

Community Rental Information

What is the process? How do I find and secure rental housing?

- Contact the property management company/private landlord/private listing and ask for the type of rental you are looking for. Include the number of bedrooms and the ideal location.
- Schedule a time to look at the options available.
- When viewing the rental, make sure to check:
 - Faucets/showerheads for water pressure and hot/cold water function.
 - Flush toilets to ensure they are working properly.
 - Thermostat/temperature. Verify if the heat is electric or gas and that the furnace/air turns on.
 - Verify which appliances are provided. For example, is there a washer/dryer hookup in the unit, or is there shared laundry in the building, or will you need a laundromat?
 - Make sure doors and windows open/close and lock.
 - Look for damage to carpeting or strange smells that might indicate water damage.
 - Check for signs of pests and infestations.
 - Check the property for safety. Drive through the neighborhood at different times/days. Is this area one that fits your living style? Does it feel safe? Is there a lot of community or traffic noise?
 - Ask about amenities that may be included in the rent. Water/sewer/garbage/wifi/cable?
 - Ask about parking, how many spaces do you get with your unit? How is visitor parking allocated? Is parking for you and your guests free?
 - Is there a guest policy?
 - Is the rental furnished or unfurnished?
 - If you like the rental you are viewing, ask the person you are meeting with what the next steps are. Is there a background check required?

You were approved for the rental, now what?

- Thoroughly read the lease before signing. Ask questions about anything you are not clear on, or don't understand.
- What are the terms of the lease?
- When is rent due? When are late fees assessed and how much are they?
- Are there mandatory fees when moving out that will go against your deposit?
- How much will this rental cost to move in? What all is due: first month's rent, last month's rent, and/or deposit?
- What is the landlord's right of entry conditions?
- Is rental insurance required?
- Were there promises made during your visit that are not included in the lease? Ask to have them added.
- Ask to change any undesirable clauses, and any changes made to the lease must be initialed by the manager/landlord and you.
- Sign and get a copy to keep for your own records of all documents.

Moving In.

- Before moving any items into the unit, complete the move-in condition inventory sheet.
 - Be very thorough, check outlets, holes in the walls, stains/tears in the carpet, appliances, open and close cupboards and drawers. This is important to ensure you are not charged for damage you did not cause.
 - Take pictures/video of everything to document.
- Sign and date the condition sheet, have the manager/landlord sign, and then request a copy for your records.
- Sign up for an account with the local electric company. You will need to indicate your move in date.
- If Wi-Fi is not provided, sign up for internet to get scheduled to have that installed. Make sure there are no restrictions for your building if any modification to the structure/property need to be made.
- Replace the batteries in the smoke detector/carbon monoxide detector to ensure they are new.
- Check for a fire extinguisher. If one is not provided, purchase one for at least the kitchen.
- Never leave a spare key in a typical hiding place.

Extra Tidbit.

- When looking at a college or university, rental postings become more active after graduation in May, when current graduates are setting their move dates.