

Being a Successful Tenant

Tenant Responsibilities

Your responsibilities as a tenant are spelled out in your lease agreement. **A lease agreement with a professional landlord will explain all of the rules, policies, procedures, and responsibilities associated with your rental. That is why it is so important to read and understand it BEFORE signing.**

The lease agreement is considered a 'guide-stone' and will assist to navigate every part of the business relationship that exists between a tenant and a landlord. Some of the basic responsibilities include:

1- Pay Rent.

This seems obvious; however, first and foremost, **Always Pay Your Rent on Time.** If there is a problem that you think the landlord should take care of, you must ***stay current on your rent while working with them to resolve the problem.***

If you think that you will have trouble making the rent or the full rental amount for an upcoming month **COMMUNICATE as early as possible.** Propose a plan of action for payments and fees, avoid incurring additional legal costs and fees. Ideas could include budgeting options, potential utility assistance, local food pantries, financial counseling services, emergency assistance funds, savings account access, family or church outreach or emergency rental assistance agencies. **The key is to communicate the issue as soon as it becomes obvious or evident that there may be an issue.**

2 - Follow the lease agreement.

The landlord's policies are spelled out in your lease agreement. By following these policies and guidelines, you can avoid eviction, and maintain a good relationship with your landlord, take good care of the property so that you and any future tenants will have a nice place to live.

3 - File maintenance & repair requests.

From time to time, things break in the rental unit. This can be due to normal wear and tear of living or negligence. Regardless of the cause, you should help the landlord keep the property in good condition by letting them know when something needs to be repaired or replaced. **You are responsible to make sure your landlord knows about maintenance & repair issues.**

4 -Keep the rental unit clean.

This is important as much for your health and safety as it is for your landlord's needs. By keeping a clean and tidy living area, you will be healthier and happier in your rental home. Clean the entire unit on a regular basis. Don't let clutter get out of control. Keeping the apartment clean will also make moving out easier when the time comes.

5 -Report Bed Bugs & Pests.

Keeping the unit clean will help you avoid problems with bugs and pests. **If you do have an infestation in the unit, report it to the landlord right away.** Always follow the pest provisions within the lease agreement. Report any pest issue as soon as the problem is discovered, the earlier treatment the better the results for a good and thorough outcome.

6 -Changes or alterations.

If you want to change anything while you're living in the unit, **you must have your landlord's permission.** Some examples of changes may include adding a new roommate, painting or changing the locks on the doors.

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7 -Notices.

If you are moving out, you need to give notice to your landlord or property manager. Your **lease agreement will provide guidelines on how much time you need to give and in what manner that notice MUST be done.** If you **break a lease there may be fees and additional consequences.** Even if your rental term is up, you need to give notice that you are moving. The lease will list how many days you need to give prior to moving out.

