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# Lakewood, NJ eviction risk: High

Ocean County · Population 69,585 · Ranked #16 of 696 in New Jersey · Nationally in the 100th percentile

**Lakewood, NJ** scores **7.7/10** on the Eviction Risk Score — the high tier. The score blends nine independent sub-scores covering local, regional, and state political climate; economic stress; supply constraint; rent-control risk; eviction-process difficulty; tenant-organizing strength; and housing-court bias. Every input is sourced from public data — Census ACS, MIT Election Lab, BLS, and the state landlord-tenant statute — with no synthetic estimates.

EVICTON RISK SCORE · 2026
POLITICAL LEAN

7.7 / 10

Rep  
-36.0% margin

HIGH

<b>Timeline</b> <span style="color: red;">164d</span> filing → judgment	<b>Cost range</b> <span style="color: red;">\$10.6-25.7k</span> legal + lost rent	<b>Average rent</b> \$1,718 49% stretched on rent	<b>Renters</b> 61% of households
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## The score in one paragraph

Lakewood scores **7.7/10** — the high-risk tier. Political climate supports tenant protections and the legal framework is procedurally demanding. Court timelines average 164 days even when uncontested; contested cases routinely exceed 120 days. Notice-period discipline (no \$1-over-stated amounts, perfect service documentation) is the single highest-leverage thing a landlord can do here. Habitability defenses are commonplace; budget for them.

## 9-axis sub-score breakdown Higher = more tenant-protective conditions

SUB-SCORE	VALUE	DISTRIBUTION
Local political climate	5.4	
Regional political climate	5.4	
State political climate	6.8	
Economic stress	8.4	
Supply constraint	9.2	
Rent-control risk	9.4	
Eviction-process difficulty	6.6	
Tenant-organizing strength	9.7	
Housing-court bias	9.3	
Primary Eviction Risk Score	7.7	9-axis mean

## How Lakewood compares

Lakewood, NJ **7.7**

Ocean County **6.6**

New Jersey average **7.0**

US national average **5.3**

**Lakewood scores 7.7/10** — that's 2.4 points **above** the US national average (5.3) and ranks **#16 of 696** covered places in New Jersey. Nationally, 99.7% of cities score lower than this one.

## Demographics & economic context

Population	69,585
Renter share of households	60.9%
Average gross rent	\$1,718 / month
Average household income	\$57,576 / year
Share of income spent on rent	49.1%
Poverty rate	29.3%
Unemployment rate	6.8%
2024 county presidential margin	-36.0%

Of every 100 households in Lakewood, roughly **61** rent. The typical renter household earns \$57,576 a year and pays \$1,718 a month in rent — equivalent to **49%** of average household income. HUD classifies any household spending more than 30% of income on housing as "cost-burdened" and more than 50% as "severely cost-burdened" — Lakewood sits **above the cost-burdened threshold**.

## Eviction cost & timeline detail

Estimated all-in eviction cost (low)	<b>\$10,559</b>
Estimated all-in eviction cost (high)	<b>\$25,704</b>
Lost-rent share of total (typical)	~60-75%
Court filing + summons service fees	\$385 - \$610
Sheriff lockout fee	\$145 - \$200
Attorney fees (contested cases)	\$1,500 - \$5,000+
Typical timeline (filing → judgment)	<b>164 days</b>
Post-eviction turnover (cleaning, repairs, re-leasing)	+30-60 days
Tenant-prevailing outcome rate	49.7%

In a typical eviction in Lakewood, **lost rent is the dominant cost driver** — accounting for 60-75% of total expense. At the city's average rent of \$1,718/month (≈ \$57/day), every day of vacancy during the eviction process costs the landlord roughly \$57. A 164-day filing-to-judgment timeline followed by a 30-day turnover means 194 days of vacancy — \$9,392 in lost rent alone, before any other cost.

