



A Checklist for Renters and Landlords

This publication is intended to provide general information only and is not a substitute for legal advice.

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Looking for a place to rent?

Renting is a big move. Whether you are renting a suite, a room in someone's home or are sharing accommodation, make sure you understand the rules that apply to your situation. Different rental spaces have different rules.

When you rent a unit in an apartment building or a suite in a home, you have rights and responsibilities outlined in a provincial law called the *Residential Tenancies Act*. But you should also ensure you have a rental agreement in place, signed by you and your landlord.

When you share a living space with a landlord (for example, if you're living in a bedroom and sharing the landlord's kitchen and other common areas) the *Residential Tenancies Act* does not apply. You should be sure you have a written rental agreement in place, signed by you and your landlord. Rental agreements are considered lease contracts and are enforceable through the courts.

All rental agreements should be in writing and include details about the rent, security deposit, inspections, termination notices and other responsibilities.

Renting out space in your home?

If you are planning to rent out a suite in your basement or an extra room in your home, be sure to discuss your expectations with your tenant ahead of time and have a written tenancy agreement in place.

When renting out a suite in your home, you have rights and responsibilities outlined in a provincial law called the *Residential Tenancies Act*. However, if your tenant is renting a room and using other common areas of your home like the kitchen, then the *Residential Tenancies Act* doesn't apply. In this case, the written tenancy agreement signed with your tenant will be considered a lease contract and will be enforceable through the courts.

All rental agreements should be in writing and include details about landlord and tenant responsibilities, security deposit, inspections, rent and termination notices.

Complete the following checklist before you decide to rent or rent out a space in your home.

FINANCES

- How much is the rent?
- Is a security deposit required?
- Does the rent include heat, water, electricity, cable or Internet? Will hook-up charges be extra? (Heat and electricity can be purchased through an energy contract. Energy retailers can advise if there is an extra cost to cancel the contract.)
- Will parking cost extra?
- Who has to pay for repairs—big ones and small ones?

THE SPACE

- Can extra belongings such as bikes, luggage, etc. be stored? Who has access to this space?
- Where is the bus stop?
- Is the rental space close to services that are used regularly? (groceries, bank, fitness)
- Is the rental space clean? Who does the snow shoveling and grass cutting? Who supplies the equipment (shovels – lawn mower)?
- Where can vehicles be parked? Is there good lighting outside and in the parking lot?
- How quiet or noisy is the rental space during studying or sleeping times?
- Are there laundry facilities? Is there a schedule for use? Is there a cost? Is there a laundromat nearby?
- Is there Internet service or can it be installed?

QUESTIONS

- Will the agreement be for a fixed amount of time or month-to-month?
- When and where will the rent be paid? What happens if it is late? Receipts are recommended for any cash rent payments.
- Who do you contact if there is a problem?
- Are sublets okay? What about a roommate?
- Are pets allowed?
- How long can guests stay?
- Is decorating allowed? What is the policy about push pins and nail holes?
- When and where are notices delivered when it's time to move out?
- When will the inspection report be done? Keep your copies.
- Get all promises in writing.

AVOID MISUNDERSTANDINGS

- Who will sign the tenancy agreement? It's best that all parties be named on the tenancy agreement.
- What will happen if one person needs to move out before the end of the tenancy?
- How will costs be shared and bills paid?
- Has tenant insurance been arranged?
- How will problems be resolved?
- Know your rights and responsibilities.

MORE INFORMATION

Contact a post-secondary institution's off-campus housing registry to find or advertise rental spaces for students.

Renters' and landlords' responsibilities are covered by the *Residential Tenancies Act* in Alberta if you are renting a unit in an apartment building or a suite in a home.

Information for Landlords and Tenants www.servicealberta.ca

Laws for Tenants in Alberta www.landlordandtenant.org

Electricity and Natural Gas Contracts www.servicealberta.ca

Consumer Contact Centre

Edmonton: (780) 427-4088 Toll free: 1-877-427-4088 www.servicealberta.ca



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