been forced from our homes and into the streets or to accrue devastating amounts of rental debt. **One thing is clear: We, as tenants, don't have the power we need, especially compared to the landlords and banks who own our homes.**

That's why we're launching a campaign for a **National Tenants' Bill of Rights**. Our campaign will set the stage for a century of powerful tenant organizing—establishing tenants as a political class, building the power of the tenant movement to win federal demands, and ultimately transforming the landscape of tenant organizing by enacting a National Tenants' Bill of Rights.

This toolkit is for anyone and everyone who is ready to **dream more boldly than ever before** with us about the rights that we deserve!



\*when we say **tenants** we mean renters, public housing residents, unhoused people, and working class homeowners

# CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

## JUNE-OCTOBER 2021

Summer and Fall of  
Radical Imagination

Engage 1 million tenants  
in imagining a National  
Tenants' Bill of Rights  
via house meetings,  
tenant union meetings,  
mass texting, and online  
surveys.

## OCTOBER 2021

Policy Drafting + Launch

- Conversations from the Summer and Fall of Radical Imagination will be drafted into a Tenants' Bill of Rights
- Public launch of our National Tenants' Bill of Rights.

## MEET (SOME OF) OUR LEADERS!



"I've endured a lot of pain in my life, but nothing will ever hurt more than waking up to the police violently evicting us from our tents, our home... We need a National Tenants' Bill of Rights, one that invests in people like my community at Echo Park."

- Queen, POWER LA



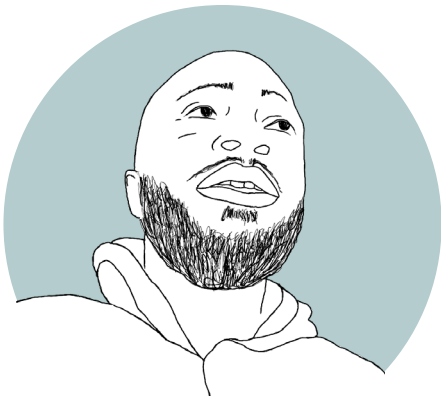
“As long as they can control us, they can make a profit because there is profit in poverty. Racism and oppression is how they make their money.”

-Marsha, Jane Addams  
Senior Caucus



“Six months after I moved into a building owned by a non-profit, I learned it was for sale to the highest for-profit bidder. 120 senior citizens, my neighbors, ages 65 to 92, were traumatized by the prospect of homelessness.”

- Linda, Jane Addams  
Senior Caucus



“Under racial capitalism, you have to have poor people. But I’ve never been punched in the face without swinging back, so a National Tenants’ Bill of Rights is the tenant movement swinging back.”

- Jarrod, KC Tenants



# HOW TO HOST YOUR OWN IMAGINATION SESSION

This summer and fall tenants across the country will be hosting thousands of Imagination Sessions— small gatherings or meetings where tenants will diagnose the problems in our current housing system and dream together about the National Tenants’ Bill of Rights that we deserve. You can be a critical part of this process by hosting your own Imagination Session with friends, family, and neighbors.


## STEP 1: SET A DATE

Pick a date for your Imagination Session between now and 10/31/21.

## STEP 2: INVITE PEOPLE

Brainstorm 10 friends, family members, or neighbors who should be scheming with us for a National Tenants’ Bill of Rights. Who is a renter? Who has a mortgage that is a struggle to keep up with?

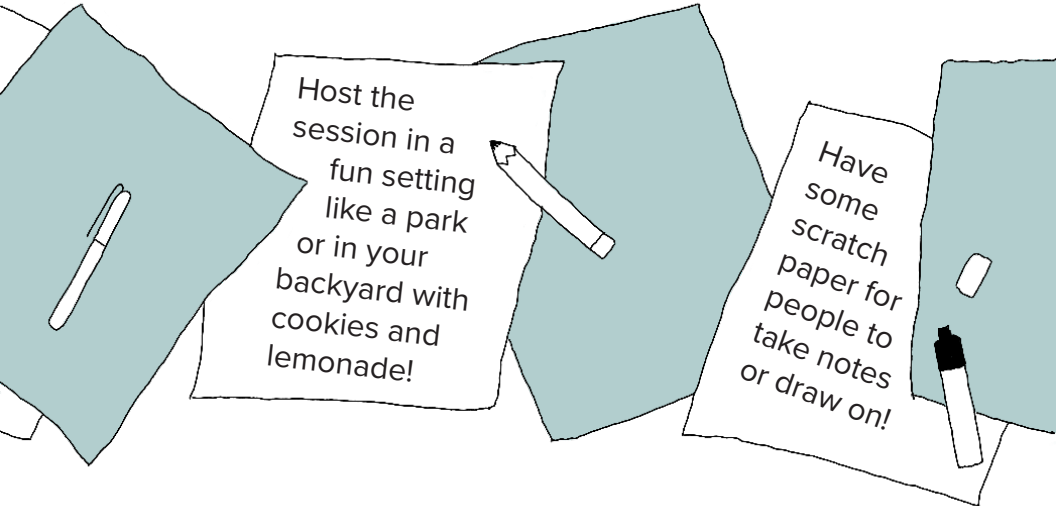
Have a conversation and invite them to join your Imagination Session.