## New Jersey statute snapshot

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Governing statute	N.J.S.A. § 46:8 & N.J.S.A. § 2A:18 (Landlord and Tenant; Anti-Eviction Act)
Just-cause eviction required	<b>Yes</b> (statewide)
Typical uncontested timeline (high)	60 days
Typical contested timeline (high)	180 days

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## Per-axis detail — what each sub-score actually measures

The Eviction Risk Score is an arithmetic mean of nine independent 0-10 sub-scores. Each is measuring something different about the local landlord-side legal and political environment. Below is what each one is and what Lakewood's value reflects.

### Local political climate

5.4

2024 county presidential margin (MIT Election Lab, 2020 fallback). Reflects the local electorate's lean — strong-Dem counties tend to support stronger tenant ordinances; strong-Rep counties tend to favor faster, landlord-neutral eviction processes.

### Regional political climate

5.4

Population-weighted average of surrounding counties in the same metro area. Local rent-control fights almost always cluster regionally — adjacent counties with the same political lean produce coordinated policy waves.

### State political climate

6.8

Statewide presidential margin + legislative chamber composition. The state legislature controls preemption (whether cities CAN pass rent control), eviction notice periods, and just-cause requirements.

### Economic stress

8.4

Census ACS poverty rate combined with BLS LAUS unemployment. High economic stress correlates with higher eviction filing rates because rent-payment problems track joblessness more reliably than any other single signal.

### Supply constraint

9.2

Renter share × average gross rent. Constrained markets (low vacancy, high rent) produce both higher rent-burden and more aggressive tenant organizing, both of which raise eviction risk.

### Rent-control risk

9.4

National percentile of rent burden. Cities at the top of the rent-burden distribution are the most likely targets of new rent-stabilization ordinances within 1-2 legislative cycles.

### Eviction-process difficulty

6.6

Coded reading of state landlord-tenant statute: notice periods, response window, available defenses, just-cause coverage, mandatory mediation. Higher = longer, more procedural, more dismissal-prone.

### Tenant-organizing strength

9.7

Renter share weighted by political lean. Cities with majority-renter populations and tenant-friendly politics produce active tenant unions that escalate individual disputes and lobby for stronger protections.

### Housing-court bias

9.3

State-weighted disposition data + appellate posture. Some state housing courts apply procedural rules strictly against landlords (dismissals for minor notice defects); others apply them strictly against tenants.

## Quick answers

What is the eviction risk score for Lakewood?

**7.7/10** — High tier. The score is the arithmetic mean of nine sub-axes covering political climate (local, regional, state), economic stress, supply constraint, rent-control risk, eviction-process difficulty, tenant-organizing strength, and housing-court bias. Inputs are public ACS 2023 5-year data, 2024 county presidential margins (MIT Election Lab; 2020 fallback), BLS LAUS unemployment, and a coded reading of the New Jersey landlord-tenant statute.

How long does an eviction take in Lakewood?

Filing to judgment runs roughly **164 days** for a standard case. All-in cost runs **\$10,559-\$25,704** per case — that's legal fees, lost rent, sheriff lockout, plus post-eviction turnover. Contested cases (where the tenant files an Answer) add another 30-60 days. Cases where a tenant raises a habitability defense or files an appeal can run 4-6 months total.

What share of Lakewood households rent?

**60.9%** of households are renter-occupied (ACS 2023 5-year, table B25008). About **49%** of average household income goes to rent at the city's average gross rent of **\$1,718/month** (ACS table B25064).

Is Lakewood a landlord-friendly market?

Elevated tier (**7.7/10**). Documented notices and proactive screening matter. Tenant defenses are common but not universal — landlords with clean procedural records win most contested cases.

What does "stretched on rent" mean?

HUD defines a household as "cost-burdened" if it spends more than 30% of income on housing, and "severely cost-burdened" above 50%. Lakewood's value of **49.1%** measures the city-wide average from Census ACS 2023 5-year table B25071 (gross rent as a percentage of household income). The higher this number, the more financially fragile the average renter household, and the more likely a missed paycheck cascades into a rent default.

Who is this report for?

Landlords evaluating a market for an acquisition, property managers underwriting an existing portfolio, investors comparing submarkets, tenants researching their rights, and journalists/researchers covering local housing policy. Every number is reproducible from public sources cited at the back of this report. **No legal advice is provided** — consult a licensed attorney in New Jersey for guidance specific to a particular property or dispute.

