

**Tenant Responsibilities**

Scattered Site Housing Program

We would like to welcome you to the Liberty Community Services Scattered Site Housing Program. This document is to help assist you as you look for a new apartment and it is only to serve as a guide. You will want to work with your Network Navigator, Housing Case Manager or Peer Navigator to make sure that the apartment you choose is a safe place to live. In addition, it provides some helpful tips in the event of an emergency which you can familiarize yourself with before moving into an apartment.

**Habitable Housing**

When a landlord rents property to a tenant as a place to live, the property must be in a "habitable" condition. ("Habitable" means fit to live in; "uninhabitable" means not fit to live in. In order for the property to be habitable, it must have all of the following:

1. Effective waterproofing and weather protection of roof and exterior walls, including unbroken

windows and doors.

1. Plumbing facilities in good working order, including hot and cold running water, connected to a sewage disposal system.
2. Gas facilities in good working order.
3. Heating facilities in good working order.
4. An electrical system, including lighting, wiring and equipment, in good working order.
5. Clean and sanitary buildings, grounds and appurtenances (for example, a garden or a detached garage) which are free from debris, filth, rubbish, garbage, rodents and vermin.
6. Adequate trash receptacles in good repair.
7. Floors, stairways and railings in good repair.

In addition, the rented property must have all of the following:

1. A working toilet, wash basin, and bathtub or shower. The toilet and bathtub/shower must be in a room that is ventilated, and that allows for privacy.
2. A kitchen with a sink, which cannot be made of an absorbent material (for example, wood).
3. Natural lighting in every room through windows or skylights. Unless there is a ventilation fan, the windows must be able to open at least halfway.
4. Safe fire or emergency exits leading to a street or hallway. Stairs, hallways and exits must be kept litter free. Storage areas, garages, and basements must be kept free of combustible materials.
5. Operable deadbolt locks on the main entry doors of rental units, and operable locking or security devices on windows.
6. Working smoke detectors in all units of multi-unit buildings, such as duplexes and apartment complexes. Apartment complexes also must have smoke detectors in common stairwells.

These are minimum requirements. Other conditions may make the rented property not habitable. For example, the rented property may not be habitable if it does not substantially comply with building and housing code standards that materially affect tenants' health and safety. These building and housing codes are established by the city in which you live.

**Tenant's Care of Property**

A tenant must take reasonable care of the rented property and common areas, such as hallways. This means that the tenant must keep those areas in good condition. A tenant is typically charged for any damages that he or she causes, or that is caused by the tenants' guests, children or pets. Tenants are required to do the following:

1. Keep the premises "as clean and sanitary as the condition of the premises permits."
2. Use and operate gas, electrical and plumbing fixtures properly. (Examples of improper use include overloading electrical outlets, flushing large, foreign objects down the toilet, and allowing any gas, electrical or plumbing fixture to become filthy.)
3. Dispose of trash and garbage in a clean and sanitary manner.
4. Not destroy, damage, or deface the premises, or allow anyone else to do so.
5. Not remove any part of the structure, dwelling unit, facilities, equipment or appurtenances, or allow anyone else to do so.
6. Use the premises as a place to live, and use the rooms for their proper purposes. For example, the bedroom must be used as a bedroom and not as a kitchen.
7. Notify the landlord when deadbolt locks and window locks or security devices do not operate properly.

If the tenant does not perform these duties and causes the property to become uninhabitable, the tenant cannot require the landlord to repair the property to make it habitable.

Similarly, the tenant cannot require the landlord to repair the property if the tenant substantially interferes with the landlord's ability to repair defects (for example, by not allowing the landlord's electrician to enter the apartment to fix faulty wiring).

**Note**: These are only guidelines and not definitive statements of the law. Questions about the law's application to particular cases should be directed to a specialist and/or the housing program in which you participate.

**Move-in Inspection Checklist**

This checklist highlights some of the COMMON violations found during unit inspections. The items on this checklist must be working or completed prior to the inspection.

 -The unit must be empty/vacant from previous tenant.