“Hi, \_\_\_\_\_. I’ve been organizing with tenants across the country for a National Tenants’ Bill of Rights. It’s important to me because [reason]. I know that you are also a renter and have had [experience / issue]. Would you be able to join me at [time and date] to imagine what we need in a bill of rights?”

You can use this chart to track who you've invited to join an Imagination Session.

| Name       | Phone Number | Invited? | Response  |
|------------|--------------|----------|-----------|
| Anna Smith | 123-456-7890 | Yes      | Attending |
|            |              |          |           |
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### STEP 3: IMAGINE



## AGENDA

**Intros:** Have everyone share their name, pronouns, and where they live. Ask people to share what home means to them!

**Background:** Give people some background on the National Tenants' Bill of Rights Campaign and why this meeting is important. Feel free to refer back to the intro page of this zine and borrow language from there.

**Key Questions:** Spend 30 minutes digging into the key questions on pages 10 and 11 with everyone at the Imagination Session. Make sure to take detailed notes!

**Visioning:** Ask everyone to share what they think the world will look like and feel like when we win a National Tenants' Bill of Rights.

**Next Steps:** Let everyone know how this Imagination Session will be used to write the Tenants' Bill of rights and share opportunities to build our movement!

1. Let people know that their answers to the key questions will be shared with the National Campaign and used to write the actual Bill of Rights.
2. Ask people if they know anyone else who should be answering these questions! They can do so at **<https://ppls.ac/imagination>**
3. Let everyone know that they can continue driving the vision of this campaign and stay in the loop by texting **TENANT to 51767**
4. Thank everyone for joining!

## STEP 4: DOCUMENT YOUR IMAGINATION SESSIONS

We're collecting photos, videos, and audio recordings of Imagination Sessions across the country. If possible, please document your session using one of the forms below! No matter how you choose to record your session, make sure you **ask for participants' consent** before you start documenting.

### VIDEO DOCUMENTATION

*Use your phone or a camera to take video of the session.*

**Variety.** Get different types of shots. Try to get some background footage and some conversations.

**Orientation.** Horizontal video is more versatile than vertical video.

**Focus/Lighting.** Make sure that the person speaking is easy to see.

### AUDIO DOCUMENTATION

*Use your phone or a mic to take audio of the session.*

**Background Noise.** Try to stay away from audio distractions like loud fans, creaky furniture, construction, wind, etc.

**Movement.** Keep your hand in one position on the mic.

**Proximity.** If you are just recording one person, keep the mic about 6 inches from the person's mouth. If recording two people, have them sit close to each other and place the mic between them.

### PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

*Use your phone or a camera to take photos of the session.*

**Action.** Take photos of people doing things.

**Framing.** Keep people's limbs and heads fully within your frame and make sure the main subject is in focus.

### WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION

**Notes.** Take detailed notes. Review them soon after the session (while your memory is still fresh) so you can add to them if needed.

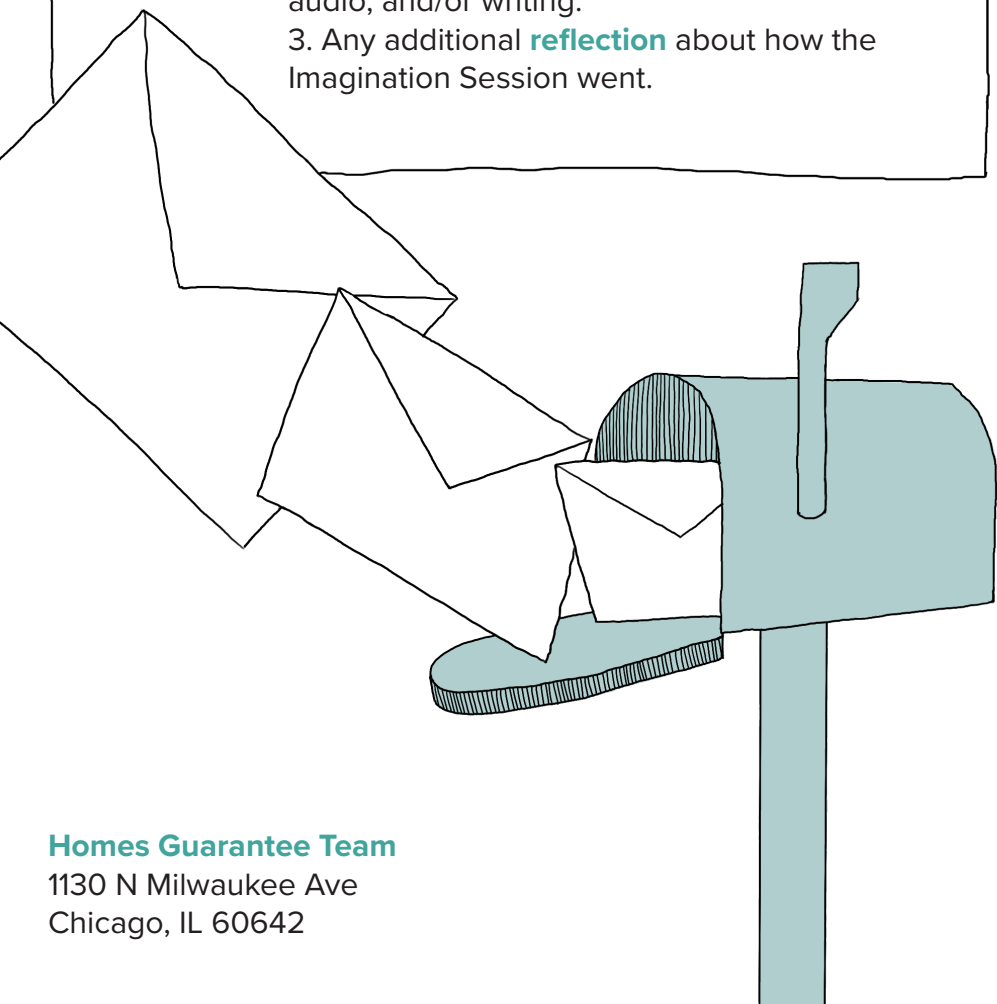
**Direct Quotes.** When something sticks out to you, get it down word for word.