## Methodology

The primary Eviction Risk Score is computed as the arithmetic mean of nine sub-scores, each independently normalized to a 0-1 national percentile against the universe of 31,828 covered US cities, then multiplied by 10. Each sub-score is capped at [1.0, 10.0] before averaging to keep the headline number from being dragged to extremes by a single outlier axis.

$$\text{score} = (S_{\text{local}} + S_{\text{regional}} + S_{\text{state}} + S_{\text{economic}} + S_{\text{supply}} + S_{\text{rent-control}} + S_{\text{eviction-process}} + S_{\text{tenant-org}} + S_{\text{court-bias}}) \div 9$$

## REPRODUCIBILITY

Every input is sourced from a public dataset cited in the source registry below. To reproduce Lakewood's score from scratch, pull the city's ACS variables from [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov) (place GEOID), the county presidential margin from MIT Election Lab's CSV, and the state statute from the cited code section. The full computation lives at [evictionriskmap.com/methodology/](https://evictionriskmap.com/methodology/) and the per-city payload is available as JSON at [evictionriskmap.com/api/v1/cities/{id}.json](https://evictionriskmap.com/api/v1/cities/{id}.json).

## CONFIDENCE & UNCERTAINTY

ACS 5-year estimates for places with population under ~25,000 carry meaningful margins of error — we suppress the score entirely for places under 5,000 and add a wide confidence band for places 5,000–25,000. Presidential margins use county-level returns (the most granular level published consistently for every US county) so they uniformly under-represent within-county political variation in large metros. The eviction-process sub-score is a coded reading of statute text; it does not attempt to measure within-state judicial variation.

## Source registry

SOURCE	COVERAGE	VINTAGE
US Census ACS 5-year (B17001, B19013, B25008, B25064, B25071)	Poverty, income, renter share, rent, rent burden	2023
US Census Gazetteer	Place + county geometry, FIPS codes	2024
MIT Election Lab	County presidential margin	2024 (2020 fallback)
BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics	City-level unemployment rate	Latest available
New Jersey landlord-tenant statute	Notice periods, just-cause, rent caps, timelines	2026 reading
HUD cost-burden thresholds	30% / 50% income-on-rent benchmarks	Codified
NGP-EvictStats scoring formula	9-axis Eviction Risk Score	Current production version

## Disclaimer

This report is informational only. The Eviction Risk Score is descriptive of measurable inputs (Census demographics, voting history, statute structure) — it is not a prediction for any individual property, tenant, or dispute. It does not constitute legal, financial, or investment advice. Eviction outcomes depend heavily on case-specific facts (notice service quality, tenant defenses, judicial assignment) that no aggregate score can capture. Before taking any action on a specific property or tenancy, consult a licensed New Jersey attorney.

All public-source citations above are non-exclusive: anyone can reproduce the Eviction Risk Score by pulling the same source data and applying the methodology published at [evictionriskmap.com/methodology/](https://evictionriskmap.com/methodology/). NextGen Properties publishes EvictionRiskMap.com as a free research tool; we do not sell the underlying data and we do not warrant the score's fitness for any particular purpose.

## ABOUT NEXTGEN PROPERTIES

NextGen Properties is a licensed real estate brokerage and full-service property-management firm. We own and operate a portfolio of single-family rentals and small multifamily buildings across the West and South, and we publish **EvictionRiskMap.com** as a free research tool for landlords, tenants, and investors evaluating local rental markets. Our team blends 20+ years of operational landlord experience with original data work — we ingest, validate, and combine public datasets (US Census ACS, BEA, Princeton Eviction Lab, CDC SVI, FRED) so customers can underwrite a market in minutes rather than weeks.

### WHAT WE DO

Full-service property management for landlords (leasing, maintenance, accounting, legal coordination) · Pre-purchase market diligence reports for investors · Free public risk data and methodology at [evictionriskmap.com](https://evictionriskmap.com)

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