* Utilities (water, gas, electric) must be turned on for the completion of the inspection.
* No chipping or peeling paint inside or outside the unit.
* Stove must be clean and in working order and secured.
* Refrigerator must be clean and be in working order with a good door seal.
* There must be a permanently installed working heating system.
* Hot and cold running water in the kitchen and bathroom(s).
* There must be a shower or bathtub that works.
* There must be a flush toilet that works, is securely mounted and does not leak.
* The bathroom must have either an outside window or an exhaust fan vented to the outside.
* There must not be any plumbing leaks.
* There must not be any plugged drains (check for slow drains).
* All plumbing fixtures must have P-traps to prevent sewer gas from leaking into the unit.
* All ground floor windows and exterior doors shall open and close as designed and must have working locks. Doubled keyed dead bolts are not permitted.
* Each living space must have two means of fire egress (i.e. door & window)
* All electrical outlets/switches must have cover plates and be in good working condition.
* All ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCls) must work properly.
* There must not be any missing, broken, or cracked windows.
* The roof must not leak. Indications of a leak are discolorations or stains on the ceiling.
* The hot water heater tank must have a temperature pressure relief valve with downward discharge pipe made of galvanized steel or copper tubing that is between six inches to eight inches from the floor or directed outside the unit (no PVC). CPVC is acceptable.
* The floor covering cannot be torn or have holes that can cause someone to trip.
* If there are stairs and railings, they must be secure.
* Four or more exterior stairs must have handrails 34 inches to 38 inches from the ground.
* Walk offs or porches 30 inches above grade must have guard rails 36 inches from the ground.
* There must be working smoke detectors properly mounted on each level of the unit including the basement and walk up attics.
* All security bars and windows must have a quick release mechanism.
* All sliding glass doors must have a lock or security bar on the door that works.
* All construction/rehabilitation (painting, carpet replacement, etc.) must be completed.
* The unit must be free from roaches or rodents.
* There must be stepping stones or walkway to the unit

*This brief listing is for the purposes of information only is not intended as a completed listing. Check HUD and local codes for other requirements.*

**City of New Haven’s Residential Rental License Program**

If you are renting an apartment in the City of New Haven, rented apartments have been certified with the **City of New Haven’s Residential Rental License Program**. This program is administered by New Haven’s Livable City Initiative. The City of New Haven’s Mission states:

“The purpose of the Residential License Inspection is to protect the safety, health, and welfare of New Haven residents by identifying deficiencies on the premises. The program will protect the character and stability of residential areas, educate the public about basic housing code standards as they relate to health and life safety issues, prevent overcrowding and improve property values throughout New Haven. A rental license helps assure renters and those charged with protecting the city that the licensed property has met minimum housing standards, and provides landlords with consistent enforcement of codes.”

Once the City of New Haven inspects the apartment, the Residential Rental License is valid for two years. A Residential Rental License is only required when there are two or more rental units in a non-owner occupied building. You may contact Livable City Initiative to determine if a property you are interested in renting has received a Residential Rental License by calling: 203-946-2966 or 203-946-7090.

**What to do in case of emergency**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Emergency** | **Next Step** |
| Electrical Outage | Call electric company- 1-800-772-5584 |
| Fire | Control fire if smallIf large, leave home immediately, call 911 then call landlord |
| Gas leak | Leave home and call landlordCall SCGC immediately 1-800-513-8898 or call 911 for your local fire department. |
| Health/Medical emergencies | Call 911Call Landlord |
| Lost keys | Call trusted person to whom you gave a spare key Call landlord (May cost money) |
| No heat/hot water | Call apartment maintenance staff or landlord If landlord cannot be reached call-Housing Program Staff-Fire Department-Housing Enforcement Agency, Livable Initiative 203-946-7090 |
| Water Leaks | Call landlord or maintenance staff |

**Liberty Community Services, Inc. conducts an initial inspection of the conditions of the apartment. As a housing program responsible for providing rental assistance, LCS is responsible for ensuring that the unit is habitual and suits the tenant’s own living needs. The tenant working with the LCS rental assistance program needs to follows rules and regulations applicable to our program.**