## STEP 5: REPORT BACK

After the Imagination Session, make sure to fill out the report form at <http://ppls.ac/dream> so that we can include the answers from your Imagination Session in the process of drafting the National Tenants' Bill of Rights.

If you don't have access to the internet, you can also mail us the following info:

1. The **answers** participants generated to the Key Questions at your Imagination Session.
2. Your **documentation**— photos, videos, audio, and/or writing.
3. Any additional **reflection** about how the Imagination Session went.



**Homes Guarantee Team**

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# KEY QUESTIONS

If you could **change** three things about the place that you live, what would they be and why?

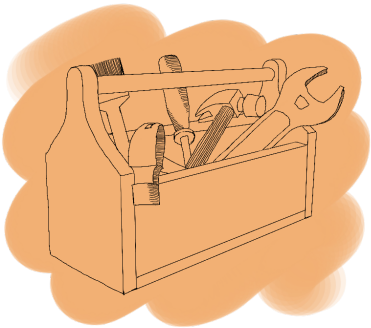
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What are the **solutions** that you want to see to these problems?

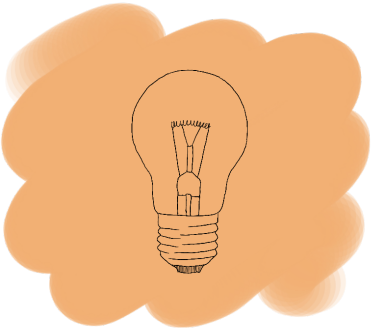
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What are some **challenges** that you have faced to find and keep housing?

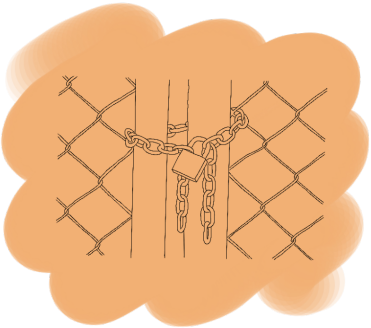
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What should the **process** to find housing actually look like?

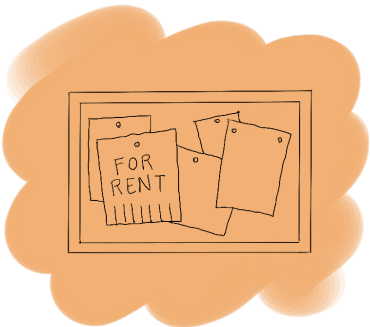
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What additional **rights** do you need to access safe, sustainable, and permanently affordable housing?

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How do you think landlords and property owners should be held **accountable** when they violate tenants' rights?

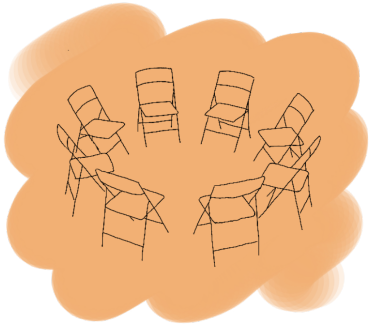
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# ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN

The Campaign for a National Tenants' Bill of Rights is led by tenants from over 22 grassroots organizations in 14 states.

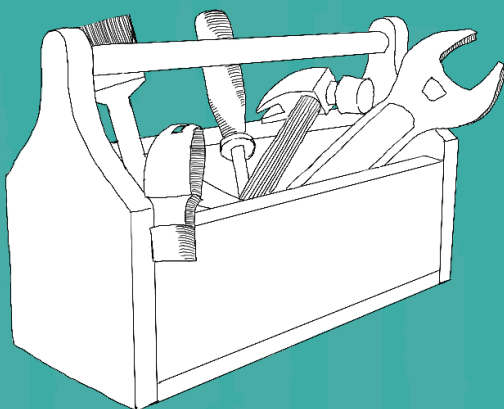
You can reach us...

at our website: [homesguarantee.com](http://homesguarantee.com)

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